

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4686

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to expand Beyond Visual Line of Sight operations for unmanned aircraft systems, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2025

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia (for herself, Mr. FINSTAD, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. FINE, Mr. SHREVE, and Mr. CRENSHAW) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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## A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to expand Beyond Visual Line of Sight operations for unmanned aircraft systems, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Local Innovation for  
5 Flight Technologies Act of 2025” or the “LIFT Act of  
6 2025”.

7 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

8 In this Act:

1           (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-  
2       GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-  
3       gress” has the meaning given the term in section  
4       44801 of title 49, United States Code.

5           (2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The term  
6       “unmanned aircraft system” has the meaning given  
7       the term in section 44801 of title 49, United States  
8       Code.

9   **SEC. 3. EXPANDING UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OPER-**  
10                           **ATIONS.**

11       (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation  
12   shall—

13           (1) not later than 30 days after the date of en-  
14       actment of this Act, issue a proposed rule enabling  
15       routine Beyond Visual Line of Sight (hereinafter re-  
16       ferred to as “BVLOS”) operations for unmanned  
17       aircraft systems; and

18           (2) not later than 6 months after the date of  
19       enactment of this Act, issue a final rule based on the  
20       proposed rulemaking issued under paragraph (1).

21       (b) SAFETY METRICS.—The Secretary of Transpor-  
22   tation shall—

23           (1) not later than 30 days after the date of en-  
24       actment of this Act, establish metrics for assessing

1 the performance and safety of BVLOS operations of  
2 unmanned aircraft systems; and

3 (2) not later than 180 days of the date of en-  
4 actment of this Act, identify and describe any addi-  
5 tional regulatory barriers and challenges to such  
6 BVLOS implementation and submit to the Director  
7 of the Office of Science and Technology Policy rec-  
8 ommendations for—

9 (A) addressing the barriers and challenges  
10 expeditiously; and

11 (B) potential regulation or legislative ac-  
12 tion.

13 **SEC. 4. EXAMINATION OF APPLICABLE INTERNATIONAL RE-**  
14 **QUIREMENTS.**

15 The Secretary of Transportation shall—

16 (1) explore options to ensure that unmanned  
17 aircraft systems operating over the high seas within  
18 flight informational regions for which the United  
19 States is responsible for operational control may op-  
20 erate without being subject to the requirements ap-  
21 plicable to manned aircraft engaging in international  
22 navigation as referenced in the Convention on Inter-  
23 national Civil Aviation;

24 (2) identify potential barriers for the operation  
25 described in paragraph (1); and

1           (3) submit to the appropriate committees of  
2 Congress—

3           (A) a report on the findings under para-  
4 graphs (1) and (2); and

5           (B) appropriate legislative recommenda-  
6 tions necessary to enable such operation.

7 **SEC. 5. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN WAIVER DE-**  
8 **TERMINATIONS.**

9       (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the  
10 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transpor-  
11 tation shall initiate the deployment of artificial intelligence  
12 tools to assist in and expedite the review of unmanned air-  
13 craft system waiver applications under part 107 of title  
14 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

15       (b) CAPABILITY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
16 TOOLS.—The artificial intelligence tools described in sub-  
17 section (a) shall—

18           (1) support performance- and risk-based evalua-  
19 tion of proposed operations;

20           (2) identify materially similar precedents and  
21 recommend consistent mitigation measures;

22           (3) assist the Administrator of the Federal  
23 Aviation Administration in identifying categories of  
24 unmanned aircraft system operations with sufficient  
25 safety data or recurring approval patterns that may

1 warrant further rulemaking to eliminate the need for  
2 individualized waivers; and

3 (4) be used in accordance with guidance on  
4 Federal use of artificial intelligence, as detailed in  
5 Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M–  
6 25–21.

7 (c) ADDITIONAL WAIVER REVIEW.—In conducting  
8 the deployment of artificial intelligence tools required  
9 under subsection (a), the Secretary of Transportation  
10 shall examine the extent to which such artificial intel-  
11 ligence tools could be used to review exemption petitions  
12 for applicants seeking to operate pursuant to section  
13 44807 of title 49, United States Code.

14 **SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELECTRIC VERTICAL TAKE-**  
15 **OFF AND LANDING PILOT PROGRAM.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation,  
17 in coordination with the Director of the Office of Science  
18 and Technology Policy, shall establish the electric Vertical  
19 Takeoff and Landing (hereinafter referred to as  
20 “eVTOL”) integration pilot program to provide grants to  
21 State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to carry  
22 out projects to accelerate the deployment of safe eVTOL  
23 operations in the United States.

24 (b) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after  
2           the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
3           shall issue a public request for proposals for the pro-  
4           gram established under subsection (a) to State,  
5           local, Tribal, and territorial governments.

6           (2) SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.—Such pro-  
7           posals shall be submitted not later than 90 days  
8           after the request is issued under subsection (a) and  
9           include a private sector partner with demonstrated  
10          experience in eVTOL aircraft development, manufac-  
11          turing, and operations.

12          (c) SELECTION OF PROJECTS.—Not later than 180  
13          days after the request is issued under subsection (a), the  
14          Secretary may select eligible pilot projects that propose  
15          to begin eVTOL operations not later than 90 days after  
16          the date on which any agreement for a pilot project is es-  
17          tablished. Selection criteria shall include—

18               (1) the use of eVTOL aircraft and technologies  
19               developed or offered by a United States-based entity;

20               (2) overall representation of economic and geo-  
21               graphic operations and proposed models of public-  
22               private partnership; and

23               (3) overall representation of the operations to  
24               be conducted, including advanced air mobility, med-  
25               ical response, cargo transport, and rural access.

1 (d) PROJECT AGREEMENTS.—

2 (1) AGREEMENT CONTENTS.—The Secretary  
3 shall execute agreements with applicants selected  
4 under subsection (c) that contain—

5 (A) project goals;

6 (B) regulatory needs;

7 (C) timelines;

8 (D) information sharing and data ex-  
9 change mechanisms; and

10 (E) responsibilities.

11 (e) REPORTING.—

12 (1) IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.—Not later than  
13 180 days after the selection of pilot program partici-  
14 pants under subsection (c), the Secretary shall sub-  
15 mit to the Director of the Office of Science and  
16 Technology Policy and the appropriate committees  
17 of Congress an initial implementation report con-  
18 taining a summary of early-stage planning, inter-  
19 agency coordination, and any immediate regulatory  
20 or legislative challenges identified.

21 (2) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year  
22 after the date on which the Secretary submits the  
23 initial implementation report under paragraph (1),  
24 and annually thereafter until the date specified in  
25 subsection (f), the Secretary shall submit to the Di-

1 rector and the appropriate committees of Congress  
2 a report that includes—

3 (A) the progress of the pilot program;

4 (B) any evaluation of program goals and  
5 outcomes;

6 (C) recommendations for the permanent  
7 integration of eVTOL operations into the na-  
8 tional airspace; and

9 (D) any proposed future initiatives to  
10 maintain United States leadership in eVTOL  
11 flight.

12 (f) SUNSET.—The Secretary shall cease to provide  
13 grants under the pilot program established under this sec-  
14 tion on the date that is 3 years after the date the first  
15 pilot project becomes operational, unless the Secretary de-  
16 termines that an extension is warranted in the national  
17 interest.

18 (g) INFORMATION USE AND SHARING.—The Sec-  
19 retary shall—

20 (1) use the information and experience yielded  
21 by the pilot program to inform the development of  
22 regulations, initiatives, and plans to enable safe  
23 eVTOL operations; and

24 (2) as appropriate, share such information with  
25 the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the



1 Secretary of Homeland Security, and the heads of  
2 other relevant agencies.

3 **SEC. 7. PRIORITIZATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYS-**  
4 **TEMS MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED**  
5 **STATES.**

6 The Secretary of Transportation shall prioritize the  
7 integration of unmanned aircraft systems manufactured in  
8 the United States into the national airspace system over  
9 unmanned aircraft systems manufactured outside of the  
10 United States to the maximum extent permitted by law.

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