

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4235

To prohibit executive agencies from procuring or operating certain unmanned ground vehicle systems, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 26, 2026

Mr. COTTON (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To prohibit executive agencies from procuring or operating certain unmanned ground vehicle 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 “American Security Ro-
5 botics Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON THE PROCUREMENT AND OPER-**
7 **ATION OF COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VE-**
8 **HICLE SYSTEMS.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) COVERED NATION.—The term “covered na-
2 tion” has the meaning given the term in section
3 4872(f) of title 10, United States Code.

4 (2) COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term
5 “covered foreign entity” means an entity that is—

6 (A) domiciled in a covered nation;

7 (B) subject to the influence or control of
8 the government of a covered nation, as deter-
9 mined by the Secretary of Homeland Security
10 or the Secretary of Defense; or

11 (C) a subsidiary or affiliate of an entity
12 described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

13 (3) COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE
14 SYSTEM.—The term “covered unmanned ground ve-
15 hicle system” means an unmanned ground vehicle
16 system manufactured or assembled by a covered for-
17 eign entity.

18 (4) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “executive
19 agency” has the meaning given the term in section
20 133 of title 41, United States Code.

21 (5) UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEM.—
22 The term “unmanned ground vehicle system” means
23 a system that includes—

24 (A) a mechanical device, including a re-
25 mote surveillance vehicle, autonomous patrol

technology, mobile robotics, or a humanoid robot, that—

(i) is capable of locomotion, navigation, or movement on the ground; and

(ii) operates at a distance from a human operator or supervisor based on commands or in response to sensor data or any combination thereof;

(B) the payload of the mechanical device described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) any external device used to control the mechanical device described in subparagraph (A).

(b) PROHIBITION ON PROCUREMENT OF COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS.—Except as provided under subsection (e), the head of an executive agency may not procure any covered unmanned ground vehicle system.

(c) PROHIBITION ON OPERATION OF COVERED UNMANNED GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (e), beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, no executive agency may operate a covered unmanned ground vehicle system.

1 (2) APPLICABILITY TO CONTRACTED SERV-
 2 ICES.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) applies
 3 to any covered unmanned ground vehicle system
 4 being used by an executive agency through a con-
 5 tract for the services of the covered unmanned
 6 ground vehicle system.

7 (d) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR
 8 PROCUREMENT OR OPERATION OF COVERED UNMANNED
 9 GROUND VEHICLE SYSTEMS.—Except as provided in sub-
 10 section (e), beginning on the date that is one year after
 11 the date of the enactment of this Act, no Federal funds
 12 awarded through a contract, grant, or cooperative agree-
 13 ment, or otherwise made available, may be used to procure
 14 or in connection with the operation of a covered unmanned
 15 ground vehicle system.

16 (e) EXEMPTION TO PROHIBITIONS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency de-
 18 scribed in paragraph (2) is exempt from the prohibi-
 19 tions under subsections (b), (c), and (d) if—

20 (A) the procurement or operation of the
 21 covered unmanned ground vehicle system is in
 22 the national interest of the United States; and

23 (B)(i) the sole purpose for the procure-
 24 ment or operation is—

1 (I) research, evaluation, training, test-
2 ing, or analysis for electronic warfare, in-
3 formation warfare operations, cybersecu-
4 rity, or the development of unmanned
5 ground vehicle system or counter-un-
6 manned ground vehicle system technology;
7 or

8 (II) conducting counter-terrorism or
9 counterintelligence activities, protective
10 missions, or Federal criminal or national
11 security investigations, including forensic
12 examinations; or

13 (ii) the covered unmanned ground vehicle
14 system, as procured or as modified after pro-
15 curement but before operational use—

16 (I) can no longer transfer data to, or
17 download data from, a covered foreign en-
18 tity; and

19 (II) poses no national security cyber-
20 security risk as determined by the head of
21 the agency.

22 (2) AGENCIES DESCRIBED.—The agencies de-
23 scribed in this paragraph are—

24 (A) the Department of Homeland Security;

25 (B) the Department of Defense;

- 1 (C) the Department of State; and
- 2 (D) the Department of Justice.

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