

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2670

To provide for the operation of micro unmanned aircraft systems.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 10, 2016

Mr. VITTER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred
to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To provide for the operation of micro unmanned aircraft
systems.

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 “Micro Drone Safety
5 and Innovation Act of 2016”.

6 **SEC. 2. OPERATION OF MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYS-**
7 **TEMS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title III of the FAA
9 Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–
10 95; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note) is amended by adding at the
11 end the following:

1 **“SEC. 337. SPECIAL RULE FOR MICRO UNMANNED AIR-**
2 **CRAFT SYSTEMS.**

3 “(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATION OF MICRO UN-
4 MANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A micro unmanned aircraft
6 system and the operator of that system shall qualify
7 for the exemptions described under subsections (b),
8 (c), and (d) if the system is operated—

9 “(A) at an altitude of less than 400 feet
10 above ground level;

11 “(B) at an airspeed not greater than 40
12 knots;

13 “(C) within the visual line of sight of the
14 operator;

15 “(D) during the hours between sunrise and
16 sunset; and

17 “(E) except as provided in paragraph (2),
18 not less than 5 statute miles from the geo-
19 graphic center of an airport with an operational
20 air traffic control tower or an airport denoted
21 on a current aeronautical chart published by
22 the Federal Aviation Administration.

23 “(2) OPERATION WITHIN 5 STATUTE MILES OF
24 AN AIRPORT.—A micro unmanned aircraft system
25 may be operated within 5 statute miles of an airport
26 described in paragraph (1)(E) if, before the micro

1 unmanned aircraft system is operated within 5 statute miles of the airport, the operator of the micro
2 unmanned aircraft system—

3 “(A) provides notice to the airport operator; and

4 “(B) in the case of an airport with an operational air traffic control tower, receives approval from the air traffic control tower.

5 “(b) EXEMPTIONS FOR OPERATORS OF MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.—Notwithstanding sections
6 44703 and 44711 of title 49, United States Code, part
7 61 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, or any other
8 provision of a statute, rule, or regulation relating to airman certification, any person may operate a micro unmanned aircraft system in accordance with subsection (a)
9 without being required—

10 “(1) to pass any aeronautical knowledge test;

11 “(2) to meet any age or experience requirement;

12 or

13 “(3) to obtain an airman certificate or medical certificate.

14 “(c) EXEMPTION FROM AIRWORTHINESS STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 447 of
15 title 49, United States Code, or any other provision of a
16 statute, rule, or regulation relating to certification of air-

1 craft or aircraft parts or equipment, a micro unmanned
 2 aircraft system operated in accordance with subsection (a)
 3 and component parts and equipment for that system shall
 4 not be required to meet airworthiness certification stand-
 5 ards or to obtain an airworthiness certificate.

6 “(d) EXEMPTIONS FROM OPERATIONAL REGULA-
 7 TIONS.—

8 “(1) PART 91 REGULATIONS.—Sections 91.7(a),
 9 91.119(c), 91.121, 91.151(a)(1), 91.405(a), and
 10 91.407(a)(1), paragraphs (1) and (2) of section
 11 91.409(a), and subsections (a) and (b) of section
 12 91.417 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations,
 13 shall not apply with respect to the operation of a
 14 micro unmanned aircraft system in accordance with
 15 subsection (a).

16 “(2) CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER OR AUTHORIZA-
 17 TION.—A micro unmanned aircraft system operated
 18 in accordance with subsection (a) may be operated
 19 by any person without a certificate of authorization
 20 or waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration.

21 “(3) FUTURE REGULATIONS.—A micro un-
 22 manned aircraft system operated in accordance with
 23 subsection (a), and the operator of such a system,
 24 shall be exempt from any additional requirements
 25 that may be prescribed pursuant to this subtitle

1 after the date of the enactment of the Micro Drone
2 Safety and Innovation Act of 2016.

3 “(e) ALTERNATIVE REGULATIONS.—Instead of being
4 operated in accordance with subsection (a), a micro un-
5 manned aircraft may be operated pursuant to any form
6 of authorization, operational rules, or exemptions per-
7 taining to unmanned aircraft systems prescribed by the
8 Administrator, except that a micro unmanned aircraft and
9 its operator shall be exempt from any requirement for an
10 airman certificate or medical certificate.

11 “(f) MICRO UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM DE-
12 FINED.—In this section, the term ‘micro unmanned air-
13 craft system’ means an unmanned aircraft system the air-
14 craft component of which weighs not more than 4.4
15 pounds, including payload.”.

16 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
17 for the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 is
18 amended by inserting after the item relating to section
19 336 the following:

“Sec. 337. Operation of micro unmanned aircraft systems.”.

