

ASSEMBLY, No. 4761

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 8, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Permits public utilities and cable television companies to operate unmanned aircraft systems to inspect storm or other damage.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning the operation of unmanned aircraft systems by
2 public utilities and cable television companies and
3 supplementing Title 48 of the Revised Statutes.

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5 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

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8 1. a. The board shall adopt, pursuant to the "Administrative
9 Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and
10 regulations permitting a public utility and cable television company
11 to operate an unmanned aircraft system in this State for the
12 inspection of damage, as the result of a storm or other event, to any
13 public utility or cable television company property within this State,
14 provided that the public utility and cable television company
15 operate the unmanned aircraft system in a manner consistent with
16 applicable federal law and regulations. Nothing in this section shall
17 be construed to affect any federal preemption of State law
18 governing aviation.

19 b. For purposes of this section:

20 "Cable television company" shall have the same meaning as
21 provided in section 3 of P.L.1972, c.186 (C.48:5A-3);

22 "Operate" shall have the same meaning as provided in section 1
23 of P.L.2017, c.315 (C.2C:40-27);

24 "Public utility" shall have the same meaning as provided in
25 R.S.48:2-13;

26 "Unmanned aircraft" shall have the same meaning as provided in
27 section 1 of P.L.2017, c.315 (C.2C:40-27); and

28 "Unmanned aircraft system" shall have the same meaning as
29 provided in section 1 of P.L.2017, c.315 (C.2C:40-27).

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31 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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34 STATEMENT

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36 This bill directs the Board of Public Utilities to adopt rules and
37 regulations permitting public utilities (utilities) and cable television
38 (CATV) companies to operate unmanned aircraft, commonly known
39 as drones, in this State. The operation of the drones is to be for the
40 inspection of damage, as the result of a storm or other event, to any
41 utility or CATV company property within this State. The use of
42 drones is to help facilitate the quick identification of damaged
43 infrastructure to efficiently restore the associated service in a timely
44 manner. The bill provides that the utilities and CATV companies
45 are to operate the drones in a manner consistent with applicable
46 federal law and regulations. Nothing in this bill is to be construed to
47 affect federal preemption of State law governing aviation.