**[Insert Date]**

The Honorable **[Insert Name]**

**[Insert complete address]**

Dear **[Insert last name of Rep. Senator or Governor]**

I would like to express serious concern with pending legislation before the California Senate. On 29 January 2014, Assembly Bill 1327 was ordered to the Senate and this bill would generally prohibit public agencies from using unmanned aircraft systems, or contracting for the use of unmanned aircraft systems, as defined, with certain exceptions applicable to law enforcement agencies and in certain other cases.

**[Insert personal paragraph about you, company location and your company’s role in the UAS industry and any relevant job and economic data]**. AB1327 would fundamentally change current search warrant requirements used by law enforcement, which have been established by decades of U.S. Supreme Court case precedent, and they would treat manned and unmanned aircraft differently, although they are capable of gathering the same data. I believe this legislation will not only hinder the ability of UAS to assist police, firefighters and other first responders in keeping California communities safe, but also jeopardize current and future manufacturing jobs in California in the rapidly growing unmanned systems sector. I urge you to give the following facts serious consideration:

* AB1327 states that:
  + A law enforcement agency may not use a drone to gather evidence or other information unless it has obtained a search warrant based on probable cause
  + The bill does allow for some very limited exceptions, for example, a law enforcement agency, without obtaining a warrant, may use an unmanned aircraft system in emergency situations if there is an imminent threat to life or of great bodily harm, including, but not limited to, fires, hostage crises, “hot pursuit” situations if reasonably necessary to prevent harm to law enforcement officers or others, and search and rescue operations on land or water.
  + The bill would create a new legal framework that would treat the use of unmanned aircraft significantly different than manned aviation, which police have been using for decades, and the U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed
* AB1327 will stifle law enforcement’s ability to utilize unmanned aircraft in important, non-intrusive capacities such as:
  + Search and rescue missions
  + Locating missing persons, including children and senior citizens
  + Aerial photography of crime scenes and car accidents
  + Responding to natural disasters, such as hurricanes
  + Providing situational awareness during hostage situations, the execution of high-risk warrants, or other situations where the safety of public safety officers is in jeopardy

The International Association of Chiefs of Police, the world’s largest police organization, issued recommended policies and procedures for law enforcement’s use of UAS to ensure the technology is used safely and responsibly.

Rather than banning the use of UAS and the benefits they provide, law enforcement should be encouraged to adopt these regulations, which even won praise from the ACLU. The UAS industry issued a Code of Conduct, which addresses the safe and responsible use of UAS.

As you are well aware, public safety agencies see tremendous benefits in using UAS. They have the capability to help police and firefighters, who put themselves into harm’s way every day to protect the communities they serve, do their job safely and efficiently. A UAS flying over a structure fire can provide firefighters with critical situational awareness, while reducing the danger to which they are exposed. A UAS flying over a wooded area can help police searching for a missing child quickly, when time is of the essence. And in times of tight budgets, UAS can provide the same capability of a manned helicopter at a fraction of the operational cost, saving taxpayer dollars.

I am also greatly concerned about the impact of this legislation on the California economy. This bill could cost California jobs as California is a national leader in UAS development, and is poised to benefit economically from the advancement of this technology. Based on the current UAS activity in California, that the unmanned aircraft industry is poised to create more than 12,292 new jobs in California the first three years following the integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) into U.S. national airspace system (NAS). Integration is scheduled to take place in 2015. Beyond the first three years, the study projects that more than 18,161 new jobs will be created in California by 2025.

Not only would future job prospects dim, but current businesses and those they employ would be at risk. More than 90 companies that manufacture unmanned systems and account for over 36,740 job with an annual economic impact of $2.6B have a footprint in California. If AB1327 were to pass, the usefulness of an unmanned aircraft for law enforcement will be almost totally nullified, create an unfriendly environment for these companies, which as a result might look to take our business, as well as jobs, elsewhere.

I greatly appreciate your support for the advancement of UAS technology as a tool to save time, save money and more importantly, save lives. I ask you to oppose AB1327, which will hinder a remarkable technology and everyone who might one day be helped by it.

Sincerely,

Enclosures