
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WATER RESCUES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that unmanned aerial
2 vehicles, more commonly known as drones, can be effectively
3 deployed to save lives. Drone technology has now advanced to
4 the point where specialized drones, such as the Pars Aerial
5 Rescue Robot, have the ability to drop life preservers to
6 swimmers in distress. These drones are now being mass produced,
7 and are undergoing testing in places like Chile and Florida.

8 The legislature further finds that eight million visitors
9 come to Hawaii each year, and as a result, county lifeguards
10 must work tirelessly to monitor ocean hazards and rescue
11 swimmers who need help, oftentimes jeopardizing their own safety
12 in the process. Rescue drones are by no means replacements for
13 human lifeguards, but could be invaluable in helping lifeguards
14 rescue swimmers in the ocean or other marine environments.
15 Giving counties the option of utilizing drones to conduct water
16 rescues would greatly enhance the overall ability of lifeguards
17 to conduct water rescues safely, while minimizing hazards to



1 rescue personnel. Moreover, drones could be useful in areas not
2 monitored by lifeguards; in such situations, drones could assist
3 in a rescue while human help is on the way.

4 The legislature sadly notes that on January 16, 2016,
5 twelve Marines could not be found after two helicopters crashed
6 off of the island of Oahu. After five days of search and rescue
7 operations, the Marine Corps changed the status of those Marines
8 from missing to deceased. These service members all earned
9 various decorations and were members of Marine Heavy Helicopter
10 Squadron 463, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
11 stationed at the Kaneohe Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Had such
12 authorization to use ocean rescue drones been in place, perhaps
13 these service members would have been timely found.

14 The purpose of this Act is to make Hawaii a safer place to
15 live and visit by authorizing the counties to utilize drones in
16 water rescue operations, provided that all necessary clearances
17 have been obtained from the federal government.

18 SECTION 2. Chapter 46, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
19 by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately designated
20 and to read as follows:

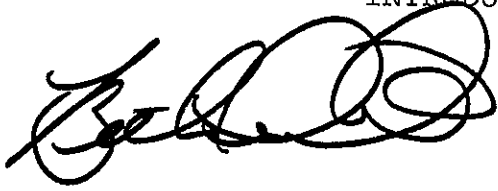


1 "546- Unmanned aerial vehicles; water rescues. The
 2 counties shall have the authority to purchase and utilize
 3 unmanned aerial vehicles, also known as drones, to drop life
 4 preservers or other personal flotation devices to swimmers in
 5 distress; provided that all necessary clearances,
 6 authorizations, or waivers have been obtained from the federal
 7 government."

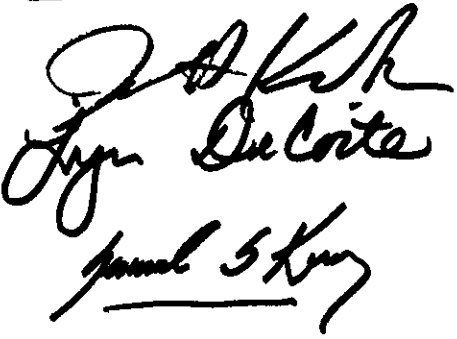
8 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

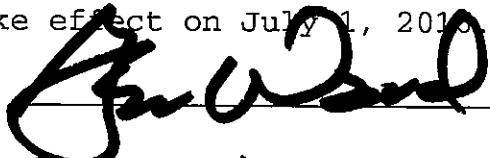
9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

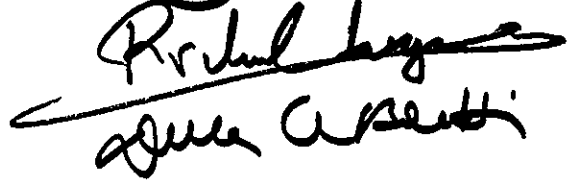
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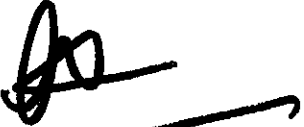

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Paul McDermott







H.B. NO. 1914

Report Title:

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles; Water Rescues.

Description:

Authorizes the counties to utilize unmanned aerial vehicles or drones in water rescue operations, provided that all necessary clearances have been obtained from the federal government.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

