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[H.R. 1646, Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act, as amended](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, June 23, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 1646](#), *the Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act, as amended*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 1646 was introduced on March 26, 2015, by Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) and was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The Homeland Security Committee ordered the bill reported, as amended, by voice vote, on May 20, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 1646 requires the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense, Transportation, Energy, and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, to research how commercially available small and medium sized unmanned aircraft, (excluding aircraft over 1,300 pounds) could be used to perpetuate an attack.

The Secretary would be required to develop policies, guidance, and protocols for DHS to prevent such an attack or mitigate the risks of such an attack based on that research, and would be authorized to share such information with stakeholders consulted in its development. The bill also requires the DHS Secretary to disseminate information to State, local, and tribal law enforcement officials regarding how such officials may bolster preparedness for and responses to attacks perpetrated by commercially available small and medium sized unmanned aerial systems.

The bill further requires the Secretary, not later than one year after enactment, to submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an assessment of the security threat associated with the commercial availability of small and medium sized unmanned aerial systems. The report must be informed by research required by the bill and may be developed in coordination with the DHS Centers of Excellence and other academic institutions.

Finally, the bill prohibits new funds from being authorized for its implementation.

BACKGROUND

In May 2008, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a [report](#) recommending that “to ensure that appropriate Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) security controls are in place regarding routine access to the national airspace system, the Secretary of Homeland Security should direct the Transportation Security Administration Administrator to examine the security implications of future, non-military UAS operations in the national airspace system and take any actions deemed appropriate.”¹ At the time the report was issued, DHS “acknowledged that security of UAS was important but expressed satisfaction that no further action was necessary, as its existing procedures were sufficient.”² The Department “has never conducted a comprehensive security assessment of the threat posed by small and medium size commercially available UAS and no entity has been tasked with leading the Federal effort in this area.”³

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 1646 would cost \$3 million in fiscal year 2016, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Because enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

¹ See Fact Sheet—[“Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act”](#)

² Id.

³ Id.