




**COUNCILMEMBER CHRIS CATE
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
SIXTH DISTRICT**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: April 11, 2016

TO: Councilmember Marti Emerald, Chair, Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee

FROM: Councilmember Chris Cate 

SUBJECT: Request for the Office of Homeland Security to Present Proposed Ordinance Relating to Unmanned Aircraft Systems

I respectfully request that the Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee docket a presentation by the City of San Diego's Office of Homeland Security (OHS) regarding a draft ordinance relating to the operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems at the next available committee meeting.

The use of unmanned aircraft systems, better known as drones, has grown increasingly popular among a large spectrum of user groups. The drone industry is important and rapidly growing. The technology that is constantly being developed from the industry is exciting in its potential to dramatically impact and improve many aspects of society, such as supporting law enforcement operations and streamlining and enhancing private sector operations. We must do what we can to help foster this industry and ensure that it thrives.

However, as the number of hobbyist and commercial drone users grow, municipalities should be proactive in creating sensible rules that ensure the safe and responsible use of this technology, while maintaining the ability for the industry to grow. As the Councilmember who represents the largest municipal airport in San Diego, Montgomery Field, ensuring the public safety of the communities surrounding airports is one of my top priorities. The City of San Diego's OHS has worked closely with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as well as a variety of stakeholders over the past several months to draft an ordinance that contains basic and common-sense regulations relating to the operation of drones. Also, my office has worked closely with OHS throughout this process to offer thoughts and feedback.

The provisions of this ordinance codify current FAA regulations as it pertains to drone usage. It will give the police department the ability to address a number of very real public safety concerns, especially as it relates to interference with aircrafts and airports. This ordinance, coupled with a larger effort focused on educating user groups on safe drone operation, will ensure we have the tools necessary to promote safe usage of drones.

As such, I respectfully request that the Committee on Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods have the Office of Homeland Security present its proposed drone ordinance to the committee.

cc: Scott Chadwick, Chief Operating Officer
John Valencia, Executive Director, Office of Homeland Security