



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Cassandra Harris 586-7148

Date: December 30, 2013

State of Hawaii Poised to Take Part in FAA Drone Testing

Honolulu- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced today the selection of six institutions to test unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in sites located across several states in the US, including the State of Hawaii.

The University of Alaska was amongst the list of institutions elected by the FAA, and will test UAS in seven climatic zones with test sites range locations in Hawaii and Oregon.

“I am pleased to see the work of the Hawaii State Office of Aerospace Development come to fruition as the federal government has identified our islands as an ideal location for UAS research,” said Senator Will Espero, Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs. “This research has the potential to grow and diversify our economy, bringing high paying jobs to our residents. It will enhance Hawaii as a test site for technology and robotics.”

The proposed research plan includes development of a set of standards for unmanned aircraft categories, state monitoring and navigation. In addition, Alaska plans to work on safety standards for UAS.

“UAS have a multitude of benefits including emergency preparedness, disaster responses, search and rescue, weather research and data collection, invasive species control, ocean and other scientific research,” said Espero. “Policymakers need to define the line with which government and the private sector may operate drones to protect the privacy of all citizens.”

During the 2012 Legislative Session, the Hawaii State Legislature passed [Senate Concurrent Resolution 137 SD1 HD1](#), requesting the Office of Aerospace Development to develop and promote a partnership in aerospace with the State of Alaska to expand and diversify both states’ economies and the United States Space Program. The Legislature also passed [Senate Resolution 73 SD1](#), requesting the director of the Office of Aerospace Development to coordinate comments and identify a lead entity to prepare a proposal, on behalf of the state, for Hawaii to be selected as one of the Federal Aviation Administration’s six unmanned aircraft system test sites.

###