



DRONE ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

Guidance and Information: FCC Comments on Proposed Import Ban

Reminder: When submitting your comments, personal stories are the most impactful and compelling – as are those that directly address some of the FCC’s questions. This document includes some of the questions the FCC seeks to address, as well as a few ideas to get you started and some general information about the impact of the FCC’s actions and how Americans use drones across a wide range of industries.

Select Questions the FCC Has Asked Commenters

- Are there drones or components that are caught up in the proposed restrictions that are not “military-grade?”
- How would the proposed action impact the financial interests of consumers?
- What are supply chain considerations that factor into the proposed restrictions?
- Are there domestically-produced alternatives for the drones that would be impacted?
- Would the proposal be cost-effective for the public?
- Are there other public interest considerations that should factor in when considering whether to move forward with this proposal?

Sample Points for Specific Industries/Use Cases

You know your story best, so share your own experiences, thoughts, and opinions! However, below are some stats and ideas to get you thinking:

- **Law Enforcement & First Responders**
 - According to a 2024 Airborne International Response Team survey, more than 80% of state and local law enforcement drone programs used DJI drones in their fleet, and nearly 25% had Autel drones in their fleet. These drones are used for keeping communities safe, including to find missing people, support SWAT teams and document crime scenes.
 - Thermal imaging drones, which would be caught up in proposed restrictions, are essential for public safety – finding heat signatures of missing hikers, spotting hotspots during wildfires, and more.
 - When a drone finds a missing child or documents a crime scene, that does not pose a national security risk, but not having access to that technology *could* put Americans at risk.
- **Agriculture**
 - According to the [American Spray Drone Coalition](#), Chinese-manufactured drones accounted for more than 75% of the agricultural spray drone market in the United States last year.
 - DJI's Agras series is the operational backbone of precision agriculture for thousands of American farms. In fact, the [Pilot Institute](#) found that 70% of agricultural drone users have a fleet entirely made up of DJI drones.
 - Farmers use these platforms for crop spraying, field mapping, irrigation monitoring, and livestock management — applications where accuracy and reliability are not optional.

- Without access to spray drones, which would be caught up in proposed restrictions, farmers face degraded performance, decreased yields, and no viable path to next-generation precision agriculture tools without incurring additional costs.
- This is not a theoretical future harm. Farmers are already making contingency plans for a supply chain that may not be there in two years – and [nearly half](#) of agricultural drone operators report that they would not pay an additional premium to purchase domestic alternatives.
- That will translate into reduced capabilities or added costs for American farmers, and 31% of agricultural drone users [report](#) that they may shut down their business altogether.

- **Creatives, Journalists & News Media**

- Foreign-manufactured drones have become essential for aerial cinematography, documentary production, and news gathering. From independent filmmakers to major broadcast networks, the platform is woven into how American stories are told from the air.
- News organizations rely on these drones to cover natural disasters, floods, political events, and breaking news in real time.
- Restricting access to updated technology directly impairs the ability of journalists to inform the public.
- The creative economy — film, television, advertising, real estate media — built workflows around foreign-manufactured drones because no comparable alternative exists at the same price point or with features that are specialized for consumer or business users, rather than military or specialized industrial use.
- Cutting off access to consumer and enterprise drones does not make America safer. It makes American storytelling more expensive and less competitive globally.

- **Small Businesses**

- Tens of thousands of American small businesses — real estate photographers, infrastructure inspectors, construction surveyors, environmental consultants — built their service offerings around technology that could be impacted by the proposed import bans.
- These are not corporations with the resources to absorb a platform transition. They are sole proprietors and small teams who invested in these models because they were the best tool for the job. They include utility teams that use thermal imaging to sense leaks of hazardous materials, surveyors that use high-end drone models with LiDAR capabilities, and more.
- No transition funding, no replacement pathway, and no domestic alternative at a similar price point or with similar capabilities has been offered. The burden falls entirely on the small business owner to forge a new path if their current drones require repair or replacement.
- Because of this, a [Pilot Institute](#) survey found that 43% of drone business users believe that they would face an extremely negative or even business-ending impact due to the placement of foreign-made drones on the Covered List restrictions, including 29% of sole proprietors.
- Even those that would continue operations report other impacts, including higher costs, lower margins, or having to shift their business model away from drones to other services.