



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

July 1, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is in response to Senate Report 115-138, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2018. The report recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) develop an online training for recreational operators of small unmanned aircraft, and an Online Aeronautical Knowledge test for remote pilot certificates. The report also asks FAA to report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 120 days of enactment.

To mitigate the possibility of cheating and to authenticate a new remote pilot for Transportation Security Agency (TSA) vetting, the FAA has determined that initial issuance of a 14 CFR part 107 certificate will continue to require in-person authentication at a knowledge-testing center. It is imperative the testing methodology used will provide for positive identification of the individual gaining access to the National Airspace System. In addition, with test questions pulled from a test bank with a finite number of questions, limiting access to knowledge-testing centers ensures the continued security and integrity of the test questions.

The FAA is not aware of another Federal agency that has successfully implemented an online knowledge testing system for imparting new privileges that can directly affect the safety of non-participating persons or property. The FAA acknowledges that there are States that have, or are considering, online testing for driver's tests. However, in all such cases, States require an in-person practical driving test for issuing a driver's license, which helps mitigate any risks associated with online knowledge testing. Part 107 does not require an equivalent in-person practical test.

The FAA does provide online education programs through the [FAASafety.gov](https://www.faa.gov) website. In addition, the FAA's [DroneZone](https://www.faa.gov/Dronezone/) found at <https://www.faa.gov/Dronezone/> provides links to FAA guidance for novice remote pilots on the operating rules of 14 CFR part 107, an introduction to airspace concepts, and resources for preparing the initial 14 CFR part 107 knowledge test. These webpages are designed to be useful to novices and experienced pilots alike. They contain a

wealth of resources on drone safety, basic principles of aircraft registration, guidance on operating as a recreational user or 14 CFR part 107, guidance for waiver applicants, and more.

We have sent identical letters to Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairwoman Lowey, and Ranking Member Granger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DK Elwell". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the first name "DK" being more prominent and the last name "Elwell" following in a similar style.

Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator



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July 1, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman:

This letter is in response to Senate Report 115-138, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2018. The report recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) develop an online training for recreational operators of small unmanned aircraft, and an Online Aeronautical Knowledge test for remote pilot certificates. The report also asks FAA to report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 120 days of enactment.

To mitigate the possibility of cheating and to authenticate a new remote pilot for Transportation Security Agency (TSA) vetting, the FAA has determined that initial issuance of a 14 CFR part 107 certificate will continue to require in-person authentication at a knowledge-testing center. It is imperative the testing methodology used will provide for positive identification of the individual gaining access to the National Airspace System. In addition, with test questions pulled from a test bank with a finite number of questions, limiting access to knowledge-testing centers ensures the continued security and integrity of the test questions.

The FAA is not aware of another Federal agency that has successfully implemented an online knowledge testing system for imparting new privileges that can directly affect the safety of non-participating persons or property. The FAA acknowledges that there are States that have, or are considering, online testing for driver's tests. However, in all such cases, States require an in-person practical driving test for issuing a driver's license, which helps mitigate any risks associated with online knowledge testing. Part 107 does not require an equivalent in-person practical test.

The FAA does provide online education programs through the [FAASafety.gov](https://www.faa.gov) website. In addition, the FAA's DroneZone found at <https://www.faa.gov/Dronezone/> provides links to FAA guidance for novice remote pilots on the operating rules of 14 CFR part 107, an introduction to airspace concepts, and resources for preparing the initial 14 CFR part 107 knowledge test. These webpages are designed to be useful to novices and experienced pilots alike. They contain a

wealth of resources on drone safety, basic principles of aircraft registration, guidance on operating as a recreational user or 14 CFR part 107, guidance for waiver applicants, and more.

We have sent identical letters to Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Shelby, and Vice Chairman Leahy.

Sincerely,

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Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator



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July 1, 2019

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Vice Chairman Leahy:

This letter is in response to Senate Report 115-138, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2018. The report recommends that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) develop an online training for recreational operators of small unmanned aircraft, and an Online Aeronautical Knowledge test for remote pilot certificates. The report also asks FAA to report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 120 days of enactment.

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wealth of resources on drone safety, basic principles of aircraft registration, guidance on operating as a recreational user or 14 CFR part 107, guidance for waiver applicants, and more.

We have sent identical letters to Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey, and Ranking Member Granger.

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Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator



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July 1, 2019

The Honorable Kay Granger
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Granger:

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wealth of resources on drone safety, basic principles of aircraft registration, guidance on operating as a recreational user or 14 CFR part 107, guidance for waiver applicants, and more.

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Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator