

1 State of Arkansas As Engrossed: H3/4/25 H3/10/25 H3/18/25

2 95th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1504

4

5 By: Representative S. Meeks

6 By: Senator M. Johnson

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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFENSE OF MANUFACTURING,
10 MODIFYING, SELLING, TRANSFERRING, OR OPERATING A
11 ROBOTIC DEVICE OR AN UNCREWED AIRCRAFT THAT IS
12 EQUIPPED OR MOUNTED WITH A WEAPON; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.

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Subtitle

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18 TO CREATE THE OFFENSE OF MANUFACTURING,
19 MODIFYING, SELLING, TRANSFERRING, OR
20 OPERATING A ROBOTIC DEVICE OR AN
21 UNCREWED AIRCRAFT THAT IS EQUIPPED OR
22 MOUNTED WITH A WEAPON.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 5, Subtitle 6, is amended to add an additional chapter to read as follows:

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Chapter 80 – Robotic Devices and Uncrewed Aircraft

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5-80-101. Definitions.

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As used in this chapter:

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(1) "Robot competition" means an event or instructional course or meeting organized and supervised by an educational institution, summer camp, sports league, television or film entertainment company, or similar organization for which reasonable safety precautions have been taken to protect participants, event staff, and spectators;

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(2) "Robotic device means a fully or partially automated



1 mechanical device that:

2 (A) Is capable of locomotion, navigation, or movement on
3 the ground; and

4 (B) Operates at a distance from its operator based on
5 commands or in response to sensor data or a combination of commands and
6 response to sensor data;

7 (3) "Uncrewed aircraft" means an aircraft, as defined by § 5-75-
8 101, that is operated without the possibility of direct human operation or
9 intervention from within or on the aircraft; and

10 (4) "Weapon means a device that is designed to threaten or cause
11 death, incapacitation, or physical injury to a person, including without
12 limitation:

13 (A) A stun gun;

14 (B) A firearm;

15 (C) A machine gun;

16 (D) A chemical agent or irritant;

17 (E) A kinetic impact projectile;

18 (F) A weaponized laser;

19 (G) An explosive device; and

20 (H) A flame thrower.

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22 5-80-102. Unlawful acts.

23 (a) It is unlawful for a person knowingly to manufacture, modify,
24 sell, transfer, or operate a robotic device equipped or mounted with a weapon
25 or an uncrewed aircraft equipped or mounted with a weapon.

26 (b) A person who commits an offense under this section is guilty of a
27 violation and upon conviction shall be fined in a sum of not less than five
28 thousand dollars (\$5,000) nor more than twenty-five thousand dollars
29 (\$25,000).

30 (c) A person who knowingly uses or directs a robotic device equipped
31 or mounted with a weapon or an uncrewed aircraft equipped or mounted with a
32 weapon to commit or facilitate the commission of another offense shall be
33 held criminally liable for that offense as if the person had personally
34 committed the act.

35 (d) This section does not sanction, authorize, prohibit, or regulate
36 the procurement or operation of a robotic device by a governmental entity.

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2 5-80-103. Exceptions.

3 (a) This chapter shall not apply to:

4 (1) A defense industrial company that is under contract with the
5 United States Department of Defense with respect to robotic devices and
6 uncrewed aircraft being developed or produced under that contract;

7 (2) A defense industrial company that obtains a waiver from the
8 Attorney General regarding robotic devices and uncrewed aircraft;

9 (3) A robotics company that obtains a waiver from the Attorney
10 General for the purpose of testing anti-weaponization technologies with
11 respect to robotic devices and uncrewed aircraft;

12 (4)(A) A person operating a nonautonomous robotic device that is
13 designed and built specifically for the purpose of participating in a robot
14 competition and equipped with weapons typically used for the purpose of
15 participating in a robot competition.

16 (B) Subdivision (a)(4)(A) of this section does not allow
17 the use of a firearm on a robotic device used in a robot competition; or

18 (5) A person operating a robotic device equipped with a blank-
19 firing weapon or attachments to a blank-firing weapon when the person is
20 authorized or permitted to acquire and possess a blank-firing weapon or
21 attachments to a blank-firing weapon for use solely as a prop in a motion
22 picture, television program, digital video production, or an entertainment
23 event.

24 (b) It shall not be a violation of this chapter for an individual
25 employed by the United States Government, the state, a county or municipal
26 law enforcement agency, or an accredited bomb squad who is acting in the
27 public performance of his or her duties to operate a robotic device that is
28 equipped or mounted with a weapon or an uncrewed aircraft that is equipped or
29 mounted with a weapon if the individual is doing so for the purpose of the
30 following without limitation:

31 (1) Disposing of explosives or suspected explosives;

32 (2) Developing, evaluating, testing, providing education on, or
33 providing training on a robotic device or an uncrewed aircraft for the
34 purpose of disposing of explosives or suspected explosives;

35 (3) Destroying property in cases where there is an imminent,
36 deadly threat to human life; or

1 (4) Using physical force in compliance with § 5-2-610.

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3 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 16, Chapter 118 is amended to add an
4 additional section to read as follows:

5 16-118-119. Civil action for unlawful use of robotic device or
6 uncrewed aircraft.

7 (a) The Attorney General may bring an action against a person who is
8 suspected of violating this chapter.

9 (b)(1) A person whose property or person is injured by reason of a
10 violation of § 5-80-101 et seq. or rules promulgated pursuant to § 5-80-101
11 et seq. may sue for the injury and recover for any damages sustained and the
12 costs of the suit.

13 (2) A civil action brought under subdivision (b)(1) of this
14 section shall be brought against the government agency alleged to have
15 violated this chapter, or, in the case of an individual, to the person
16 alleged to have violated this chapter.

17 (3) In a civil action in which the plaintiff prevails, a court
18 may award:

19 (A) Liquidated damages of not less than five hundred
20 dollars (\$500) nor more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000);

21 (B) Punitive damages; or

22 (C) Any other relief that the court deems appropriate,
23 including without limitation injunctive relief.

24 (4) In a civil action in which the plaintiff prevails, a court
25 shall award reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

26 (5) A person may not bring a civil action against a law
27 enforcement officer or a member of an accredited bomb squad under subsection
28 (b) of this section for using a robotic device or an uncrewed aircraft in
29 good faith and in the line of duty.

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31 /s/S. Meeks
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