

By: Senator(s) Suber

To: Agriculture; Technology

SENATE BILL NO. 2661

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A NEW SECTION IN TITLE 69, CHAPTER 21,  
2 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO ALLOW FARMERS TO UTILIZE UNMANNED  
3 AERIAL VEHICLES IN AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES; TO REQUIRE THE  
4 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE TO PROMULGATE RULES AND  
5 REGULATIONS REGARDING UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS,  
6 DRONE OPERATOR LICENSING AND DRONE USAGE IN AGRICULTURE; AND FOR  
7 RELATED PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) For the purpose of this section, the  
10 following words shall have the following meanings, unless context  
11 clearly provides otherwise:

12 (a) "Agriculture" or "agricultural" means acts of farming  
13 and raising livestock. Activities that fall within agriculture  
14 include soil preparation, seed planting, crop harvesting,  
15 gardening, viticulture, apiculture, dairying, poultry and  
16 ranching.

17 (b) "Unmanned aerial vehicle" means an unmanned aircraft  
18 system that is remotely controlled or flies autonomously using  
19 software-controlled flight plans in its embedded systems that work  
20 in conjunction with onboard sensors and a global positioning



21 system. An unmanned aerial vehicle is also commonly referred to  
22 as a drone.

23 (2) Farmers, property owners and/or operators who perform  
24 agricultural pursuits and licensed third-party unmanned aerial  
25 vehicle (UAV) technicians may utilize unmanned aerial vehicles to  
26 aid with farming and the performance of agricultural duties.

27 Unmanned aerial vehicles may be used to:

28 (a) Scout pests and diseases that are impacting or  
29 could potentially impact crops, and apply targeted treatments;

30 (b) Monitor plant water stress to help target  
31 irrigation resources and crop needs;

32 (c) Screen and monitor crops and livestock;

33 (d) Monitor livestock movement, count livestock and  
34 detect stray livestock;

35 (e) Create three-dimensional (3D) renderings of animals  
36 to calculate market value and assess forage quality;

37 (f) Apply water, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides,  
38 fertilizers, rodenticides or feed to crops;

39 (g) Create land imaging of a farmer or rancher's  
40 property;

41 (h) Monitor soil conditions and quality;

42 (i) Collect soil and water samples; and

43 (j) Perform any other troubleshooting measures as  
44 deemed safe and effective by the Department of Agriculture and  
45 Commerce.



46           (3) The Mississippi Department of Agriculture shall  
47 promulgate rules and regulations regarding approved unmanned  
48 aerial vehicle specifications, drone operator licensing and drone  
49 usage in agriculture.

50                   **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force  
51 from and after July 1, 2024.

