

My name is Wallace Keller and I am providing this testimony in opposition to HB 1613.

I regret that I cannot testify in-person due to a work conflict.

I do not support this bill as I believe it will potentially place the lives of Law Enforcement and the public in unnecessary jeopardy. Why would you risk a life when you can utilize a machine? I contend this should not even be a question.

Law enforcement agencies may use Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)/Robots for a variety of purposes. For instance, they may use drones/robots to gather intelligence prior to conducting an operation. This can help with identifying where a suspect may be hiding or by visualizing the layout of a building before officers enter. Drones/robots can also be used to support an operation that is underway; for example, by live streaming an operation to monitor where a suspect exited a building or to illuminate where a suspect might have discarded evidence when officers cannot see all the possibilities from the ground or remote locations. Drones/robots can also be used to collect photo evidence in instances where access may be hindered or dangerous. They can also provide remote communications, such as with a hidden suspect or one who has taken hostages—and distance may provide a valuable safety buffer to officers, potential victims, and others nearby. Tethered Surveillance Robots play a crucial role in hostage situations, where human intervention can be risky. Equipped with cameras and two-way communication systems, these robots allow negotiators to establish contact with hostage-takers while maintaining a safe distance. If a person has isolated themselves and potentially others in a closed-off location and refuses to engage with responders, a robot can be deployed to help gain entry and provide situational awareness for the team to evaluate while limiting the risk of creating a life-threatening situation.

Law enforcement generally needs a warrant for surveillance, especially when it involves private property. If law enforcement has any suspicion that criminal activity is being conducted, they will most certainly obtain a search warrant. They do not want to lose any criminal case because of their failure to obtain a warrant.

Good policies developed by law enforcement adhering to State and Federal Constitutional opinions/laws can minimize concerns of any potential civil issues that may arise.

In closing, with good policies, the utilization of drones/robots can enhance law enforcements response to hazardous incidents and keep not only the responding personnel safe, but also the public, with a rapid and safe resolution of serious incidents.

I encourage a **Do Not Pass** in HB 1613

Wallace Keller

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