

25 Jan 21

Senate Appropriations Committee
Chairman Ray Holmberg
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Grand Forks, ND 58201
rholmberg@nd.gov

From: Matt Dunlevy, CEO & Chairman, SkySkopes

Subject: Recommendation to Amend Commerce Budget

To the Honorable Chairman Holmberg and Committee,

Having worked for years in the UAS industry, it is clear to me that the need for UAS training in North Dakota is essential to the continued development of, and leadership position with, UAS in North Dakota. The UAS program at Williston State College and TrainND Northwest is new, but shows as much tremendous promise as any new UAS initiative organized in the state of North Dakota. Through direct collaboration with the organizations, I detect a vision at their program that would certainly drive value for North Dakota in some of the most important sectors of the state's economy, namely UAS, agriculture, and energy. Pilots produced by TrainND would be in a perfect position to take advantage of the new statewide beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) UAS network being constructed in the western side of North Dakota by the Northern Plains UAS Test Site's (NPUASTS) Vantis. This is also an opportune time to engage in such work due to the coincidentally simultaneous success North Dakota now enjoys as a member of the FAA's new Beyond program.

Such an appropriation, to my knowledge would be used to purchase equipment and administer the UAS program. I would suggest this appropriation during this legislative session in order to lay the groundwork to create workforce as soon as possible to take full advantage of Vantis.

Similarly to Vantis, I believe this would keep North Dakota the center of UAS development and operations, while also attracting companies to do UAS business in North Dakota and making the lives of North Dakotans better through advances in UAS in operations.

My understanding is that this would be a one-time appropriation, with lasting, and significant, value for North Dakota. To jump start this program will be to get a leg-up on other states without gold standard training to be adopted in such industries as oil and gas.

Please feel free to reach out to me at matt@skyskopes.com with any questions.

Very respectfully,



Matt Dunlevy
CEO & Chairman