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Overview

This bill restricts the use of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs or drones) by law enforcement agencies, generally requiring a search warrant prior to their deployment. The bill establishes notice and reporting requirements and regulates the use, storage, and disclosure of information gathered by drones. Creates a civil cause of action for those who are aggrieved by violations of the law.

Section

1 Use of unmanned aerial vehicles.

Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines the following terms: “adverse result,” “law enforcement agency,” and “unmanned aerial vehicle.”

Subd. 2. Use of unmanned aerial vehicles limited. Requires a search warrant for a law enforcement agency to operate a UAV.

Subd. 3. Exceptions. (a) Authorizes use of a UAV in an emergency without a warrant, but the law enforcement agency must provide notice to the court no later than 48 hours after deploying the UAV.

(b) Authorizes warrantless use of UAVs to collect information from a public area with prior court approval under certain limited circumstances.

Subd. 4. Limitations on use. Establishes certain limits on the use of UAVs. Requires governing body approval prior to purchasing a UAV. Prohibits the use of

Section

facial recognition or other biometric matching technology unless expressly authorized by a court. Restricts UAV surveillance to the target specified in the warrant. UAVs may not be equipped with weapons.

Subd. 5. Consensual disclosure of information. Allows a person to consent to the use of UAV surveillance data related to them.

Subd. 6. Data retention and classification. Restricts the use of collateral data collected during targeted UAV surveillance to situations where the subject consents under subdivision 5. Requires destruction of data collected outside the scope of the warrant. Classifies UAV surveillance data as criminal investigative data.

Subd. 7. Evidence. Prohibits evidence collected in violation of this section from being admitted in criminal cases.

Subd. 8. Notice. Requires notice to be given to a subject of a search warrant for UAV surveillance. Delayed notice is permitted in limited circumstances.

Subd. 9. Remedies for violation. Authorizes a civil cause of action for aggrieved parties.

Subd. 10. Reporting. Requires law enforcement agencies to report to the legislature on their use of UAVs. Requires an agency to post specified information on the agency's use of UAVs on the agency's Web site. Requires the State Court Administrator to report to the legislature on the number requests for UAV warrants that were filed and granted each year.