

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

July 24, 2014

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

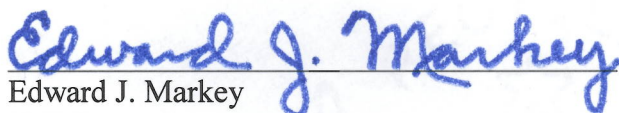
According to a story in Politico (“President Barack Obama to issue executive order on drone privacy”, July 23, 2014), the Administration plans to issue an executive order on privacy to put in place voluntary best practices for the use of commercial unmanned aircraft systems, commonly known as drones, in the United States. That article quotes a White House spokesman as stating “there is an inter-agency process underway” to address privacy issues. While we applaud your efforts to address this pressing national issue, we believe that the federal government should put in place strong, enforceable rules -- not voluntary best practices -- that protect the privacy rights of American citizens.

We recognize the many benefits of drone technology, including economic development, job creation and the capability to perform important tasks such as inspecting pipelines, assessing natural disasters, and tracking volcanic ash. However, as Senate and House authors of the Drone Aircraft Privacy and Transparency Act (S. 1639 and H.R. 2868), we believe only strong, enforceable rules will force potentially bad actors to respect privacy. Although we are confident that most drones users will serve as good actors and follow best practices, we worry about the worst offenders who will take the opportunity to act unrestricted and ignore any voluntary guidelines.

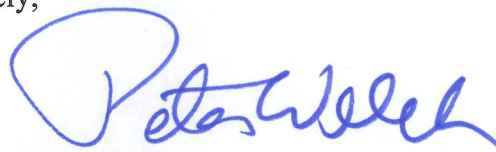
As you consider executive action on drones, we encourage you to include the following in any final plan: 1) Requirements that commercial drone operators disclose what data is collected, how that information is used, whether the data will be sold, and when the information will be deleted; 2) Mandates that law enforcement obtain a warrant before using drones, except in emergency circumstances; and 3) The creation of a publicly-available website that lists where and when drones fly.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with your Administration on this important 21<sup>st</sup> century privacy issue.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
U.S. Senator



Peter Welch  
U.S. Representative