Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2025

The Honorable Bryan Bedford
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Bedford,

We write today in support of the joint application submitted by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and the Applied Research Institute (ARI) to be a recipient for one of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Test Site designations.

Indiana is uniquely situated to best assist the FAA in integrating UAS into the national airspace system as well as advance the United States' capacities for manufacturing and deploying drone technologies. Between the geographical location in the heart of the Midwest, the already numerous testing assets for a variety of missions, and state and federal representatives who are committed to supporting advancement of these critical technologies, our state is poised to provide the best outcomes for American leadership in drone manufacturing and deployment.

Following a clear signal from the Trump Administration, through the Executive Orders (EO) titled "Unleashing American Drone Dominance" and "Restoring American Airspace Sovereignty," now is the time to create an American ecosystem for not just the testing and development, but also the scalable manufacturing of drone technologies.

Indiana has long been one of the most manufacturing-intensive states in the country. While the mission of establishing U.S. drone dominance will rely on the development of advanced drone technologies, it will be even more critical that we can take these newly developed technologies and scale them at a level in which we can deploy them to industries across the country. From applications in defense, agriculture, public safety, and beyond, there is a demand and need for U.S.-developed and produced technologies that address the national security and privacy concerns posed by their foreign-made counterparts. Indiana is also well-positioned to meet the influx of workforce needs that will accompany this growing ecosystem.

Purdue University and other in-state university partners have proven their capabilities to address strategic national needs. With the first university-owned airport in the country, the largest indoor motion capture facility in the world, and a faculty dedicated to addressing the challenges of safely integrating UAS into the national airspace, Purdue hosts many of the assets that will directly contribute to the success of this application.

Indiana's existing military infrastructure is another differentiating factor. Indiana hosts the Technology Readiness and Experimentation (T-REX) initiative at Camp Atterbury, an experimentation program aimed at accelerating the development and adoption of advanced UAS and counter-UAS technologies for the military. This was most notably demonstrated in August 2025 when a first-of-its-kind technology demonstrated the ability to neutralize a 49-drone swarm with a single electromagnetic pulse. The Indiana National Guard also hosts multiple assets with special use airspace to test other capabilities, notably at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC). Naval Surface Warfare Center – Crane (NSWC Crane) is already a leader in the counter-UAS mission with existing efforts to grow as our military aims to expand capabilities and eliminate inefficiencies in the procurement cycle.

ARI's expertise in managing consortia is well known across both state and local government. ARI's position as a state-connected nonprofit allows it to connect industry and government partners with the resources they need. Managing the Silicon Crossroads Hub, Heartland Bioworks tech hub, and the Defense Innovation Unit OnRamp Program, among others, ARI is able to effectively leverage their expertise on the state and federal level to ensure that our national security challenges are addressed in collaboration with industry. This ensures not only the long-term viability of these projects, but a mutually beneficial relationship that will advance dual-use capabilities.

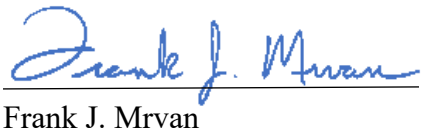
Underscoring these capabilities is a state government that is willing to work with federal counterparts to find solutions. Indiana EO 25-73, signed by Governor Mike Braun on October 29, 2025, is intended to launch a task force with representation across sectors, from industry and academia to military and public safety. The recommendations from this task force will serve to bolster and implement the lessons learned from an official FAA UAS Test Site. The need for enhanced drone development is not limited to one sector, and this task force shows that our state is willing to send a clear signal: Indiana is ready to lead the way.

We are committed to working with the FAA, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Commerce, and all other federal agencies to ensure that the commitment to support this progress on the state level is matched by Indiana's federal representatives. The threat posed by allowing our foreign adversaries to control our domestic supply of drones requires a whole-of-government approach, and Indiana is the right state to lead this initiative. We fully endorse the IEDC and ARI application for an FAA Test Site in Indiana, and we are looking forward to working together to reestablish U.S. drone dominance.

Sincerely,

Todd Young
United States Senator

Jim Banks
United States Senator



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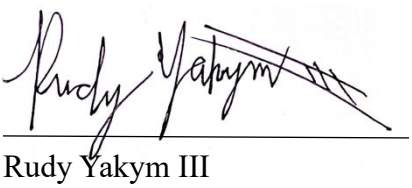

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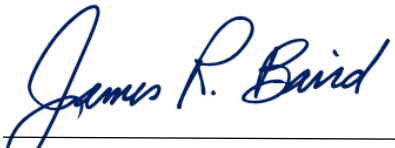

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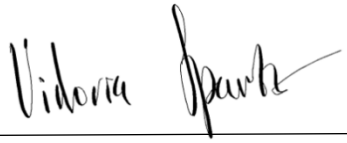

Victoria Spartz
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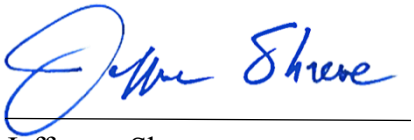

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