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***Amendment to FAA Reauthorization Legislation Authorizes For-Hire
Drone Operations***

On February 11, 2016, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee adopted an amendment to the Aviation Innovation, Reform & Reauthorization Act (AIRR Act) that would allow small unmanned aircraft systems weighing less than 55 pounds (also referred to as "drones" or "sUAS") to carry property on a for-hire basis. The amendment, if ultimately enacted as part of the AIRR Act, would require the Secretary of Transportation to issue a final rule within one year of enactment. The amendment also calls for the establishment of a pilot program developing an unmanned aircraft traffic management system (UTM) for low altitude operations. The amendment was introduced by U.S. Congressman Scott Perry of Pennsylvania. In addition to Mr. Perry's amendment, the AIRR Act contains a section directing the FAA to create a risk-based permitting procedure for all UAS. These developments are separate and apart from the new rules regarding sUAS operations proposed by the FAA on February 15, 2015. The AIRR Act will next be considered by the full House.

The Scopelitis Firm is following the AIRR Act and its potential impact on the commercial use of drones—both to delivery of property for hire and for other purposes—very closely. If you have questions about these developments, please contact Prasad Sharma at psharma@scopelitis.com, Jacob Fisher at jfisher@scopelitis.com, Craig Helmreich at chelmreich@scopelitis.com, or JT Young at jyoung@scopelitis.com. The Firm's general telephone line is 317-637-1777.