

March 24, 2020

Stephen Dickson
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
800 Independence Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Dickson:

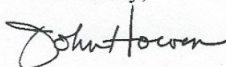
The fight against COVID-19 requires as much ingenuity and creativity as we can muster. I write in support of a letter sent last week from Nicholas Flom, director of the Northern Plains UAS Test Site to Jay Merkle, the head of the FAA's UAS Integration Office, calling for you to exercise your existing authorities to waive certain regulations and enable critical drone deliveries and services.

The 2018 FAA Reauthorization Act includes language that allows you to waive requirements of and regulations associated with Section 44711 of Title 49. Doing so would allow small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to get in the air now and deliver essential goods and supplies wherever necessary. The UAS industry has the capacity and the technical capability to do this as soon as appropriate waivers are in place.

Safety is a top priority, even in an emergency situation. I believe that waivers can be appropriately tailored to ensure public safety. Industry, in coordination with the Northern Plains UAS Test Site, can ensure aircraft are safe to fly, operate in safe areas and are capable of carrying necessary goods and supplies where needed. The FAA can work with the test site, industry partners and appropriate federal, state and local agencies to determine the places with most urgent needs and those where drone delivery might yield the greatest benefit at the lowest level of risk.

Please give expedited consideration to this request, which has the potential provide vital assistance to our national effort to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak. I look forward to working with you to clear regulatory barriers to enable our nation to overcome this epidemic.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
U.S. Senator