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ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP

**Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky in Support of HB 5274, AAC The Use of
Drones**

Before the Public Safety Committee

March 1, 2016 Rm. 2E

I am ranking member of Program Review and Investigations Committee, and was co-chair with Sen. Kissel for the drones study. We chose to study drones in 2014 to assist the Judiciary Committee because of developing issues:

- The industry was taking off, but statutes were not keeping pace;
- Drones were becoming low cost; we knew hobbyists would want them; and
- Issues of safety, privacy and police use were rising.

After 6 months of research, PRI determined the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has predominant jurisdiction, but states can regulate official government use and ban weaponization of drones. In 2015 the Senate passed our bill, but too late in the session for the House to take it up. Late in 2015, the FAA finally acted to register drone operators.

This session, PRI raised and heard only the weaponization section of last year's bill, aware Public Safety would be hearing the entire bill. In initial bill screening yesterday, we leaned towards not allowing anyone to weaponized a drone, including civilians and the police, due to the aerial nature of these devices. We will clarify that police can use robots as they are not aerial devices, and are less prone to error.

Finally, we are likely to make the effective date of the weaponization section "on passage" rather than Oct. 1st because of the continued, irresponsible behavior of one hobbyist and recommend that change. We will share our revised language with your committee and hopefully work together with you as this bill goes forward. Thank you for your interest in drone regulation.