

Submitter: Anthony Estrada

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1186

Drones are powerful tools that enable widespread surveillance with limited manpower required. They can be used to serve the public good. They also track the activities and movements of whoever and whatever is in their line of sight, which is expansive. This power shouldn't be wielded lightly. This is why the law requires law enforcement officers to obtain a warrant before using drone technology. The current law honors our right to privacy and to be free from unnecessary surveillance. It's good and reasonable that an objective 3rd-party approve the proposed use of drones before they can be employed. The current law also limits the period during which drone use is authorized without the need for a new warrant. The proposed revisions to the law lack any time constraints, or meaningful checks of any kind.

The law as written already includes an exception for exigent circumstances that permit circumvention of the warrant requirement. The current regulations balance the interests of efficiency with those of personal liberty. The proposed revisions don't consider this balance or provide meaningful restraint on law enforcement's ability to use this powerful technology.

This measure is drafted so broadly as to apply to circumstances far beyond those cited by advocates as justifying the change in law.

Being under law enforcement surveillance is a chilling experience regardless of whether one has engaged in any wrongdoing. We have laws in place to ensure that the use of drone technology is used only when necessary and only for however long is necessary. The proposed revisions undermine the values and rights protected by those laws.

Vote no on this bill.