

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H3/4/25 H3/10/25 H3/18/25 H3/20/25*

2 95th General Assembly

# A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1504

5 By: Representative S. Meeks

6 By: Senator M. Johnson

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFENSE OF MANUFACTURING,  
10 MODIFYING, SELLING, TRANSFERRING, OR OPERATING A  
11 ROBOTIC DEVICE OR AN UNCREWED AIRCRAFT THAT IS  
12 EQUIPPED OR MOUNTED WITH A WEAPON; AND FOR OTHER  
13 PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

17 TO CREATE THE OFFENSE OF MANUFACTURING,  
18 MODIFYING, SELLING, TRANSFERRING, OR  
19 OPERATING A ROBOTIC DEVICE OR AN  
20 UNCREWED AIRCRAFT THAT IS EQUIPPED OR  
21 MOUNTED WITH A WEAPON.

23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 5, Subtitle 6, is amended to add an  
26 additional chapter to read as follows:

27 Chapter 80 – Robotic Devices and Uncrewed Aircraft

29 5-80-101. Definitions.

30 As used in this chapter:

31 (1) "Robot competition" means an event or instructional course  
32 or meeting organized and supervised by an educational institution, summer  
33 camp, sports league, television or film entertainment company, or similar  
34 organization for which reasonable safety precautions have been taken to  
35 protect participants, event staff, and spectators;

36 (2) "Robotic device" means a fully or partially automated



1 mechanical device that:

2 (A) Is capable of locomotion, navigation, or movement on  
3 the ground; and

4 (B) Operates at a distance from its operator based on  
5 commands or in response to sensor data or a combination of commands and  
6 response to sensor data;

7 (3) "Uncrewed aircraft" means an aircraft, as defined by § 5-75-  
8 101, that is operated without the possibility of direct human operation or  
9 intervention from within or on the aircraft; and

10 (4) "Weapon means a device that is designed to threaten or cause  
11 death, incapacitation, or physical injury to a person, including without  
12 limitation:

13 (A) A stun gun;

14 (B) A firearm;

15 (C) A machine gun;

16 (D) A chemical agent or irritant;

17 (E) A kinetic impact projectile;

18 (F) A weaponized laser;

19 (G) An explosive device; and

20 (H) A flame thrower.

21

22 5-80-102. Unlawful acts.

23 (a)(1) It is unlawful for a person knowingly to manufacture, modify,  
24 sell, transfer, or operate a robotic device equipped or mounted with a weapon  
25 or an uncrewed aircraft equipped or mounted with a weapon.

26 (2) It is unlawful for a person to knowingly modify the  
27 programming of a robotic device for the purpose of harming a human being or  
28 property.

29 (b) A person who commits an offense under this section is guilty of a  
30 violation and upon conviction shall be fined in a sum of not less than five  
31 thousand dollars (\$5,000) nor more than twenty-five thousand dollars  
32 (\$25,000).

33 (c) A person who knowingly uses or directs a robotic device equipped  
34 or mounted with a weapon or an uncrewed aircraft equipped or mounted with a  
35 weapon to commit or facilitate the commission of another offense shall be  
36 held criminally liable for that offense as if the person had personally

1 committed the act.

2 (d) This section does not sanction, authorize, prohibit, or regulate  
3 the procurement or operation of a robotic device by a governmental entity.

4  
5 5-80-103. Exceptions.

6 (a) This chapter shall not apply to:

7 (1) A defense industrial company that is under contract with the  
8 United States Department of Defense with respect to robotic devices and  
9 uncrewed aircraft being developed or produced under that contract;

10 (2) A defense industrial company that obtains a waiver from the  
11 Attorney General regarding robotic devices and uncrewed aircraft;

12 (3) A robotics company that obtains a waiver from the Attorney  
13 General for the purpose of testing anti-weaponization technologies with  
14 respect to robotic devices and uncrewed aircraft;

15 (4)(A) A person operating a nonautonomous robotic device that is  
16 designed and built specifically for the purpose of participating in a robot  
17 competition and equipped with weapons typically used for the purpose of  
18 participating in a robot competition.

19 (B) Subdivision (a)(4)(A) of this section does not allow  
20 the use of a firearm on a robotic device used in a robot competition; or

21 (5) A person operating a robotic device equipped with a blank-  
22 firing weapon or attachments to a blank-firing weapon when the person is  
23 authorized or permitted to acquire and possess a blank-firing weapon or  
24 attachments to a blank-firing weapon for use solely as a prop in a motion  
25 picture, television program, digital video production, or an entertainment  
26 event.

27 (b) It shall not be a violation of this chapter for an individual  
28 employed by the United States Government, the state, a county or municipal  
29 law enforcement agency, or an accredited bomb squad who is acting in the  
30 public performance of his or her duties to operate a robotic device that is  
31 equipped or mounted with a weapon or an uncrewed aircraft that is equipped or  
32 mounted with a weapon if the individual is doing so for the purpose of the  
33 following without limitation:

34 (1) Disposing of explosives or suspected explosives;

35 (2) Developing, evaluating, testing, providing education on, or  
36 providing training on a robotic device or an uncrewed aircraft for the

1 purpose of disposing of explosives or suspected explosives;

2 (3) Destroying property in cases where there is an imminent,  
3 deadly threat to human life; or

4 (4) Using physical force in compliance with § 5-2-610.

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6 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 16, Chapter 118 is amended to add an  
7 additional section to read as follows:

8 16-118-119. Civil action for unlawful use of robotic device or  
9 uncrewed aircraft.

10 (a) The Attorney General may bring an action against a person who is  
11 suspected of violating this chapter.

12 (b)(1) A person whose property or person is injured by reason of a  
13 violation of § 5-80-101 et seq. or rules promulgated pursuant to § 5-80-101  
14 et seq. may sue for the injury and recover for any damages sustained and the  
15 costs of the suit.

16 (2) A civil action brought under subdivision (b)(1) of this  
17 section shall be brought against the government agency alleged to have  
18 violated this chapter, or, in the case of an individual, to the person  
19 alleged to have violated this chapter.

20 (3) In a civil action in which the plaintiff prevails, a court  
21 may award:

22 (A) Liquidated damages of not less than five hundred  
23 dollars (\$500) nor more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000);

24 (B) Punitive damages; or

25 (C) Any other relief that the court deems appropriate,  
26 including without limitation injunctive relief.

27 (4) In a civil action in which the plaintiff prevails, a court  
28 shall award reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

29 (5) A person may not bring a civil action against a law  
30 enforcement officer or a member of an accredited bomb squad under subsection  
31 (b) of this section for using a robotic device or an uncrewed aircraft in  
32 good faith and in the line of duty.

33  
34 /s/S. Meeks