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Contact: Larry Akey, Director of Communications, (202)580-6922 [o] or (202)580-9313 [c]
lakey@constitutionproject.org

TCP Lauds Efforts to Enhance Transparency, Privacy for Drone Use

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Virginia Sloan, president of The Constitution Project, a bipartisan legal watchdog group, offered the following comment in response to the introduction of the Drone Aircraft and Privacy Act by Senator Edward Markey (D-Mass.) earlier today:

"There are clearly beneficial applications of domestic surveillance drones, but without proper safeguards, their use - particularly by law enforcement - poses a serious threat to constitutional rights and values. We applaud Senator Markey for recognizing these concerns, and working proactively to address them."

The legislation establishes clear standards for informing the public about the location, timing, and ownership of the thousands of domestic drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles, expected to fly in American airspace in the coming years. It includes a requirement that law enforcement agencies and their contractors and subcontractors obtain a warrant, except in exigent circumstances, prior to using a drone for surveillance activities.

In [comments filed](#) in 2013 with the Federal Aviation Administration, TCP urged the agency to safeguard First and Fourth Amendment rights by creating limits on the geographic scope that drone surveillance can cover as well as strict rules for law enforcement use of surveillance images obtained. The Constitution Project Liberty and Security Committee earlier published [Guidelines for Public Video Surveillance](#), which recommends a variety of safeguards for government use of surveillance cameras that are equally applicable to aerial cameras on drones.

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Created out of the belief that we must cast aside the labels that divide us in order to keep our

democracy strong, The Constitution Project brings together policy experts and legal practitioners from across the political spectrum to foster consensus-based solutions to the most difficult constitutional challenges of our time through scholarship, advocacy, policy reform and public education initiatives. Established in 1997, TCP is based in Washington, D.C.

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The Constitution Project | 1200 18th Street, NW | Suite 1000 | Washington | DC | 20036