

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 2113 (McKinnor)  
As Amended April 9, 2026  
Majority vote

## SUMMARY

This bill prohibits the operation of an unmanned aircraft within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event.

### Major Provisions

- 1) Prohibits the operation of an unmanned aircraft within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event, except under the following circumstances:
  - a) The person has obtained consent from the venue operator for the ticketed event.
  - b) The person is an employee of the entertainment venue where the ticketed entertainment event is held and is conducting official business.
  - c) The person is an employee of a water, sewer, electrical, telephone, cable, or other regulated utility service provider and is conducting official business.
- 2) Allows each violation to be an infraction punishable by a fine of \$500.
- 3) Defines a "Ticketed entertainment event" as any professional music, sporting, or performing arts event held that meets all of the following requirements:
  - a) It is held in an entertainment venue with the capacity to hold 1,000 or more attendees with gated entries or barriers that prevent access to the general public.
  - b) A revocable license that has been issued by the venue operator of the entertainment venue is required for attendance at the event.
  - c) It is not covered by Federal Aviation Administration restrictions.

## COMMENTS

*Background.* Drones—termed "unmanned aircraft" and "unmanned aircraft systems" in the Government Code—are increasingly used by government, businesses, and private individuals for a variety of purposes, including law enforcement surveillance, monitoring wildfires, package delivery, search and rescue efforts, or simply for fun. Many drones, whether professional or recreational, come equipped with a camera allowing them to record everything they fly over, including live entertainment events.

As recreational drones have become more affordable in recent years, they have become more ubiquitous. The author argues that this proliferation has created new public safety challenges, particularly at large, ticketed entertainment events that draw dense crowds. Outdoor concerts, sporting events, and festivals often host tens of thousands of attendees in confined spaces, where unauthorized drone operations pose risks of injury, disruption, and interference with emergency response efforts.

*FAA drone pilot requirements.* To legally fly a drone for recreational purposes in the United States, a person is required to register their drone, pass an aeronautical knowledge and safety test, and carry proof of passage when flying. These requirements apply to anyone flying a recreational drone that weighs 250 grams (0.55 lbs) or more. For people flying drones under 55 pounds for non-recreational purposes, additional requirements apply, including a requirement to obtain a remote pilot certification, which allows operators to fly drones for work or business.<sup>1</sup>

*FAA restrictions.* The FAA currently prohibits the flying of drones over certain restricted areas, such as airports. In addition, some jurisdictions have created "No Drone Zones" that prohibit the taking off and landing of drones in restricted areas. The FAA provides No Drone Zone signs that can be used by these governments to identify areas where there are local flight restrictions. They do not, however, restrict a person from flying a drone over the area.<sup>2</sup>

The FAA also prohibits the flying of drones in and around sports stadiums beginning one hour before and ending one hour after the scheduled time of any normal or post-season event for any of the following:

- 1) Major League Baseball
- 2) National Football League
- 3) NCAA Division One Football
- 4) NASCAR Sprint Cup, Indy Car, and Champ Series races<sup>3</sup>

*National Security Special Events.* In addition to the stadium restrictions, the FAA establishes temporary flight restrictions (TFR) for certain events that the federal government designates as National Security Special Events. These restrictions apply to both drones and planes. The only exceptions are for emergency, public safety, and military aircraft. During Super Bowl LX at Levi Stadium in Santa Clara, the FAA issued a TFR that restricted air traffic during the week leading up to the game and the game itself. On the day of the game, the TFR had "a 30-nautical-mile outer ring and a more restrictive 10-nautical-mile inner core."<sup>4</sup>

The FAA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) coordinated to enforce several TFRs during the week of the Super Bowl, with special restrictions for drones. These restrictions for drone operators included a no-fly zone within 30 nautical miles and 18,000 feet above Levi Stadium during the game.<sup>5</sup>

This bill proposes a more limited 400-foot restriction. However, it applies that restriction to all entertainment venues and all live entertainment and sports events, including high school sports that require an attendee to obtain a ticket to enter the game.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.faa.gov/uas/recreational\\_flyers](https://www.faa.gov/uas/recreational_flyers)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.faa.gov/uas/resources/community\\_engagement/no\\_drone\\_zone](https://www.faa.gov/uas/resources/community_engagement/no_drone_zone)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting\\_started/where\\_can\\_i\\_fly/airspace\\_restrictions/sports\\_stadiums](https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/where_can_i_fly/airspace_restrictions/sports_stadiums)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/super-bowl-lx-what-general-aviation-pilots-need-know>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/faa-and-fbi-announce-strict-no-drone-zones-super-bowl-lx>

**According to the Author**

"AB 2113 is intended to protect public safety at large, ticketed entertainment events by establishing clear limits on the operation of unmanned aircraft systems (drones) over these venues. With California hosting some of the world's largest concerts, sporting events, and festivals, unauthorized drones pose real risks to attendees, performers, and event personnel. While federal authorities oversee national airspace, local law enforcement often has the best knowledge and capacity to respond quickly to threats at individual venues. This bill empowers local authorities with a clear statutory framework, balancing safety, privacy, and access, to ensure that California's live entertainment and sporting events remain safe, vibrant, and accessible for all residents and visitors."

**Arguments in Support**

Live Nation Entertainment, sponsors of the bill, write in support:

Live events are an integral part of California's economy, attracting millions of visitors each year and driving tens of millions in local economic impact across the state. Live Nation alone produces hundreds of outdoor concerts each year at amphitheaters, stadiums, and other open spaces in California. The safety of our guests is a priority for us, as it is for all other event organizers across the state. That requires understanding the ever evolving of technology that bad actors may use, including drones and other unmanned aerial vehicles. Drone usage has skyrocketed in recent years (160% increase since 2019 according to the FAA). Like many of our colleagues in other live events, we have experienced a growing number of unauthorized drone incursions at outdoor festivals, stadiums, and amphitheaters.

Despite that, under current rules and regulations many high-density events such as outdoor festivals and concerts are excluded from existing prohibitions on unauthorized drone use, despite facing comparable security risks to the highest profile of gatherings. As a result, AB 2113 will dramatically improve the safety of live events by enacting an outright ban on operating unauthorized drones and other unmanned aircraft over large crowds at ticketed entertainment events.

We look forward to working closely with state and local law enforcement agencies across the state as they exercise this authority to help create safer events for staff, artists, and fans alike.

In addition, the San Francisco Forty-Niners note:

The rapid growth of personal drone use has created new public safety challenges, particularly at large outdoor concerts and sporting events. Unauthorized drone operations over these gatherings pose serious risks of injury, disruption, and interference with emergency response efforts. While federal authorities regulate national airspace, local law enforcement agencies are responsible for managing crowd safety at these events and currently lack clear state-level statutory authority specifically addressing personal drone operations in close proximity to ticketed venues.

**Arguments in Opposition**

TechNet, writing in opposition, argues:

We respectfully request amendments to ensure the bill does not inadvertently restrict legitimate, federally authorized drone operations that provide significant public and economic benefits. Specifically, we recommend including a clear exemption for drones

operating pursuant to authorization by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), including those engaged in commercial activities under established federal frameworks.

As currently drafted, the bill could create ambiguity for operators who are compliant with FAA regulations and operating under lawful authority, including those supporting critical services. Drones for example, are increasingly being used for a variety of purposes from infrastructure inspection, emergency response support, utility monitoring, construction, real estate, or even media and film events. In such cases, these operations are conducted under strict federal safety standards and in coordination with relevant authorities.

AB 2113 prohibits the use of drones within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed venue with the capacity to hold 1,000 or more attendees. However, in more dense and urban areas, this creates a significant concern regarding the commercial use of drones by the neighboring commercial entities to a venue. While the bill allows for an exemption of drones being used by employees of a utility service provider on conducting official business, it would still prohibit the use of drones in other commercial settings.

For example, in an urban and dense location of an outdoor venue, any neighboring commercial use of drones would be limited. Petco Park in San Diego, Oracle Park in San Francisco, the Oakland Coliseum are in various dense urban settings and drone use would be limited for their immediate neighbors.

If any of the hotels or condominiums immediately around Petco Park needed to use a drone to conduct an infrastructure inspection, they would be prohibited from doing so if there was an event happening at Petco Park. Any active construction in the immediate vicinity of a venue would also be prohibited from using a drone. Sacramento is building an urban soccer specific stadium, if the stadium is completed first and begins hosting events, any of the following construction in the immediate vicinity would be prohibited from using a drone. Additionally, use of drones by first responders in the immediate vicinity of a ticketed event could be prohibited as well under this language.

## FISCAL COMMENTS

No new state costs. Costs incurred by local agencies will be because the bill creates a new crime or infraction and do not represent state-reimbursable local costs.

## VOTES

### **ASM PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Lowenthal, Macedo, Bryan, DeMaio, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, McKinnor, Ortega, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ward, Wicks, Wilson

### **ASM ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM: 9-0-0**

**YES:** Ward, Lackey, Elhawary, Jeff Gonzalez, McKinnor, Ortega, Quirk-Silva, Valencia, Zbur

### **ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Wicks, Hoover, Bauer-Kahan, Calderon, Caloza, Ellis, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**UPDATED**

VERSION: April 9, 2026

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