

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Senator Thomas Umberg, Chair
2025-2026 Regular Session

AB 2113 (McKinnor)
Version: April 9, 2026
Hearing Date: June 16, 2026
Fiscal: Yes
Urgency: No
AM

SUBJECT

Aviation: unmanned aircraft systems: ticketed entertainment events

DIGEST

This bill makes it unlawful to operate an unmanned aircraft (UA) within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event, except as specified, and makes a violation an infraction punishable by a fine of \$500.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UAs are becoming more popular and ubiquitous in society. They are used by governments for public safety and law enforcement purposes, and by businesses and journalists for professional purposes. They are also used by individuals for recreation. Many UAs are equipped with a camera that allows recording and photos to be taken when they are flown. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has forecasted that by 2027, the commercial drone fleet will be around 955,000 and the recreation fleet roughly 1.82 million.¹ The author argues that the proliferation of drone use creates safety concerns at ticketed entertainment events and that his bill will alleviate that issue by enacting precise limitations on their operation within a ticketed entertainment event.

The bill is sponsored by Live Nation Entertainment and supported by organizations that put on outdoor ticketed entertainment events. No timely opposition was received by the Committee. Should this bill pass this Committee, it will next be referred to the Senate Public Safety Committee.

¹ U.S. Govt. Accountability Off., *Drone Operations*, available at <https://www.gao.gov/drone-operations>.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE LAW

Existing federal law:

- 1) Requires the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), under the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, to safely integrate unmanned aircraft system (UAS) operation into the national airspace system and to develop and implement certification requirements for the operation of UAS in the national airspace system. (Pub. Law 112-095.)
- 2) Requires, under FAA rules, federal registration of a UAS before its first flight outdoors for any UAS weighing more than 0.55 pounds (250 grams) and less than 55 pounds (25 kilos). Upon registration, UAS owners receive a Certificate of Aircraft Registration/Proof of Ownership along with a unique identification number, which must be marked or affixed to the UAS. (14 C.F.R. Parts 1, 45, 47, 48, 91, and 375.)
- 3) Permits commercial UAS flight over unpopulated areas if safety conditions are met, as specified. (14 C.F.R. Part 107.)
- 4) Restricts UAs operation within a 3-nautical-mile radius and up to 3,000 feet above ground level (AGL) of any stadium with a seating capacity of 30,000 or more. (14 C.F.R. § 99.7.)

Existing state law:

- 1) Defines unmanned aircraft and unmanned aircraft systems as follows:
 - a) "Unmanned aircraft" means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft;
 - b) "Unmanned aircraft system" means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including, but not limited to, communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft that are required for the pilot in command to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system. (Gov. Code § 853.5.)
- 2) Provides that a person who knowingly and intentionally operates an unmanned aircraft system on or above the grounds of a state prison, a jail, or a juvenile hall, camp, or ranch is guilty of an infraction, punishable by a fine of \$500. (Gov. Code, § 4577 (a).)
- 3) Makes it a misdemeanor to use an unmanned aircraft system to look through a hole or opening into the interior of specified areas in which the occupant has a reasonable expectation of privacy with the intent to invade the privacy of a person inside. (Pen. Code, § 647(j)(1).)

This bill:

- 1) Makes it unlawful to operate an unmanned aircraft within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event.
 - a) This prohibition does not apply to a person who (A) has obtained consent from the venue operator for the ticketed entertainment event, or (B) is an employee of the entertainment venue where the ticketed entertainment event is held and is conducting official business.
 - b) This prohibition does not apply to a person who is an employee of a water, sewer, electrical, telephone, cable, or other regulated utility service provider and is conducting official business.
- 2) Makes a violation of this provision an infraction, which is a crime. Each violation is punishable by a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500).
- 3) Defines the following terms for these purposes.
 - a) "Ticketed entertainment event" means any professional music, sporting, or performing arts event held that meets all of the following requirements:
 - i. 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;
 - ii. a revocable license that has been issued by the venue operator of the entertainment venue is required for attendance at the event;
 - iii. it is not covered by FAA restrictions.
 - b) "Unmanned aircraft" has the same meaning as defined in Section 853.5 of the Government Code.
 - c) "Venue operator" means any person who owns, operates, manages, or controls an entertainment venue.

COMMENTS

1. Stated need for the bill

The author writes:

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.”

2. UAs and ticketed entertainment events

Existing federal law provides regulations for flying drones under the Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems regulations in Part 107 of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Under these regulations, UAs are restricted from operating within a within a 3-nautical-mile radius and up to 3,000 feet above ground level (AGL) of any stadium with a seating capacity of 30,000 or more. (14 C.F.R. § 99.7.) These regulations apply to Major League Baseball games, regular or post-season National Football League games, or NCAA Division I football games, as well as major motor speedway events. This temporary restriction “applies to the entire U.S. domestic National Airspace System, and takes effect starting one hour before the scheduled event time until one hour after the event concludes.”² The FAA has also established temporary flight restrictions over stadiums hosting FIFA World Cup 2026 matches and related events.³ Violations of FAA regulations can lead to fines of up to \$100,000, confiscation of the UA, and federal criminal charges.⁴

The restriction under this bill is more limited than the FAA regulations described above at 400 feet within an outdoor ticketed entertainment event. The bill applies to any professional music, sporting, or performing arts event that is held outdoors where the venue has a capacity of 1,000 or more attendees and has gated barriers that prevent access to the general public, requires a ticket for attendance, and is not covered by FAA restrictions. Exceptions to the prohibition are if the person has obtained consent from the venue to operate a UA or the person is an employee of a water, sewer, electrical, telephone, cable, or other regulated utility service provider and is conducting official business.

3. Amendment⁵

The bill does not currently contain an exception for emergency responders. To ensure there is no confusion, the author has agreed to amend the bill to clarify that it does not prohibit emergency responders from using an UA within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event in their emergency response duties. The specific amendment is:

² FAA, *Can I fly a model aircraft or UAS over a stadium or sporting events for hobby or recreation?*, available at <https://www.faa.gov/faq/can-i-fly-model-aircraft-or-uas-over-stadium-or-sporting-events-hobby-or-recreation>.

³ FAA, *FAA Establishes ‘No Drone Zones’ for FIFA World Cup 2026 Stadiums, Fan Events and Base Camps*, available at <https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/faa-establishes-no-drone-zones-fifa-world-cup-2026-stadiums-fan-events-and-base-camps>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ The amendments may include nonsubstantive changes as identified by Legislative Counsel.

This section shall not be interpreted to prohibit a firefighter, peace officer, medical personnel, or other emergency personnel in the performance of their fire suppression, law enforcement, or emergency response duties from using an unmanned aircraft within 400 feet of an outdoor ticketed entertainment event.

4. Stakeholder statements

Live Nation, the sponsor of the bill, writes in support stating:

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[Fn. Omitted]). 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.

SUPPORT

Live Nation Entertainment (sponsor)
Anschutz
BottleRock Napa Valley
Forty Niners Football Company

OPPOSITION

None received

RELATED LEGISLATION

Pending Legislation: None known.

Prior Legislation: None known.

PRIOR VOTES

Assembly Floor (Ayes 72, Noes 0)

Assembly Appropriations Committee (Ayes 15, Noes 0)

Assembly Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism Committee (Ayes 9, Noes 0)

Assembly Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee (Ayes 15, Noes 0)
