

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 423
By: Paxton
Border Security
5/25/2023
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 2013, the Texas Legislature passed H.B. 912, which limited the use of unmanned aircraft and the activities of those unmanned aircraft. This is codified in Chapter 423, Government Code.

Chapter 423, Government Code, prohibits the use of capturing images, creating a penalty if a photo is captured. Section 423.002 creates non-applicability uses where the government, for a compelling government interest, can capture images. Included in this list is the United States military for operations, exercises, and missions.

The Texas military forces has mission ready packages that pertain to the use of unmanned aircraft including search and recovery missions after natural disasters and the operation of monitoring devices along the Texas border as part of Operation Border Star. However, state law currently only allows the United States military to operate unmanned aircraft.

S.B. 423 is a narrowly tailored bill allowing the Texas military forces the authority to use unmanned aircraft as part of their mission ready packages and to train for those mission ready packages.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 423 amends current law relating to the use of unmanned aircraft by the Texas military forces.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 423.002(a), Government Code, to provide that it is lawful to capture an image using an unmanned aircraft in this state in certain circumstances, including as part of an operation, exercise, or mission of any branch of the United States military or of the Texas military forces as defined by Section 437.001 (Definitions).

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.