

December 13, 2024

The Honorable Michael Whitaker  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigations  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Lloyd Austin  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
Washington D.C.

Dear Administrator Whitaker, Director Wray, Secretary Mayorkas, and Secretary Austin

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the increased reporting of drone activity in the airspace near New England. As you are aware, these states are home to some of the busiest and most complex airspaces in the country, including those serving major airports such as LaGuardia, John F. Kennedy, Newark Liberty, and others that are vital to the U.S. economy. Some of these drones have been reported over or near Picatinny Arsenal, a U.S. military research and manufacturing facility.

The proliferation of reported drone activities in this region raises significant safety and security concerns for both commercial and private aviation as well as national security concerns. As you know, incidents involving drones interfering with aircraft operations have increased, posing a real and substantial risk to passengers, crews, and others in the vicinity. And, I am particularly concerned about the potential for these unmanned aerial vehicles – many of which are as large as a car-- to disrupt air traffic and, more alarmingly, to be used maliciously to threaten national security. I am also concerned about their potential use for surveillance near military installations or elsewhere, to collect sensitive information

With the growing number of reported drone activities in this region, it is critical that the FAA take immediate and comprehensive action to ensure the safety of the airspace. I therefore request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provide briefing regarding a comprehensive plan, coordinated with interagency partners, on addressing these concerns. This briefing should cover all details available regarding these drones as to ownership, operation,

impacts on aviation, national security, and privacy. I request this briefing no later than December 18, 2024. Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent.

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator