



March 11, 2026

Honorable Daniel Webster
United States House of Representatives
2184 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for Orange County Sheriff's Office FY 27 Community Project Funding Request for Drones as First Responders.

Dear Congressman Webster,

I am pleased to support the Orange County Sheriff Office's Fiscal Year 2027 Community Project Funding Request for Drones as First Responders.

These systems will allow the Orange County Sheriff's Office to enhance public safety in Central Florida through rapid, aerial response for high priority calls for service.

Central Florida is home to densely populated regions including major tourist attractions, large public venues, and critical infrastructure. Traditional emergency response models face limitations due to traffic congestion and geographic distance. The requested autonomous dock system enables drones to launch immediately upon dispatch activation, reducing response times and providing law enforcement with crucial aerial intelligence.

Funding for these programs is vital to better protect Central Floridians. The implementation of this project will generate operational data that can inform and support similar deployments nationwide. This project will help other jurisdictions adopt best practices and advance public safety.

In closing, I wholeheartedly support the Orange County Sheriff's Office FY27 Community Project Funding Request for Drones as First Responders. I appreciate your consideration in funding this much-needed project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric D. Smith".

Eric D. Smith
Chief of Police