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Chairman Lamar Smith
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20513

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you know, I have been working, since December 2013, on an international, collaborative, STEM high school project to develop sensor-equipped, small unmanned aircraft systems to locate avalanche victims in Nepal. (Please see nepalrobotics.org.) The current FAA restrictions on drone flights have greatly complicated and frustrated an already extremely challenging effort. I hope that, when I return to Nepal, in March, to conduct further systems tests at Mount Everest, the obstacles I have encountered in the United States will not result in technical problems due to lack of flight testing.

I add that current restrictions discourage aspiring scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians from entering a field that is enormously important to the future of our nation's economy and security. This is a tragic situation.

I applaud your bill, H.R. 4489, as a good step in the right direction. I respectfully request that, as you proceed with your initiative, you continue to consider what can be done to encourage educational research and development for small unmanned aircraft systems in the United States.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Kronmiller

USA Leader, Bullis-Kanjirowa STEM Project
Robotics Team Leader and Mentor
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