



## News Release

For Immediate Release

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*USDOT Secretary Elaine Chao congratulates NCDOT Chief Deputy Secretary on NC's selection at Wednesday's event in Washington, D.C.*

### **N.C. Selected for FAA Drone Integration Pilot Program**

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao today announced that the N.C. Department of Transportation has been selected as one of only 10 participants in the Federal Aviation Administration's Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS, or 'drones') Integration Pilot Program, an initiative that will shape the future of drones in America.

"We are looking forward to helping today's winners unlock the enormous potential of drone operations, which will create new services and jobs in their local communities," said Secretary Chao.

The primary focus of NCDOT's proposal is working with global drone delivery companies, such as Zipline, Matternet and Flytrex, to set up a network of medical distribution centers that can use drones to make medical deliveries. These companies currently operate overseas.

Blood and other supplies currently travel by courier to hospitals and testing facilities. With drones, medical providers would get the test results and supplies they need much faster.

NCDOT has also partnered with existing UAS software companies like AirMap and Raleigh-based PrecisionHawk to develop Unmanned Traffic Management systems that track drones as they fly.

"North Carolina has always been on the forefront of aviation innovation and now is a national leader in drone safety education and use," said Chief Deputy Secretary David Howard, who attended the announcement on behalf of NCDOT. "Being selected for this program will allow us to learn more about how drones can safely be used in new ways to help our citizens."

The [UAS Integration Pilot Program](#) is an opportunity for state, local and tribal governments to partner with private sector entities, such as UAS operators or manufacturers, to accelerate safe UAS integration.

The program is expected to foster a meaningful dialogue on the balance between local and national interests related to UAS integration, and provide actionable information to the U.S.

Department of Transportation regarding the expanded and universal integration of UAS into the National Airspace System.

NCDOT's Division of Aviation will host a media availability on Friday, May 11, from 1-2 p.m., at the Division of Aviation Hanger, 1050 Meridian Dr., Morrisville. Contact James Pearce at (919) 812-1685 or [jpearce2@ncdot.gov](mailto:jpearce2@ncdot.gov) for more details.

**\*\*\*NCDOT\*\*\***

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