Press Release

Primer: Drone Regulation

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Unmanned Aircraft Systems, referred to colloquially as “drones,” are entering our airspace at rapid rates as companies look to drone delivery to promote cost savings, greater efficiency, and worker safety. In a new primer, Technology and Innovation Policy Analyst Joshua Levine discusses how the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has traditionally regulated airspace, the current state of federal drone regulation, and recent scholarship on how to promote commercial drone adoption while protecting private property rights and valuable airspace.

Key points:

- The United States has become the largest drone market in the world.
- While drones can provide significant economic benefits, critical regulatory gaps prevent widescale adoption, limiting their commercial viability.
- For commercial drone operations to flourish, the FAA and federal authorities should finalize and implement Beyond Visual Line of Sight rules, address agency shortcomings that delay progress on commercial operations, clarify its authority on technology and operational requirements, and defer to state and local governments for local management, integration, and enforcement of drone infrastructure and operations.

Read the analysis