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**After Announcing Competitive Grant for City of Reno & Flirtey, Heller Tours Nevada-Based Drone Delivery Company**

*In April, Heller Urged the Transportation Secretary to Choose the City of Reno/Flirtey Application for Program*

**RENO –**U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV), a member of the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, today toured Flirtey, a Reno-based drone delivery service company that is pioneering life-saving applications of drone technologies. In May, Heller [announced](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=CCE90940-D6F0-4B14-9D99-B2106ADBB4B8) that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) selected the City of Reno and Flirtey for its highly competitive Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Integration Pilot Program after Heller made the case for their application to DOT Secretary Elaine L Chao. The DOT received more 140 applications and only 10 were selected for the program.

Launched in October 2017, the [UAS Integration Pilot Program](https://www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/uas_integration_pilot_program/) allows state, local, and tribal governments to collaborate with private sector entities, such as UAS operators or manufacturers, to help accelerate drone integration into the national airspace system. In April, Heller urged Secretary Chao to choose the Reno-Flirtey application for the UAS pilot program. Heller noted Flirtey’s previous partnership with the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority, an ambulance and care flight emergency medical services provider, to launch the first automated external defibrillator (AED) drone delivery service in the United States. He also remarked on the support from the community, including the Reno Police Department, Reno Fire Department, and a local hospital, that Flirtey has received for its efforts.

“Flirtey is leading Nevada – and the world – in drone innovation and I’m pleased that the Department of Transportation has recognized that their partnership with the city of Reno presents a critical opportunity. Not only will this partnership save lives, it will also help advance drone technology with the potential to ultimately increase the cardiac arrest survival rate,” **said Heller.** “One of the fastest growing start-ups based in Reno, Flirtey supports high-paying jobs and can serve as a model for cutting-edge drone technologies to be replicated around the nation. As a member of the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, I’ll continue to promote policies that further enhance Nevada’s standing as a leader in the safe implementation of drone technologies and fight to see that the private sector has the necessary framework to fully unleash their power to innovate.”

During a July 2017 hearing, [Heller stated to Secretary Chao that Nevada is leading the nation in the autonomous systems space](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=099B6127-9341-47AD-B5F1-B2A201796EF1) – both in the air and on the roads – due in part to its predictable climate and expansive air and space corridors, and he [discussed how policy can be updated to support Nevada’s designated UAS test site and better facilitate research and development of this cutting-edge technology.](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=099B6127-9341-47AD-B5F1-B2A201796EF1) He played an integral role in establishing Nevada as just one of just seven nationally recognized UAS test sites, and he has a long record of advocating in favor of federal policies that advance drone technologies and recognizes that there are more ways in which this technology can play a role in our daily lives. For example, the [FAA Reauthorization Act of 2017](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/6/heller-secures-significant-wins-for-nevada-in-faa-reauthorization-billl) included Heller’s provisions that will promote the state’s already robust drone industry by extending the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) test sites, allowing for small UAS package delivery, and authorizing beyond line-of-sight operations at the test sites, including Nevada’s.

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