

## Federal Laser Law

*[The language below was signed into law by the President on February 14 2012. We are presenting it as it appears in the United States Code, which lists U.S. laws.]*

### U.S.C. TITLE 18, CHAPTER 2

#### **Sec. 39A. Aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft**

(a) OFFENSE -- Whoever knowingly aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

(b) LASER POINTER DEFINED -- As used in this section, the term 'laser pointer' means any device designed or used to amplify electromagnetic radiation by stimulated emission that emits a beam designed to be used by the operator as a pointer or highlighter to indicate, mark, or identify a specific position, place, item, or object.

(c) EXCEPTIONS -- This section does not prohibit aiming a beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft, or the flight path of such an aircraft, by--

(1) an authorized individual in the conduct of research and development or flight test operations conducted by an aircraft manufacturer, the Federal Aviation Administration, or any other person authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration to conduct such research and development or flight test operations;

(2) members or elements of the Department of Defense or Department of Homeland Security acting in an official capacity for the purpose of research, development, operations, testing or training; or

(3) by an individual using a laser emergency signaling device to send an emergency distress signal.

(d) The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, may provide by regulation, after public notice and comment, such additional exceptions to this section, as may be necessary and appropriate. The Attorney General shall provide written notification of any proposed regulations under this section to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House and Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the House, and the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation in the Senate not less than 90 days before such regulations become final.

#### **LEGISLATIVE STATUS AND HISTORY**

112th Congress, 2011-2012 HR 386. Introduced January 20 2011. See [this page](#) for updates. Passed as Section 311 of H.R. 658, the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, signed into law by the President on February 14 2012.

111th Congress, 2009-2010 HR 5810. Passed by the House of Representatives July 27 2010. Sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Died in committee.

110th Congress, 2007-2008 HR 1615. Passed by the House May 22 2007. Was not voted on by the Senate

109th Congress, 2005-2006 HR 1400. Passed by the House Dec. 8 2005. Passed by the Senate Dec. 22 2005. No House-Senate conference, expired before it could be sent to the President