

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 450 (HB 1054)

2026 Regular Session

Villio

New law permits a party at trial to introduce footage taken by an unmanned aircraft system operated on behalf of a law enforcement agency if the party provides written notice of intent to offer proof of authentication by certificate not less than 45 days prior to the commencement of trial.

New law applies in all criminal cases, cases in juvenile courts, family court proceedings involving criminal manners, and civil forfeiture proceedings arising from criminal activity.

New law requires that notice provided pursuant to new law includes a copy of the certificate and provides for the minimum contents to be contained in the certificate.

New law requires the certificate to be signed and dated by the declarant and permits law enforcement agencies to utilize electronic signatures to comply with new law.

New law provides that the certificate may identify the primary operator responsible for the recording if more than one person participated in the operation of the unmanned aircraft system.

New law permits the defendant's attorney or the defendant acting in his own defense to demand that the person who operated the unmanned aircraft system provide testimony by filing a written demand. Further provides for service of the demand on certain individuals.

New law provides that footage is not considered self-authenticating under new law if a demand is made timely.

New law requires that the demand for the testimony of the person who operated the unmanned aircraft system be filed and served on the person who operated the unmanned aircraft system within 30 days of the receipt of the notice. Further permits the court to extend the period for good cause shown if such request is made prior to the expiration of the period.

New law permits an extension of time to make a demand if exceptional circumstances exist and provides that any allegation of exceptional circumstances constitutes a preliminary plea on the defendant's behalf for the purposes of existing law (C.Cr.P. Art. 580).

New law provides for the form of the demand, the individuals to be served, and requires a contradictory hearing to determine if an extension is warranted.

New law provides that the footage from the unmanned aircraft system is admissible at trial without the necessity of testimony from the operating person and is self-authenticating if notice is timely filed and if the defendant does not timely file a demand.

New law provides that the filing of a demand does not prevent the admission of the footage in any other manner otherwise appropriate pursuant to existing law or its ancillaries.

New law requires a party seeking to offer proof of authentication by certificate in accordance with new law in a noncriminal case in juvenile court to provide written notice of intent to offer proof of authentication by certificate not less than 30 days prior to the commencement of trial. Further requires the notice to include a copy of the certificate.

New law requires that a demand made pursuant to new law for a noncriminal case in juvenile court be made within 10 days of receipt of the notice.

New law defines "electronic signature", "footage", "law enforcement agency", and "unmanned aircraft system".

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds C.E. Art. 902.1)