

Ohio/Indiana UAS center to be housed in Springfield

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A new Ohio/Indiana Unmanned Aerial Systems Center and Test Complex will be housed at the Nextedge Industrial Park in Springfield.

The state controlling board this week approved funding for a two-year lease for space in the Advanced Virtual Engineer Test Cell Inc. facility, according to an announcement from State Sen. Chris Widener. Avetec is a nonprofit research organization.

With backing from the state of Ohio, the Dayton Development Coalition has been working to establish the center to serve as a single-point resource for government, industry and universities looking to conduct research and develop technologies. Ohio also is partnering with Indiana on the center as part of an effort to pursue one of six unmanned aircraft testing sites the FAA will select.

Right now testing of the craft — also known as UAVs or UAS' — is done on a limited basis under very restricted conditions, so getting the Dayton area designated as a test site would make it much easier to fly and thereby draw a whole crop of companies dedicated to designing and manufacturing the aircraft and other related products.

Insiders expect the center to bolster its application to the FAA.