



Hearing on HB 317 and HB 1509

Before the House Transportation Committee
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Testimony of:

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Thank you Chairmen Hennessey and Carroll and members of this Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. During our testimony, we plan on discussing how Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPRs) work, how we and our colleagues have used them, some of the many successful cases stemming from our use of ALPRs, and ultimately recommendations on what to include in legislation. We also want to note our support for Representative Jozwiak's legislation, HB 1509, regarding license plate registration stickers.

ALPRs read license plate characters. ALPRs can be mounted on cars or stationary objects like signs or overpasses. The data is then stored in a database. The data can be compared to plate numbers which may have already been deemed of interest because, for example, they may belong to a perpetrator of a serious crime. ALPRs cannot instantly provide an officer with the vehicle owner's home address, phone number, personal security information or other private information about the owner.

ALPRs help support law enforcement efforts to investigate a wide variety of criminal activity, including recovering stolen vehicles and other property, locating missing individuals, apprehending murderers and child molesters, and assisting domestic violence cases. Data from ALPRs provides strong and solid investigate leads, allowing police to locate and identify suspects, witnesses, and victims, and to identify vehicles used in an area near where the offense occurred. The information is particularly helpful when law enforcement is attempting to identify an individual at a specific crime scene location. The ALPR may very well provide the only way to identify the criminal. In cases involving a child abduction, the ALPR may literally be the difference between life and death.

The importance of ALPRs can best be explained by focusing on specific examples of how they have helped to solve crimes. In Washington County, by way of example, ALPRs have helped with the arrest of burglars, of an individual for homicide by vehicle, a person who skimmed thousands of dollars from an ATM, and an outlaw motorcycle gang whose members have since been charged with the attempted murder of a man.

In June, a suspect was arrested in Queens for fatally shooting his girlfriend in the head and then dumping her body in Middle Smithfield Township. An ALPR revealed that the arrested individual had crossed the Verrazano Bridge. Police set up further alerts on the vehicle. Three days later, his plate hit in Queens, which helped to

reveal where he was staying. He was subsequently arrested for homicide. Without an ALPR, this murderer might very well be out on the streets, posing a danger to anyone he encountered.

Another mass shooting even may have been averted at Temple University just weeks ago thanks to an ALPR. Days before the massacre at a Walmart in El Paso, an individual in Bucks County made threats against Temple University while purchasing 5 boxes of ammunition. He had also been to various other Walmarts, where he bought knives, small cylinder propane bottles, and binoculars. Through the Walmart video surveillance, law enforcement was able to get the license plate from this individual's vehicle. It was registered to an address over an hour away from the Walmart where he purchased the ammunition. Through the ALPR, law enforcement quickly located his vehicle consistently at one location not far from the Bucks County Walmart and safely apprehended him before anything serious occurred. Without an ALPR, it could have taken days, weeks, even months to locate this dangerous individual.

In Montgomery County, an autistic man agreed to drive an individual home, but that individual ultimately stole his car at knife-point. Thanks in large part to a subsequent hit from an ALPR on that vehicle, the perpetrator was ultimately apprehended.

In Lehigh County, ALPRs have helped with a considerable number of investigations. In one case, an ALPR was crucial in solving a homicide, as it refuted a claim by the assailant that he was not in the vicinity of the homicide. In other cases, many stolen cars have been recovered. ALPRs have also allowed law enforcement to remove illegal guns and drugs from those driving with expired or suspended registration—which no doubt helped to prevent many violent crimes.

Allegheny County law enforcement has helped to solve homicides and robberies in different areas of the County as a result of ALPRs. Consider also that following the Tree of Life shooting last October, ALPRs were able to track the defendant's vehicle just days before the shooting to a gun practice range and that his car was in the vicinity of 5 other Jewish centers prior to the massacre. This has proven to be important information.

Police in Chester County have used ALPRs to track down murder suspects as well.

Last year, ALPR data helped in the apprehension of a suspect in a \$1.2 million skimming scheme in Franklin and Cumberland Counties, as well as in Maryland and Virginia.

Consider these two examples from Seattle Police:

- Police obtained a partial plate and a description of the car in a drive-by-shooting with three innocent victims. Police ran several partial plate searches and found one in the ALPR system that had been in the area of the shooting at the time. The vehicle matched the description and led to identification of the vehicle and ultimately to the arrest of the shooting suspects.
- A victim at a charity-operated homeless shelter was threatened and nearly stabbed by an individual who was known only by his first name. The victim reported that the suspect had stabbed people before, was extremely violent, and had left the scene in an agitated state. The victim was able to provide a partial license plate, which with other description information, enabled police to use the ALPR database to determine the car was routinely parked under a nearby overpass in the middle of the night. Police then located the vehicle and the suspect before he hurt anyone else.

In 2007, in Roseville, CA, a 76-year-old man was killed in a hit-and-run incident. Witnesses were able to capture a partial license plate number of the car, which was provided to law enforcement. Equipped with this information, police used their ALPR system to query the partial plate and the location of the hit within a 10-mile radius. The image results allowed law enforcement to find the full license plate number, and eventually the location of the suspect. This information led to a hit-and-run felony arrest.

There are far more examples in other states, too. These include the capture of a serial bank robber in Colorado, a murder suspect in South Carolina, a double murder in Louisiana, a child abductor in Texas, and stolen vehicles in North Carolina. Many more examples are included in the [attached](#), from the International Chiefs of Police.

We understand the need to ensure that the data is used by law enforcement officials or their employees for only appropriate and legitimate purposes and that such information be disclosed or shared only for the same purposes. We believe that legislation should allow law enforcement use of the data “for legitimate law enforcement purposes.”

Moreover, language requiring audits is appropriate, as would be language that provided that when the system is accessed, such use is documented. Other criminal justice databases have such a requirement.

With regard to retention of data, it is vitally important that we be permitted to keep the data indefinitely so long as it is related to or being used in a case or investigation. Moreover, if the data was used in a prosecution, we must keep it until after all the appeals periods have passed and the judgment is final. By contrast, if the data does not fall into one of these categories, requiring its removal would be appropriate. Jurisdictions differ in terms of how long such data can be kept. We believe that allowing the retention of data for at least one year would be reasonable. Crimes are not solved instantaneously, investigations take time, crimes are not always reported immediately (especially sexual assaults). Providing a retention of less than one year could hinder some very serious cases.

The PDAA also supports HB 1509, the legislation to require that registration stickers be placed on license plates. Stickers help show whether a car is properly registered, inspected, and insured. Streamlining the entire process in the manner that Representative Jozwiak has proposed makes sense both as a matter of public safety and as a matter of operational efficiency.

Thank you again for holding this important hearing and considering our views.

News Stories about Law Enforcement ALPR Successes September 2017 - September, 2018

The following links are recent news stories from around the United States about specific cases where law enforcement used ALPR alerts and historical ALPR data to generate investigative leads and solve crimes. These are only some of the public stories (many more successful leads are generated every day), and these stories are only from the year. Countless successes like these have been achieved over more than a decade of law enforcement use of ALPR technology. The success of ALPR technology and data in protecting public safety and bringing criminals to justice could not be more clear.

Historical ALPR data helps Colorado law enforcement arrest serial bank robber suspect

https://www.gisentinel.com/news/western_colorado/cops-suspect-in-gj-heist-may-be-serial-bank-robber/article_e53350fc-9ace-11e8-b1cd-10604b9f6eda.html

ALPR detection leads to arrest of murder suspect in South Carolina

<https://abcnews4.com/news/local/mexican-fugitive-wanted-for-murder-arrested-by-us-marshals-in-north-charleston>

Historical ALPR data leads to Florida woman's arrest for using 6-year-old child to steal packages from porches

<https://1025wfla.iheart.com/content/2018-01-17-suspect-in-package-theft-case-identified/>

ALPR alert in California provides investigative lead in Kansas murder case

<http://www.salina.com/news/20180129/maine-man-bound-over-for-trial-in-connection-with-tescott-mans-murder>

Historical ALPR data provides key evidence in Louisiana double murder case

http://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2018/01/raynell_kimbrough_dawn_scott.html

ALPR data helps in apprehension of suspect in \$1.2 million ATM skimming scheme in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia

<http://www.abc27.com/news/local/man-admits-to-12m-atm-skimming-scheme/1155828995>

Historical ALPR data leads to arrest of suspect in fatal hit-and-run in Sacramento, California

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/crime/article214309774.html>

ALPR alert in Connecticut leads to arrest of New York City murder suspect

<http://www.courant.com/breaking-news/hc-br-connecticut-state-police-arrest-homicide-suspect-20180709-story.html>

Historical ALPR data yields evidence in Florida insurance fraud case

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/news/20180214/deputies-deltona-man-burns-car-wife-files-fraudulent-insurance-claim>

Historical ALPR data is key evidence in Ohio rogue police officer case

<https://www.coshocotribune.com/story/news/local/2018/02/12/eubanks-serve-90-days-pay-fine-reporting-fake-shooting/330602002/>

ALPR data helps lead to arrest in Colorado of man who abducted two Texas girls

<http://www.krdo.com/news/license-plate-scanners-like-the-one-that-caught-terry-miles-used-by-pueblo-pd/682080534>

Historical ALPR data provides key evidence in Louisiana murder case involving former NFL running back

http://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2018/01/its_going_to_end_up_bad_witnes.html

Florida identity theft suspects apprehended with the help of historical ALPR data

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/news/20180419/eyelid-tattoo-helps-lead-deputy-to-w-volusia-father-son-duo-in-id-theft>

Federal District Court in Nevada reaffirms no privacy expectation in ALPR data, upholds law enforcement use of commercial ALPR data to generate investigative leads and solve crimes

<http://thenewspaper.com/rlc/docs/2018/us-alprok.pdf>

Kentucky Supreme Court reaffirms no privacy expectation in ALPR data, upholds law enforcement use of ALPR systems to protect public safety

<http://opinions.kycourts.net/sc/2015-SC-000470-DG.pdf>

<http://www.wdrb.com/story/37515693/ky-supreme-court-police-license-plate-readers-are-not-a-violation-of-privacy>

North Carolina kidnapping suspect arrested thanks to ALPR lead

<http://www.wbtv.com/story/37541742/two-people-arrested-after-a-kidnapping-in-east-charlotte>

Vermont murder suspect located in Massachusetts with the help of ALPR technology

<http://www.wcax.com/content/news/Trial-underway-for-Burlington-man-charged-in-downtown-shooting-death-472769183.html>

Los Angeles carjacking suspect caught in Marin County thanks to ALPR technology

<https://patch.com/california/millvalley/man-arrested-stolen-vehicle-marin-county>

Florida double-murder suspect arrested thanks to historical ALPR data

<https://www.youobserver.com/article/longboat-key-murder-suspect-update>

ALPR hit on stolen vehicle in California results in man's arrest

<http://www.redbluffdailynews.com/lifestyle/20180203/police-logs-feb-3-2018>

California men arrested for vehicle theft and forged check after ALPR alert

<http://www.redbluffdailynews.com/general-news/20180201/corning-men-arrested-in-chico-vehicle-theft-forged-check-possession>

ALPR alert for suspended vehicle registration leads to arrest of rape suspect in Georgia

<http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/latest-news/article195620239.html>

Historical ALPR data provides clues in Washington, DC murder mystery

<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/DC-Police-Have-New-Clues-on-Who-Killed-Man-Who-Vanished-After-Arranging-Online-Date-469995683.html>

ALPR helps Florida police department locate missing person and recover 2 stolen cars

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/miami-springs/article195334884.html>

ALPR alert on stolen vehicle in North Carolina results in arrests

<http://www.wcnc.com/article/news/local/suspects-detained-after-leading-deputies-to-2-county-chase/506728516>

Texas police stop ATM robbers with the help of historical ALPR data

<http://cbsaustin.com/news/local/houston-gang-suspected-of-multiple-atm-robberies-arrested-in-wilco>

ALPR alert leads to arrest of Louisiana man wanted on multiple charges including domestic assault and cruelty to juveniles

<http://bossierpress.com/suspect-arrested-numerous-warrants/>

Stolen Ferrari recovered in Florida thanks to ALPR technology

<http://www.thedrive.com/news/17284/florida-uber-driver-in-stolen-250000-ferrari-busted-by-cops-license-plate-reader>

9-year-old kidnap victim recovered with help from ALPR in California

https://www.highlandnews.net/news/public_safety/police-rescue--year-old-boy-kidnapped-by-his-father/article_2d164c3e-2258-11e8-8844-c3b18a16c569.html

California law enforcement agency uses ALPR to recover stolen car, home robbery items

http://www.goldenstatenewspapers.com/tracy_press/news/three-teens-in-custody-after-police-spot-stolen-car/article_41d1cb46-2634-11e8-9614-6f94aafea24a.html

Serial bank robber in California caught with the help of ALPR technology

<http://www.hometownstation.com/santa-clarita-news/crime/seasoned-bandit-pleads-guilty-to-four-bank-robberies-225526>

Connecticut law enforcement agency recovers stolen vehicle with LPR technology

<http://www.norwichbulletin.com/news/20180324/license-plate-reader-system-leads-to-stolen-car-recovery-arrest-in-putnam>

ALPR detection leads to recovery of stolen car, arrest in Louisiana

<http://www.wbrz.com/news/license-plate-reader-spots-stolen-car-man-arrested-after-brief-pursuit>

California pharmacist arrested for pharmacy robberies after ALPR detection

<https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2018/04/05/well-known-pharmacist-suspected-of-robbing-danville-pharmacy/>

Washington, DC nun held at gunpoint, vehicle stolen; suspect apprehended thanks to ALPR technology

<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/May-God-Bless-You-Nun-Shares-Words-of-Grace-With-Alleged-Attacker-During-Carjacking-479322843.html>

Northern Virginia ALPR detection leads to recovery of stolen vehicle from Connecticut

<https://www.arlnow.com/2018/04/19/pepperspraying-knife-brandishing-in-rosslyn/>

ALPR helps identify suspect in Indiana incident involving vehicle that nearly strikes police chief

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/post-tribune/crime/ct-ptb-hammond-fleeing-suspect-st-0421-story.html>

ALPR detection in California leads to recovery of stolen vehicle and missing minor

<http://abc7news.com/license-plate-cams-lead-sausalito-police-to-stolen-vehicle/3403545/>

Historical ALPR data used to crack case of stolen credit cards in Louisiana

https://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2018/05/mastephon_taylor_jamal.html

Suspect in Florida drive-by shooting taken into custody thanks to ALPR detection

<http://www.gainesville.com/news/20180530/keystone-heights-man-arrested-after-drive-by-shooting>

Historical ALPR data helps apprehend home invasion and aggravated assault suspect in Florida who held three children at gunpoint

https://www.wftv.com/news/local/man-accused-of-pointing-gun-at-children-during-deltona-home-invasion-posts-bail/759420965?utm_source=homestream&utm_medium=site_navigation&utm_campaign=homestream_click

Armed carjacking suspect stopped with the help of ALPR technology

<http://www.wbtv.com/story/38438167/three-detained-after-armed-carjacking-leads-to-chase-jump-and-run>

New York murder suspect captured in Washington state thanks to ALPR technology

<https://www.kxly.com/news/local-news/suspect-in-new-york-murder-arrested-in-spokane/756515490>

North Carolina armed robbery suspect arrested after stolen car spotted by ALPR system

<https://www.wsocv.com/news/local/1-arrested-when-stolen-car-spotted-pursued-police-say/775694597>

ALPR leads to arrest of suspect in murder of Uber driver in North Carolina

<https://www.wcnc.com/article/news/crime/man-accused-of-murdering-charlotte-uber-driver-pleads-not-guilty/275-575500143>

Missouri police recover stolen firearm, defaced firearm, and drugs thanks to ALPR alert on stolen vehicle

<http://www.kfvs12.com/story/37215964/3-arrested-on-drug-charges-in-poplar-bluff-mo>

Illinois police department credits ALPR technology with helping confront crime problem

<http://www.kmov.com/story/37313938/alton-police-increased-patrol-shows-results>

Fresno, California auto theft suspect caught after ALPR alert

<http://abc30.com/license-plate-reader-helps-fresno-police-catch-stolen-car-suspect/3816438/>

Historical ALPR data leads to larceny plea by retired New York police officer

https://www.silive.com/news/2018/08/retired_cop_from_staten_island_1.html

Northern Virginia ALPR detection leads to recovery of two stolen vehicles

https://www.insidenova.com/news/arlington/arlington-police-beat-edition/article_8fc3bac4-b132-11e8-b984-874a62e7a6e7.html

Bay Area ALPR detections help lead to arrest of child sexual assault suspect

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2018/09/14/fremont-home-invasion-child-sexual-assault-arrest/>

Escaped prisoner found in Pennsylvania thanks to ALPR data

https://www.delcotimes.com/news/escaped-upper-darby-prisoner-located-in-philadelphia-flees-again/article_f1ea9f36-bb3e-11e8-9d5c-07bc036d2e3d.html

ALPR hotlist detection leads to arrest of suspect in hit-and-run death in southeast Florida

<http://www.wflx.com/story/39125358/how-license-plate-reader-technology-works>

Indiana "Blue Net" ALPR detection results in arrest of stolen vehicle suspects

https://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/in-custody-after-attempting-to-run-from-hammond-officers-who/article_efe4eeed-c6ad-59e6-b8e4-a405dcdaae5e.html

Illinois burglary and stolen vehicle suspect arrested with the help of ALPR technology

<https://www.wifr.com/content/news/Rockford-man-arrested-after-officers-find-stolen-car-495056451.html>