



Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 434
House Committee on Judiciary

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March 8, 2022

The Kansas Highway Patrol appreciates this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 434. The bill would allow public agencies to not be required to disclose records that contain captured license plate data or records that pertain to the location of automated license plate recognition systems (ALPRS) except to the extent disclosure is otherwise required by law.

The Kansas Highway Patrol views ALPRS as a helpful tool in our mission to protect the citizens of Kansas. Motor vehicles are often involved in the commission of crimes. Automated license plate recognition systems allow our officers to quickly and effectively identify criminals that utilize Kansas highways for illicit purposes. These systems have not only increased the number of significant arrests made by our agency, but they also have allowed our officers to spend less time searching for specific vehicles and more time focusing on other traffic safety issues.

In a recent example of how ALPRS have assisted our agency, a historical vehicle data search found a homicide victim's vehicle being driven by the suspect who also had a live kidnapping victim with them. Photographs of the vehicle were distributed to field personnel, and troopers were able to locate and arrest the suspect even though the license plate was switched by the time the vehicle had been located. The victim was safely returned to their family. As another example, ALPRS data was used to confirm an alibi in a homicide case. After several months of being under arrest, the suspect in the case was released and murder charges dropped after a read of their license plate was not found in the system. In another case, ALPRS license plate data in combination with cellphone pings helped troopers in Wichita locate a juvenile human sex trafficking victim. She was found and returned to her family in Missouri. ALPRS data has also been used to locate persons in Silver and Amber Alerts.

Troopers on the Kansas Turnpike have experienced phenomenal success recovering stolen property and locating individuals since the implementation of automated license plate recognition systems. From July 2016 through July 2021, 265 stolen vehicles and 225 stolen license plates were recovered from the Kansas Turnpike using ALPRS data. In the same time period, 83 wanted persons, 48 missing persons, many hundreds of thousands of dollars of recovered property were located using ALPRS data.

Senate Bill 434 ensures good governance by requiring that the data collected during the operation of ALPRS and information pertaining to the location of ALPRS are exempt from the requirements of the Kansas Open Records Act. The data collected by ALPRS contain sensitive information that could be used

for nefarious purposes should they ever be obtained by bad actors. Disclosing the location of ALPRS across the state could potentially result in tampering by the public and avoidance of certain roadways by the very criminals the ALPRS were designed to help capture. The Kansas Highway Patrol believes that the conditions set out in the bill will both safeguard confidential license plate data and enable our agency to continue utilizing ALPRS while providing service, courtesy, and protection to all Kansans. We sincerely thank members of the Committee for their consideration of our testimony.

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