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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6002**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Trudeau, Holy, Alvarado, Bateman, Chapman, Conway, Dhingra, Frame, Hasegawa, Kauffman, Lovelett, Nobles, Pedersen, Shewmake, Slatter, Stanford, and Valdez)

READ FIRST TIME 01/23/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to driver privacy protections and automated  
2 license plate reader systems; adding a new chapter to Title 10 RCW;  
3 prescribing penalties; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** INTENT. The legislature finds that it  
6 plays an important role balancing the need to ensure public safety  
7 and an individual's right to privacy under both the federal Fourth  
8 Amendment to the United States Constitution and the broader  
9 protection of individual rights guaranteed by Article I, section 7 of  
10 the Washington state Constitution.

11 The legislature further finds that the dramatic expansion of  
12 surveillance technology across the country has demonstrated the need  
13 to establish sensible guardrails on the use of surveillance data  
14 collected from monitoring the location and travel of individuals,  
15 without a warrant, to ensure its use by law enforcement and other  
16 government agencies must not come into conflict with existing  
17 protections for Washingtonians and ensure that it is not being used  
18 for purposes prohibited under state and federal law.

1        NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 2.**        DEFINITIONS. The definitions in this  
2 section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly  
3 requires otherwise.

4        (1) "Agency" includes all state agencies and all local agencies.

5        (2) "Audit trail" means all records of queries and responses in  
6 an automated license plate reader system, and all records of actions  
7 in which system data is accessed, entered, updated, shared, or  
8 disseminated, including the:

9        (a) Location of cameras used as part of the automated license  
10 plate reader system;

11        (b) Date and time of access;

12        (c) Data elements used to query the automated license plate  
13 reader system;

14        (d) Specific purpose for accessing or querying the automated  
15 license plate reader system, including the offense type for any  
16 criminal investigation;

17        (e) Associated call for service or case number; and

18        (f) Username of the person or persons who accessed or queried the  
19 system.

20        (3) "Audit trail data" means all forms of data collected or  
21 generated by an automated license plate reader system for purposes of  
22 producing an audit trail.

23        (4) "Automated license plate reader data" means all data  
24 collected by automated license plate reader systems including, but  
25 not limited to, global positioning system coordinates, location, date  
26 and time, speed of travel, photograph, license plate number,  
27 automobile characteristics, or other identifying information.

28        (5) "Automated license plate reader system" or "ALPR" means a  
29 system, software, or computer algorithm, whether used independently  
30 or in combination with one or more mobile or fixed automated cameras,  
31 that is used to convert images of license plates into computer-  
32 readable data. An ALPR excludes automated traffic safety cameras that  
33 do not interface or interact with an ALPR system and toll cameras.

34        (6) "Court order," "warrant," or "subpoena" means a court order  
35 as defined in RCW 43.17.420.

36        (7) "Law enforcement agency" has the same meaning as in RCW  
37 10.116.010.

38        (8) "Local agency" includes every county, city, town, municipal  
39 corporation, quasi-municipal corporation, special purpose district,  
40 local housing authorities, or any office, department, division,

1 bureau, board, commission, or agency thereof, or other local public  
2 agency including their respective employees and agents.

3 (9) "State agency" includes every state office, department,  
4 division, bureau, board, commission, or other state agency, and their  
5 respective employees and agents.

6 (10) "Watch list" means a list of license plate numbers to be  
7 compared against a license plate number obtained from an automated  
8 license plate reader system.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** OPERATION. (1) Except as provided for in  
10 this section, it is unlawful for any agency to access, operate, or  
11 use an automated license plate reader system or its associated  
12 automated license plate reader data.

13 (2) An agency may access, operate, or use an automated license  
14 plate reader system and its associated data only for the following  
15 authorized purposes:

16 (a) Any law enforcement agency may use an automated license plate  
17 reader system for the purpose of comparing captured automated license  
18 plate reader data with:

19 (i) Data on any of the following watch lists maintained by either  
20 a federal or Washington state agency: The department of licensing,  
21 the state criminal justice information system, the federal bureau of  
22 investigation kidnappings and missing persons list, and the  
23 Washington missing persons list; or

24 (ii) License plate numbers that have been manually entered into a  
25 state or local automated license plate reader system database, upon  
26 an officer's determination that the license plate numbers are  
27 relevant and material to an investigation of a vehicle that is:

28 (A) Stolen;

29 (B) Associated with a missing or endangered person;

30 (C) Registered to an individual for whom there is an outstanding  
31 felony warrant; or

32 (D) Related to or involved in a felony.

33 (b) Any parking enforcement agency including, but not limited to,  
34 the department of enterprise services and institutions of higher  
35 education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 may use an automated license  
36 plate reader system for the following purposes:

37 (i) Enforcing time restrictions on the use of parking spaces; or

38 (ii) Identifying vehicles on a watch list for impoundment or  
39 immobilization under a local ordinance enacted under RCW 46.55.240,

1 provided the list includes only license plates of vehicles subject to  
2 that ordinance.

3 (c) An automated license plate reader system may be used as a  
4 component of photo toll systems authorized by RCW 47.56.795 or  
5 47.46.105.

6 (d) Any transportation agency may use an automated license plate  
7 reader system for the following purposes:

8 (i) Providing real-time traffic information to the public,  
9 traffic modeling, and traffic studies such as determining  
10 construction delays and route use; and

11 (ii) Enforcing commercial vehicle systems at Washington state  
12 patrol enforcement sites and weigh stations.

13 (e) State and local agencies operating ALPR systems are the legal  
14 owners of the associated ALPR data.

15 (3) It is unlawful for any agency, as described in RCW 43.17.425,  
16 to use an automated license plate reader system for immigration  
17 investigation or enforcement, or both, in accordance with RCW  
18 10.93.160, or for any protected health care services under chapter  
19 7.115 RCW, or to track or otherwise monitor activity protected by the  
20 Washington state Constitution and the first amendment to the United  
21 States Constitution.

22 (4) It is unlawful for any agency to collect automated license  
23 plate reader data on the premises or immediate surroundings or access  
24 to or from facilities that provide protected health care, as  
25 described in chapter 7.115 RCW, or at facilities conducting an  
26 immigration matter as defined in RCW 19.154.020, schools, places of  
27 worship, courts, or food banks.

28 (5)(a) Any agency that intends to use, or currently uses an ALPR  
29 system as of the effective date of this section and intends to  
30 continue using the system, shall register it with the office of the  
31 attorney general on forms approved by the office for that purpose  
32 within 180 days of the effective date of this section. The head of  
33 the agency shall certify that the system meets all the requirements  
34 of this chapter, and that the agency has a policy or policies in  
35 effect governing its use and a documented training process for the  
36 officers that will use it. Agencies may not use ALPR systems that  
37 have not been properly registered under this section.

38 (6) A positive match by an automated license plate reader system  
39 alone does not constitute reasonable suspicion as grounds for a state  
40 or local law enforcement officer to stop the vehicle. The officer

1 shall develop independent reasonable suspicion for the stop or  
2 immediately confirm visually that the license plate on the vehicle  
3 matches the image of the license plate displayed on the automated  
4 license plate reader system and confirm by other means that the  
5 license plate number is on one of the lists specified in subsection  
6 (2)(a) of this section.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** RETENTION. Automated license plate reader  
8 data collected by or on behalf of an agency, as authorized pursuant  
9 to section 3(2) of this act, shall not be used or shared for any  
10 other purpose and shall not be retained longer than 21 days, with the  
11 following exceptions:

12 (1) When retained pursuant to a valid, court-issued, probable  
13 cause felony warrant or subpoena, or as permitted by court order in  
14 criminal or civil cases, provided the data is deleted at the  
15 conclusion of the criminal or civil case. ALPR data may be shared in  
16 discovery in accordance with applicable court rules;

17 (2) When retained for the purpose of parking enforcement,  
18 provided the data is deleted no later than 12 hours after collection;

19 (3) When retained for the purpose of toll collection, for as long  
20 as such captured ALPR data is needed to support the assessment and  
21 collection of a toll pursuant to section 3(2)(c) of this act;

22 (4) When retained for the purpose of traffic studies, provided  
23 the data is deleted no later than 30 days after collection;

24 (5) When retained for the purpose of enforcing commercial vehicle  
25 systems, provided the data is deleted no later than four hours after  
26 collection; and

27 (6) When retained for the purpose in section 3(2)(a) of this act  
28 for as long as such captured ALPR data is needed as evidence of  
29 specific unlawful conduct enumerated in section 3(2)(a) of this act.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** PROHIBITED PRACTICES. (1) An agency that  
31 uses an automated license plate reader system pursuant to section  
32 3(2) of this act shall not:

33 (a) Disclose, share, or permit access to automated license plate  
34 reader data except as required in a judicial proceeding;

35 (b) Provide any other entity with direct access to the automated  
36 license plate reader system, except with other state or local  
37 agencies authorized to collect ALPR data under section 3 of this act.

1 A third-party vendor providing ALPR services may directly access an  
2 ALPR system and data.

3 (2) Any agency that uses a watch list pursuant to section 3(2)  
4 (a) and (b)(ii) of this act must ensure the watch list is updated no  
5 less than once every 24 hours.

6 (3) An agency shall not sell, lease, rent, or purchase automated  
7 license plate reader data or audit trail data.

8 (4) An agency may obtain privately held automated license plate  
9 reader data only pursuant to a valid, court-issued, probable cause  
10 warrant.

11 (5) Automated license plate reader data is not subject to  
12 disclosure under the public records act, chapter 42.56 RCW, except  
13 such data may be used for bona fide research as defined in RCW  
14 42.48.010 and does not include individually identifiable information.

15 (6) Any ALPR vendor must provide technical controls preventing  
16 unauthorized data sharing, secondary transfer, or access by  
17 nonauthorized agencies, including federal civil immigration  
18 enforcement in accordance with this chapter.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** RECORDKEEPING/LOG. If an ALPR operator  
20 accesses or provides access to ALPR data, the ALPR operator shall do  
21 both of the following:

22 (1) Maintain a record of that access for five years. At a  
23 minimum, the record must include all of the following:

24 (a) The date and time the data is accessed;

25 (b) Data elements used to query the ALPR system;

26 (c) The username of the person who accesses the data and, as  
27 applicable, the organization or entity with whom the person is  
28 affiliated;

29 (d) The purpose for accessing the data;

30 (2) Require that ALPR data only be used for the authorized  
31 purposes in this act.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** ADMISSIBILITY IN COURT. Any information  
33 obtained from a knowing violation of section 3 of this act is  
34 inadmissible in any civil or criminal case in all courts of general  
35 or limited jurisdiction in this state, except with the permission of  
36 the person whose rights have been violated in an action brought for  
37 damages under section 11 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION.

2 **Sec. 8.**

3 **POLICIES.**

4 (1) By July 1, 2027, the  
5 attorney general shall develop and publish model policies on the use  
6 of automated license plate reader systems consistent with this act.

7 (2)(a) By December 1, 2027, any agency that uses an automated  
8 license plate reader system pursuant to section 3(2) of this act  
9 shall:

10 (i) Adopt a policy governing use of the automated license plate  
11 reader system consistent with the model policies established under  
12 subsection (1) of this section and submit copies of the applicable  
13 policies to the attorney general; or, if the agency did not adopt  
14 policies consistent with the model policies, provide notice to the  
15 attorney general stating the reasons for any departures from the  
16 model policies and an explanation of how the agency's policies are  
17 consistent with the provisions of this act, and include a copy of the  
18 agency's relevant policies; and

19 (ii) Submit an annual report on its automated license plate  
20 reader system practices and usage to the appropriate committees of  
21 the legislature. The report must also be conspicuously posted on the  
22 agency's public website. The report shall include:

23 (A) The number of matches that resulted in arrest and  
24 prosecution;

25 (B) The number of stolen vehicles and stolen license plates  
26 recovered due to use of the system;

27 (C) The number of preservation requests and disclosure orders  
28 received;

29 (D) The number of times automated license plate reader data or  
30 audit trail data was shared with or accessed by another governmental  
31 entity and the identity of each of those governmental entities;

32 (E) The number of times automated license plate reader data was  
33 shared or accessed pursuant to a judicial warrant;

34 (F) Any changes in policy that affect privacy concerns;

35 (G) Results from the agency's internal audit of its ALPR system;  
36 and

37 (H) The total annual number of ALPR reads, hits, matches, and  
38 alerts.

39 (b) Prior to or coincident with implementation of an automated  
40 license plate reader system, a local law enforcement agency shall  
take measures to promote public awareness on the use of such system.

(3) After December 1, 2026, whenever an agency modifies or  
repeals any policies pertaining to the use of automated license plate

1 reader systems, the agency shall submit notice of such action with  
2 copies of any relevant policies to the attorney general within 60  
3 days.

4 (4) By December 31, 2027, the attorney general shall publish on  
5 its website a report on the requirements of this section, including  
6 copies of the model policies.

7 (5) Agencies that adopt policies required by this section must  
8 publish the policies on the agency website and submit a website link  
9 for those published policies with the attorney general. The attorney  
10 general is not required to publish those agency policies.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** AUDITS. (1) Each agency operating or  
12 accessing an automated license plate reader system shall maintain  
13 audit trail data documenting all access to and use of the system.  
14 Audit trail data must be retained for two years and must include, at  
15 a minimum:

16 (a) The identity of each user and the date, time, and purpose of  
17 each system access or search;

18 (b) Search term entered, where applicable;

19 (c) Any export, download, or sharing of ALPR data; and

20 (d) Any audit trail data generated by or made available through a  
21 third-party vendor providing ALPR services. Each agency shall ensure  
22 that all such vendor audit trail data is downloaded or otherwise  
23 obtained and retained by the agency in accordance with this section.

24 (2) Each agency shall conduct an internal audit at least once  
25 each year to review:

26 (a) All access to and use of the ALPR system, as reflected in the  
27 audit trail data; and

28 (b) The agency's compliance with the data retention, purging, and  
29 sharing requirements established under this chapter and agency  
30 policy.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** VIOLATIONS—APPLICATION OF THE CONSUMER  
32 PROTECTION ACT. The legislature finds that the practices covered by  
33 this chapter are matters vitally affecting the public interest for  
34 the purpose of applying the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86  
35 RCW. A violation of this chapter is not reasonable in relation to the  
36 development and preservation of business and is an unfair or  
37 deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of

1 competition for the purpose of applying the consumer protection act,  
2 chapter 19.86 RCW.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** CRIMINAL PENALTIES. Any person who  
4 willfully and intentionally queries, accesses, or uses an automated  
5 license plate reader system for a purpose not specifically authorized  
6 under this chapter, or who willfully and intentionally retains,  
7 sells, shares, permits access, or disseminates automated license  
8 plate reader system data or audit trail data in violation of this  
9 chapter, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** CIVIL REMEDY. A person injured by a  
11 violation of this chapter may bring a civil action to recover any  
12 equitable, declaratory relief, or injunctive relief with respect to  
13 the violation; and recover all other appropriate relief, including  
14 monetary damages. The court may award to a person aggrieved by a  
15 violation of this chapter who prevails in an action brought under  
16 this section the costs of the action, including reasonable attorneys'  
17 fees.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any provision of  
19 this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held  
20 invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision  
21 to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Sections 1 through 12 of this act  
23 constitute a new chapter in Title 10 RCW.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 15.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
25 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
26 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
27 effect immediately.

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