

March 23, 2026

Hon. Carol Hagain McEntee and Members of the Committee
Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island House of Representatives

RE: HB 8077 – Automated License Plate Readers

Dear Chair McEntee and Members of the Committee:

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) is a national, century-old, not-for-profit organization supported by approximately 1,200 property and casualty insurance companies, including 387 who write business in Rhode Island. Working hand-in-hand with our member companies and Rhode Island state and local law enforcement, we help to detect, prevent, and deter insurance crimes.

Automated license plate readers have proven to be a valuable crime fighting tool in cases ranging from arson, kidnapping, murder, vehicle theft and more. Given their success, we understand it is not your intent to unduly restrict their use for crimefighting purposes. However, we remain concerned with several provisions of HB 8077:

1). Sec. 12-5.3-2(a)(3) requires, prior to “entering into an agreement with any other person or entity to acquire, share, or otherwise use automated license plate readers or data,” municipal law enforcement agencies must hold a public hearing and obtain city or town council approval and state law enforcement agencies must, via rulemaking, adopt policies and procedures. While we understand this would largely apply to law enforcement entities that enter into a formal agreement with a private vendor or non-government entity, a liberal interpretation of agreement could include ad hoc, one-time sharing information related to a crime. For example, NICB vehicle data proved critical in the apprehension of three individuals charged in the relation of shooting a police officer in a neighboring state. Absent a public hearing, council approval, and adopted policies, we may be prohibited from sharing such information, or otherwise it would be inadmissible in court. We would suggest language that clarifies “entering into agreement” includes the exchange of monies or other consideration.

2). Sec. 12-5.3-3(a) states “[o]peration of and access to an automated license place reader and captured plate data shall be for official law enforcement purposes only...”. While it does not seem the intent of the bill is restrict commercial ALPR use, at worse, this language seems to prohibit all non-law enforcement ALPR use or private vendors with law enforcement contracts, and at best, it is confusing. For example, a private garage that uses to ALPR technology to open and close the gate for approved parkers would be prohibited. We would suggest this language be clarified to ensure non-law enforcement use of ALPRs remains lawful.

3). In the same section, we are concerned that the language stating that law enforcement use of ALPR data shall only be used for purposes of identifying: stolen vehicles, vehicles associated with wanted, missing, or endangered persons, vehicles that register as a match within the National Crime Information Center, and vehicles associated with a suspect in an ongoing, active investigation of a violent felony or domestic violence offense. Broadly interpreted non-law enforcement entities may

be prohibited from sharing evidence obtained by ALPRs with law enforcement related to non-enumerated crimes, including some insurance fraud or other white collar crimes. For example, if NICB or an insurer had critical ALPR evidence related to a medical provider engaged in a highly sophisticated, multi-million dollar medical fraud ring, NICB or the insurer would be prohibited from sharing that information with law enforcement. This is particularly troubling given Rhode Island, like nearly all states, require insurers to report suspected insurance fraud to state police. We would propose that instead of the bill attempting to identify the types of crimes ALPR data can be used to investigate, that the bill identifies the crimes in which ALPR data cannot be used.

4). In the same section, we are also concerned the legislation provides an unreasonably restrictive retention schedule of 21 days. While the bill provides several exceptions, including the vehicle remains the subject of an active investigation, many crimes take months or years to solve and the vehicle used may not yet be a known component of the investigation. Setting short destruction timelines on public agency automated license plate reader data would likely mean that valuable criminal evidence would be deleted and some crimes would go unsolved. We would suggest a much longer retention period than provided.

5). Section 12-5.3-6 requires, among other things, that law enforcement agencies maintain a public list of current census tracts in which an ALPR is located. Census tracts are relatively small geographic units of at least one square mile. We are concerned that publishing the location of ALPRs would allow criminals, particularly sophisticated organized crime rings involved in activities such as vehicle theft, cargo theft, drug running, and human trafficking to map their routes to evade detection—which can easily and quickly be done by artificial intelligence. We suggest this mandate be deleted from the bill.

We thank you for your review and consideration of our views. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at hhandler@nicb.org or 312-771-3974.

Sincerely,



Howard Handler, Sr. Director
Senior Director, Strategy, Policy and Government Affairs