FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION STATEMENT ON SENATE BILL 4, AN ACT CONCERNING CONSUMER PRIVACY.

March 4, 2026

The Freedom of Information Commission offers the following statement on Section 18(c) of Senate Bill 4, which seeks to make confidential automated license plate reader information.

Specifically, Section 18(c) provides that "[a]utomated license plate reader information is confidential and shall not be deemed a public record for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act…." Such information is defined (in lines 1026-1029) as "information that is (A) gathered by an automated license plate reader, or (B) created through an analysis of the information gathered by an automated license plate reader."

The FOI Commission would like to make the committee aware that in a November 2025 Final Decision[1], the Commission concluded that the Manchester Police Department violated the disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information Act by failing to provide the requester with public records; specifically, "license plate data generated by automated license plate readers." In its final decision, the FOI Commission noted that, because the police department had not extracted and preserved the requested records, they could not meet their burden of establishing the applicability of the claimed exemption from disclosure, based upon generalized testimony regarding records they did not review and do not exist.[2] As there were no records to review, the determination regarding the applicability of any particular exemption was not fully adjudicated at that time. A subsequent complaint[3] involving the same parties and a new request for data is pending before the Commission.

The Commission believes that there is a strong public interest in law enforcement agency use of automated license plate reader information technology. As the committee may be aware, discussion in the legislature about automated license plate readers has accelerated due in part to reporting[4] by journalists who discovered out-of-state authorities have searched data collected by Connecticut police departments thousands of times in an effort to enforce federal immigration

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[1] *See* Docket #FIC 2024-0808; Katherine Revello and Connecticut Inside Investigator v. Chief, Police Department, Town of Manchester; Police Department, Town of Manchester; and Town of Manchester (November 19, 2025), available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/foi/finaldecisions/2025/nov19/2024-0808.pdf

[2] *See* Town of Greenwich v. FOI Commission, 226 Conn. App. 40, 59, *cert. denied,* 349 Conn. 924 (2024) ("without first conducting a search to determine whether the records…exist and, to the extent they exist, reviewing such records, the plaintiffs cannot satisfy their burden of establishing that those records are exempt from disclosure….").

[3] *See* Docket #FIC 2026-0058; Katherine Revello v. William Darby, Chief, Police Department, Town of Manchester; Police Department, Town of Manchester; and Town of Manchester (Filed January 22, 2026).

[4] Out-of-state police are using Connecticut license plate camera data for immigration enforcement (CTinsider.com, February 3, 2026) https://www.ctinsider.com/connecticut/article/ct-license-plate-camera-reader-flock-immigration-21252287.php

laws. That story came to light due in part to public records requests filed with local police departments.

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