

Austin City Council Testimony
Support for License Plate Readers

Sgt. Drew McAngus

Mr. Mayor and Council members. I want to thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today as a Lifelong citizen of Austin, Travis County, as a representative for Constable Stacy Suits, and as a Career Law Enforcement Officer. Today I want to encourage you to support the Proposal brought before you by Councilwoman McKenzie Kelley concerning bringing back to the Austin Police Department their ability to start using again License Plate Readers. My experience tells me this is a PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUE.

As the Sergeant with Travis County Constable Pct 3 CORP Unit (Community Out Reach Program) and the Sergeant over our Traffic Unit I speak to you this morning from experience. Last year, I was able to Recover or was involved with the Recovery of over 25 stolen vehicles throughout the City of Austin and Travis County. I have done this by daily visiting Homeless Encampments and areas around these encampments located in each of your districts. I have firsthand knowledge, that many of the Stolen Vehicles that I have recovered were used for crimes such as: Burglaries, Dealing Drugs, and to sell for profit.

I know there is concern about what happens to the data collected by using the License Plate Readers. I understand the concern, however, I also understand the over whelming sense of lost one experiences when they walk outside of their house in the morning, to go to work, to school, or to the doctor and learn their vehicle has been stolen.

Many of the victims of Vehicle Theft can only afford to pay for Liability Insurance and do not have Full Coverage. Most do not have the money to buy another car and therefore suffer from not knowing if they can continue their Quality of Life. Once their vehicle is stolen, they often no longer can get to work, take their kids to school, or even go to the grocery store for food.

I believe the advantages of re-instituting the use of License Plate Readers by the Austin Police Department far out way the concerns some have. I humbly ask each of you to vote in favor of Councilwoman Kelley's proposal today and fund the use of the License Plate Readers.

Thank You!