

# STATE OF NEW YORK

685

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 6, 2021

Introduced by Sen. HOYLMAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Consumer Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law and the executive law, in relation to the use of automatic license plate reader systems

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
2 397-b to read as follows:

3 § 397-b. Use of automatic license plate reader systems prohibited. As  
4 used in this section: 1. "Automatic license plate reader system" or  
5 "ALPR system" shall mean a system of one or more mobile or fixed high  
6 speed cameras used in combination with computer algorithms to convert  
7 images of license plates into computer-readable data.

8 2. It shall be unlawful for any business, individual, partnership,  
9 corporation, association, or state or local government non-law enforce-  
10 ment entity to use an automatic license plate reader system.

11 3. The provisions of this section shall not apply to an electronic  
12 toll collection system or associated transaction system or any component  
13 thereof which is operated by a public authority for the purpose of  
14 imposing and collecting tolls on a roadway within the state.

15 4. A violation of the provisions of this section shall constitute a  
16 violation, and upon conviction thereof shall be punishable by a term of  
17 imprisonment not to exceed fifteen days, or by a fine of not more than  
18 one thousand dollars, or by both such fine and imprisonment. Each unlaw-  
19 fully installed or maintained device shall constitute a separate and  
20 distinct violation.

21 § 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 837-w to  
22 read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1     § 837-w. Use of automatic license plate readers by law enforcement  
2     agencies. 1. The use of automatic license plate reader systems by state  
3     and local law enforcement agencies shall be governed by this section.

4     (a) "Automatic license plate reader system" or "ALPR system" shall  
5     mean a system of one or more mobile or fixed high speed cameras used in  
6     combination with computer algorithms to convert images of license plates  
7     into computer-readable data.

8     (b) "Captured plate data" shall mean the GPS coordinates, date and  
9     time, photograph, license plate number, and any other data captured by  
10    or derived from any ALPR system.

11    (c) "Secured area" shall mean an area, enclosed by clear boundaries,  
12    to which access is limited and entry is only obtainable through specific  
13    access-control points.

14    2. (a) A state or local law enforcement agency may use an automatic  
15    license plate reader for the immediate comparison of captured plate data  
16    held by the registry of motor vehicles, the department of criminal  
17    justice information services, the national crime information center, the  
18    FBI kidnappings and missing persons list, and the New York state AMBER  
19    alert plan for the purpose of identifying:

20    (i) outstanding parking or traffic violations;

21    (ii) a violation of vehicle registration requirements;

22    (iii) a vehicle in violation of inspection requirements;

23    (iv) a stolen vehicle or stolen license plate;

24    (v) a vehicle registered to an individual for whom there is an  
25    outstanding default or arrest warrant for felony charges; or

26    (vi) a vehicle associated with a missing person.

27    (b) Automatic license plate readers may also be used: (i) by parking  
28    enforcement entities for the regulation of public parking;

29    (ii) by state or local government agencies for the purpose of control-  
30    ling access to secured areas; and

31    (iii) by the department of transportation or a public authority, for  
32    the purpose of electronic toll collection.

33    3. (a) Captured plate data obtained for the purposes described under  
34    this section shall not be used or shared for any other purpose and shall  
35    not be preserved for more than one hundred eighty days except pursuant  
36    to a preservation or disclosure request under this subdivision, or a  
37    warrant. Captured plate data may be maintained within the custody and  
38    control of a law enforcement agency for a longer time period if the data  
39    is retained or stored as part of an ongoing investigation, and in such  
40    case the data shall be destroyed at the conclusion of either (i) an  
41    investigation that does not result in any criminal charges being filed;  
42    or (ii) any criminal action undertaken in the matter involving the  
43    captured plate data.

44    (b) Upon the request of any law enforcement agency, an operator of an  
45    ALPR system shall take all necessary steps to immediately preserve  
46    captured plate data in its possession. A requesting agency must specify  
47    in a written sworn statement: (i) the particular camera or cameras for  
48    which captured plate data must be preserved or the particular license  
49    plate for which captured plate data must be preserved; and (ii) the date  
50    or dates and timeframes for which captured plate data must be preserved.

51    (c) A law enforcement agency may apply for a court order for disclo-  
52    sure of captured plate data which shall be issued by any court of compe-  
53    tent jurisdiction if the agency offers specific and articulable facts  
54    showing that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the captured  
55    plate data is relevant and material to an ongoing criminal or missing  
56    persons investigation.

1 (d) Captured plate data shall be destroyed by the operator of the ALPR  
2 system if the application for a disclosure order is denied or at the end  
3 of fourteen days, whichever is later.

4 4. Entities authorized to use ALPR systems under subdivision two of  
5 this section shall not sell, trade, or exchange captured plate data for  
6 any purpose.

7 5. An alert from an ALPR system used by a law enforcement agency does  
8 not constitute reasonable suspicion or probable cause to perform a traf-  
9 fic stop. If an ALPR system alerts on a plate, a law enforcement officer  
10 must visually confirm that the plate number and state of origin match  
11 the alert before taking law enforcement action.

12 6. Law enforcement agencies that use ALPR systems shall:

13 (a) Adopt a policy governing use of the system and conspicuously post  
14 the policy on the entity's web site;

15 (b) Adopt a privacy policy to ensure that captured plate data is not  
16 shared in violation of this section or any other law and conspicuously  
17 post the privacy policy on the agency's web site; and

18 (c) Report annually its automatic license plate reader practices and  
19 usage to the division, and conspicuously post the report on the entity's  
20 web site. The report shall include:

21 (i) the number of license plates scanned;

22 (ii) the number of preservation requests;

23 (iii) the number of disclosure orders;

24 (iv) any changes in policy that affect privacy concerns;

25 (v) the names of the lists against which captured plate data was  
26 checked, and for each list the number of confirmed matches;

27 (vi) the number of disclosure orders resulting in criminal charges,  
28 and the number of such charges resulting in conviction;

29 (vii) the total number of automatic license plate readers being oper-  
30 ated by the agency;

31 (viii) the number of automatic license plate reader readings being  
32 retained;

33 (ix) the number of requests made for automatic license plate reader  
34 data, including (A) the number of requests that resulted in the release  
35 of information; (B) the number of out-of-state requests; (C) the number  
36 of federal requests; (D) the number of out-of-state requests that  
37 resulted in a release of information; and

38 (x) any data breaches or unauthorized uses of the automatic license  
39 plate reader database.

40 7. Any plate data captured or improperly maintained shall not be  
41 introduced by the state in any grand jury or criminal proceeding or in  
42 any civil or administrative proceeding brought by the state or any  
43 government office or official. The state shall disclose to the defense  
44 the existence and the contents of any such captured data. A criminal  
45 defendant shall be entitled to introduce evidence of captured data,  
46 however obtained and maintained, in his or her defense. An individual  
47 whose rights have been violated by the improper capture or maintenance  
48 of plate data may introduce evidence concerning that plate data in a  
49 civil action or may grant permission to another party in a civil  
50 proceeding to introduce such evidence.

51 8. (a) Any aggrieved person may institute a civil action to restrain  
52 any violation of this section. If, in any such action, a willful  
53 violation is found to have occurred, the violator shall not be entitled  
54 to claim any privilege absolute or qualified, and he or she shall, in  
55 addition to any liability for such actual damages as may be shown, be  
56 liable for exemplary damages of not less than one hundred and not more

1 than one thousand dollars for each violation, together with costs and  
2 reasonable attorneys' fees and disbursements incurred by the person  
3 bringing the action.

4 (b) Any employee of a law enforcement agency authorized to utilize an  
5 ALPR system who violates the provisions of this section prohibiting the  
6 use, sale, dissemination or other distribution of license plate data for  
7 other than legitimate law enforcement purposes shall be guilty of a  
8 misdemeanor punishable by a sentence of imprisonment not exceeding one  
9 year or a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or by both such fine  
10 and imprisonment.

11 9. Captured plate data shall be considered personal data. Captured  
12 plate data may only be disclosed to, or with the prior written consent  
13 of, the person to whom the vehicle is registered; provided, however,  
14 that upon presentation to an operator of an ALPR system of a valid,  
15 current abuse prevention order protecting the driver of a vehicle joint-  
16 ly registered with or registered solely in the name of the individual  
17 against whom the order was issued, captured plate data may not be  
18 disclosed except pursuant to a disclosure order or as the result of a  
19 match.

20 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.