

# **Gov. Pritzker Signs Legislation To Expand Use Of Expressway Cameras For Law Enforcement Investigations**

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CHICAGO – Governor JB Pritzker today signed two pieces of legislation that allow for the expanded use of expressway cameras, empowering law enforcement agencies to investigate criminal activities along expressways and State highways.

“There is nothing more important than keeping Illinoisans safe—in our schools, in our parks, and on our expressways,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “The tragic incidences of gun violence on our highways requires aggressive and intentional action. By signing this bill, law enforcement agencies will have the tools to respond to criminal activity in a timely and efficient manner—ensuring the safety and security of our residents, while holding perpetrators accountable.”

“Automated license plate readers play a growing, critical role in ISP investigations and arrests in the Chicagoland area,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “ISP now routinely uses this technology to track down expressway shootings and carjacking suspects, so the expansion of this technology across Illinois expands our ability to protect our interstates and bring violent criminals to justice.

House Bill 4481 increases the number of cameras along expressways and State highways in the counties of Boone, Bureau, Champaign, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Henry, Kane, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Macon, Madison, McHenry, Morgan, Peoria, Rock Island, Sangamon, St. Clair, Will, and Winnebago. The state’s FY23 budget included \$20 million to expand the technology. This legislation is effective immediately.

“The millions of Illinoisans who regularly use state highways and expressways deserve safety during their commutes,” said Assistant House Majority Leader LaToya Greenwood (D-East St. Louis). “As a lawmaker, it’s a privilege to be able to join Governor Pritzker in taking such a direct, substantial step towards providing that safety. These cameras give police officers the tools they need to crack down on anyone misguided enough to break the law on our highways again.”

“Public safety is one of the biggest issues concerning Illinoisans,” Senator Laura Murphy (D-Des Plaines) said. “I am proud to advance legislation that will help our families feel safer and provides law enforcement the additional tools they need to investigate crimes and ensure justice is served.”

House Bill 260 allows for the use of expressway cameras along Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive. This gives law enforcement agencies the ability to use images from expressway cameras to investigate vehicular hijacking and other criminal activities, detect highway conditions and facilitate highway safety and incident management services. This legislation is effective immediately.

“As concerns about crime remain at the forefront, we must ensure law enforcement has the right tools to keep our communities safe and hold violent offenders accountable,” said State Representative Ann M. Williams (D-Chicago). “This bill, which expands the use of camera technology on our roadways, including on DuSable Lake Shore Drive,

will allow for more effective policing while protecting privacy concerns and civil liberties.”

“Expressway cameras are a much needed tool to combat crime on Jean-Baptiste DuSable Lake Shore drive,” said State Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago).

“Protecting our lake front communities and this critical piece of infrastructure is a top priority and am proud to see Governor Pritzker sign this law to expand the expressway camera program.”

The Illinois State Police (ISP), working with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Chicago Department of Transportation, has installed more than 150 Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) on Chicago expressways with plans to install approximately 150 more throughout the summer. These ALPRs cover the Dan Ryan Expressway (I-94), I-90, I-290, I-55, and I-57.

In February of 2021, ISP received a \$12.5 million grant to cover the costs of engineering, permitting, and labor associated with the purchase and installation of readers, controllers, servers/software, electrical power, and communications equipment required to install ALPR systems. In the first phase, ALPRs were installed on the Dan Ryan expressway during the summer and fall of 2021. The second phase was just completed for a total of 150 ALPRs on numerous expressways. For the final phase, ISP is currently installing 150 more ALPRs for a total of 300 under this initial grant.

The funding and installation of ALPRs stem from the Tamara Clayton Expressway Camera Act (Expressway Camera Act), which was signed into law on July 12, 2019 and became effective on January 1, 2020. On February 4, 2019, Ms. Clayton was on her way to work when she was tragically shot and killed while driving on I-57 near Cicero Avenue. ISP investigators responded and the investigation into her death remains open and ongoing. The Expressway Camera Act requires the ISP, IDOT, and Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA) to conduct a program to increase the number of cameras along expressways in Cook County. The images from these cameras are not used for petty offenses, such as speeding.

As of June 2, 2022, 69 expressway shootings on Cook County area expressways have been reported; 32 shootings resulted in injuries and one fatality. During the same time period in 2021, there were a total of 90 expressway shootings; including 45 shootings resulting in injuries and eight fatalities.

In 2021, there was a total of 264 reported expressway shootings. This includes 114 shootings with injuries, 22 shootings with fatalities, and a total of 148 gunshot victims. In 2020, there was a total of 128 reported expressway shootings, including 49 shootings with injuries, seven shootings with fatalities, and a total of 72 gunshot victims.

Earlier this month, Governor Pritzker signed laws reinvigorating the Violent Crime Witness Protection Act, combatting carjackings and vehicle theft launching a victim-centered co-responder pilot program to pair victims and witnesses with trauma-informed social workers. Last year, Illinois enacted the most comprehensive reform to our state firearms laws in over a generation, including universal background checks to keep guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them.