

New Belt Law Ends Traffic Stops For Windshield Obstructions

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SPRINGFIELD – Beginning Jan. 1, a new law from State Senator Christopher Belt will put an end to traffic stops from law enforcement that solely involve minor windshield obstructions.

“This measure is not about hindering officers but about creating an understanding between law enforcement and drivers about what a legitimate reason is to be pulled over,” said Belt (D-Swansea). “With this new law, we are sending a powerful message that the state does not tolerate racial profiling or other forms of discrimination.”

Starting Jan. 1, law enforcement officers cannot stop or search a vehicle because of a small item between the driver and the windshield such as decorations, disability placards, GPS systems and air fresheners. With concerns that traffic enforcement practices such as this disproportionately affect certain communities, this new law will prevent officers from using a minor windshield obstruction as a pretext to pulling drivers over but adds that the item cannot materially obstruct the driver's view.

“This new law helps reduce unnecessary police encounters over minor vehicle code offenses that too often lead to violent confrontations,” said Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, noting that Illinois was one of the last states to change the law. “Thank you to State Senator Belt and State Representative LaShawn Ford for championing this legislation that will result in greater equity on our roads by eliminating pretextual traffic stops and make our streets safer for both the public and law enforcement.”

[House Bill 2389](#) takes effect Jan. 1, 2024.