



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

March 25, 2019

Michele Storms
Executive Director, ACLU-WA
901 5th Avenue, Suite 630
Seattle, WA 98164

RE: HB 1229

Dear Michele Storms,

The Seattle City Council is committed to improving transportation access for all of its residents - including safe pedestrian crosswalk access. The recent closure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the change it brought to commuting habits and choices is significant to Seattle - more people are choosing to commute in other modes than their personal vehicles. As a result, we want to improve the movement of buses and provide safer pedestrian access through the use of automated traffic enforcement cameras.

We share your concerns about privacy and use of data. Our 2017 surveillance ordinance was carefully crafted and stands as an example of our respect for both privacy and transparency. Any new deployment of this type of technology must be reviewed and approved by the City Council. In addition, Council would require regular reports on the technology being used and its impact on the community.

We also share your concerns about HB 1229. While the City of Seattle will continue to advocate for technology to improve pedestrian safety and reduce congestion in key intersections, the technology must not be used beyond its purpose to the detriment of residents' privacy. Any language in state legislation considering broader policing power beyond the purpose of enforcing transportation rules would not meet our privacy regulation and transparency.

For this reason, we do not support HB 1229 nor would we support any legislation that would permit automated cameras originally deployed for traffic enforcement to be used more broadly for other surveillance or policing goals. We remain committed to the privacy goals reached in our 2017 surveillance ordinance. Should data from automated traffic cameras be used for other surveillance



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or police purposes, the city would discontinue use of our automated cameras until the privacy issues were resolved.

While we do advocate for more technological options to improve transportation mobility and protect pedestrians at key intersections, we agree that this information must only be used for traffic enforcement. Limited use of technology to advance traffic safety does not need to be inconsistent with our privacy and surveillance commitment.

Sincerely,

Council President Bruce Harrell

Councilmember Mike O'Brien

Councilmember Sally Bagshaw

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Councilmember M. Lorena González

Councilmember Rob Johnson

Councilmember Kshama Sawant

Councilmember Debora Juarez



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T. Mosqueda

Councilmember Tereesa Mosqueda

CC: Shankar Narayan, Technology & Liberty Director, ACLU-WA
Eric Alfaro Gonzalez, Legislative Director, ACLU-WA