



128 Dorrance Street, Suite 400
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: (401) 831-7171
Fax: (401) 831-7175
www.riaclu.org
info@riaclu.org

ACLU OF RI POSITION: OPPOSE

**TESTIMONY ON 24-H 7748,
AN ACT RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE – COURTS – STATE
AND MUNICIPAL COURT CONTRACT
March 12, 2024**

The ACLU of Rhode Island has long expressed opposition to the needless proliferation of surveillance technologies – particularly camera technologies – as a method of addressing the enforcement of traffic statutes. Similarly, we are opposed to this legislation which would expand the allowable use for traffic violation detection systems for violations of our state’s “Don’t Block the Box” statute.

Our organization has argued for years about the inefficiency of surveillance systems at curbing the problems they are purportedly designed to address. Traffic violation systems by nature cannot cure any problems with a driver in the moment, and any violations found by their use are presumed to be the owner of the car rather than the actual driver of the vehicle. They also create an unofficial record of the whereabouts of drivers and store data on vehicle location for indeterminate amounts of time. Because of this, the net effect of these systems is to normalize the issue of “surveillance creep” rather than comprehensively addressing the problems they are designed to attempt to fix. Ultimately, use of this technology is all about raising revenue, not promoting traffic safety.

Issues of traffic in Rhode Island will not be solved by pointing cameras, and the collateral consequences of camera use show that these are not a long-term solution for any chronic traffic concerns. For these reasons, we strongly urge that the expansion proposed by this bill be rejected. Thank you for your consideration.