

February 20, 2026

Members of the Washington State Legislature:

We, the undersigned mayors from cities and towns across Washington State, write to respectfully urge you to amend SB 6002 to **authorize the use of automated license plate readers (ALPRs) for investigation of gross misdemeanors.**

Local governments are on the front lines of ensuring public safety in our communities, often working with limited resources. Law enforcement agencies rely on timely, accurate investigative methods and tools. With limited resources and often not enough officers, technology is one of the ways we can increase our public safety capacity. ALPRs are an effective and efficient investigative tool that helps officers quickly identify vehicles connected to crimes, locate suspects and vulnerable individuals, and generate leads that may otherwise be unavailable. ALPRs are a tool that when used in combination with recognized investigative practices and within existing legal standards do not circumvent probable cause requirements or replace other investigatory practices and methods.

Allowing the continued use of ALPR technology for gross misdemeanor investigations strengthens law enforcement’s ability to carry out timely and effective investigations of offenses that significantly impact public safety and quality of life. As currently structured, limitations on the use of ALPRs in SB 6002 restrict application to felonies, excluding gross misdemeanors. Gross misdemeanors are not minor offenses. They represent serious criminal conduct that can cause significant harm to individuals, families, and communities. Many gross misdemeanors involve ongoing threats to victim safety, repeated or escalating behavior, and conduct that disrupts community well-being. Washington law recognizes the seriousness of these offenses in its classification structure. For reference, under 9A.28.020 RCW, an attempt to commit a Class C felony is classified as a gross misdemeanor – reflecting the Legislature’s established determination that conduct falling within this category may involve behavior closely approaching felony-level criminality.

Given the nature and impact of these offenses, effective investigation and timely intervention are critical to preventing further harm and protecting our residents. The following is a non-exhaustive list of gross misdemeanors for which ALPR data, including vehicle identification, license plate, and location information, may be critical to solving cases and preventing further harm.

Gross misdemeanors: Person & victim-centered offenses

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth-degree assault, including domestic violence (DV) & interfering in DV reporting • Attempted third-degree rape • Attempted third-degree rape of a child • Second-degree sexual misconduct with a minor & child molestation • Second-degree voyeurism • Failure to register as a sex or kidnapping offender • Attempted criminal trespassing against • Second-degree animal cruelty • Health care facility or provider interference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempted criminal trespassing against children as a registered sex or kidnapping offender • Obstructing a law enforcement officer • Third-degree criminal mistreatment • Third-degree abandonment of a dependent person • Stalking & Harassment • Attempted luring & unlawful imprisonment • Violation of antiharassment, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, extreme risk, or vulnerable adult protection orders |
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Gross misdemeanors: Vehicle, roadway, & property offenses

- Driving under the influence
- Physical control of a vehicle while under the influence
- Reckless driving
- Hit & run of attended vehicle or property resulting in injury
- Street racing
- Reckless endangerment
- Third-degree defrauding public utility
- Roadway construction zone violations
- First-degree trespassing
- Second-degree vehicle prowling

As evident by proactive actions taken by many cities and towns to address public concern regarding ALPRs, we are committed to balancing public safety with individual privacy and civil liberties, which require strict adherence to probable cause standards. We support clear statutory guardrails governing ALPR use. The continued inclusion of ALPR use for gross misdemeanor offenses can be achieved in alignment with important privacy protections and legal standards.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Legislature amend SB 6002 to authorize the use of ALPRs in the investigations of gross misdemeanors. We also welcome the opportunity to work with legislative partners on additional technical amendments to ensure the bill is clear, workable, and effective for local jurisdictions and the public.

Thank you for your leadership and continued partnership with Washington's cities and towns in advancing safe and thriving communities. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continuing to work with you on this critical issue.

Sincerely Mayors of Washington cities and towns,

Troy Linnell, Algona
 Ryan Walters, Anacortes
 Don Vanney, Arlington
 Nancy Backus, Auburn
 Greg Wheeler, Bemerton
 Len Burton, Benton City
 Terry Carter, Bonney Lake
 Dale Kaemingk, Brier
 Bill Aslett, Burlington
 Chris Brewer, Centralia
 Elsa Martin, Cheney
 Matthew Lundh, Cle Elum
 Dean Hachamovitch, Clyde Hill
 Jack Smith, Colville
 Linda Springer, Cosmopolis
 Bob Poch, Coulee Dam
 Sean Smith, Covington
 Timothy Verzal, Deer Park
 Ronald Frederick, DuPont
 Amy McHenry, Duvall
 Jerrilea Crawford, East Wenatchee
 Dave Olson, Edgewood
 Josh Collette, Elma
 Cassie Franklin, Everett
 Jim Ferrell, Federal Way
 Cody Lord, Garfield
 Steven Yarbrough, Gold Bar

Ashley Lara, Grandview
 Hilda Gonzalez, Granger
 Joseph Armand, Harrington
 Dan Nutt, Lone
 Michael Robitaille, Kahlotus
 Kelli Curtis, Kirkland
 Brett Gailey, Lake Stevens
 Corinna Rittgarn, Latah
 Carl Florea, Leavenworth
 Susan Svendsen, Long Beach
 Scott Korthuis, Lynnden
 George Hurst, Lynwood
 Sean P. Kelly, Maple Valley
 Jon Nehring, Marysville
 David Rosenbaum, Mercer Island
 Peter Daggett, Metaline
 Stephanie Vignal, Mill Creek
 Bruce White, Milton
 Patsy Cudaback, Monroe
 Tyler Trimble, Montesano
 Peter Donovan, Mount Vernon
 Joe Marine, Mukilteo
 Kevin Hester, Nooksack
 Ronnie Wright, Oak Harbor
 Bill Crossley, Odessa
 Wayne Turner, Okanogan
 Dontae Payne, Olympia
 Ken Johnson, Othello

Vic Kave, Pacific
 Rob Putaansuu, Port Orchard
 Ed Stern, Poulsbo
 Ned Witting, Puyallup
 Dee Roberts, Raymond
 Angela Birney, Redmond
 Armondo Pavone, Renton
 Carrie Roecks, Rockford
 Jeff Adams, Roslyn
 Bruce Hopkins, Ruston
 Julia Johnson, Sedro-Woolley
 Roger Bell, Selah
 Sharon Schirman, Shelton
 Betsy Robertson, Shoreline
 Laura Padden, Spokane Valley
 Stefany Smith, Springdale
 Sid Roberts, Stanwood
 Charles Hill, Starbuck
 Russell Wiita, Sultan
 Carla S. Bowman, Sumner
 Roy Schulz, Tekoa
 David Watterson, Tenino
 Rob Adams, Tieton
 Thomas McLeod, Tukwila
 Wesley Kerr, Uniontown
 Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver
 Gustavo Reyna, Walla Walla
 Fred Brink, West Richland
 Katy Kinney Harris, Yarrow Point