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November 9, 2026

Chairs McDonald, Rozic, Solages and members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on the use of Flock Safety Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) technology in New York. We appreciate the opportunity to share our views and encourage legislation that protects the privacy of New Yorkers while ensuring law enforcement have the necessary tools to keep their communities safe.

How Flock ALPRs Work

Flock's fixed license plate reader (LPR) cameras capture still images of vehicles traveling on public roads. Software records the license plate and observable vehicle characteristics, such as make, color, and body type. Flock ALPRs do not use facial recognition technology.

There are two primary ways an agency may use the system. First, an authorized user may search for a vehicle connected to a specific investigation—for example, a vehicle described by a witness or associated with a reported offense. Second, an agency may place a plate or vehicle on an authorized hotlist, such as a stolen-vehicle or missing-person alert list, so that a camera can generate a timely alert if the vehicle is detected. The result is an investigative lead: it is not a determination of guilt, a probable-cause finding, or a substitute for police work. Officers must verify the alert and assess the circumstances before acting.

That distinction matters. A camera does not solve a case on its own. Investigators supply the facts, decide what to search, corroborate the result, interview witnesses, and determine what evidence is relevant. The technology can help narrow a search from thousands of possible routes or vehicles to a lead.

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Efficacy of Flock ALPRs

In Flock's first annual 2025 Impact Census, nearly 700 law-enforcement agencies in 43 states reported on outcomes and use. The Census estimated that Flock technology assisted in approximately one in five cleared cases in customer jurisdictions and helped locate approximately 10,000 missing persons nationwide in 2025. The report also estimated that the platform supported roughly one million investigations and incidents. The methodology and its limits are described in the 2025 Impact Census. This year, research by professors at the University of South Carolina found that Flock LPR was associated with an 11% decrease in motor vehicle theft and a 15.9% increase in clearance by arrest in the first year after Flock deployment across 216 agencies.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), in a June 7, 2024 letter, called its partnership with Flock "instrumental in enhancing our capabilities." NCMEC also wrote that "Over 100 missing children cases have been resolved thanks to the swift action enabled by this technology." That figure reflects cases reported as of the letter's date; it is not a current annual count. We are grateful for NCMEC's work and for its recognition of the importance of timely tools in AMBER Alert cases.

Safeguards, local control, and public trust

The data generated by a Flock customer's cameras belongs to and is controlled by that customer, not Flock. The customer sets the retention period and decides whether to share its data. Flock does not sell customer data to third parties. Data is automatically deleted at the end of the selected retention period unless the agency preserves specific evidence for an active investigation in accordance with its policies and applicable law.

System access is limited to authorized users and protected by mandatory multi-factor authentication. Searches create audit records that include the user, agency, reason, time, search parameters, and case number where applicable. Flock will be requiring all law-enforcement customers to adopt Audit Assistance, which flags unusual patterns for agency review, and case codes for law-enforcement searches, with exigent searches flagged for follow-up. These measures strengthen accountability, but they do not replace clear laws, agency policies, independent oversight, or consequences for misuse.

We recognize the legitimate concerns about persistent vehicle data, sharing across jurisdictions, retention, cybersecurity, and the potential for misuse. This is why we encourage the state Legislature to adopt a framework that establishes protections in law to address each concern. Flock Safety also supports legislation that would prohibit the sale of LPR data, require documented reasons and auditable logs for searches, and provide meaningful agency oversight and penalties for misuse.

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Flock's view is that privacy and public safety are not opposing goals. Legislation should preserve timely, case-specific investigative leads while establishing a framework for the collection, access, retention, and sharing of data. We welcome the Committee's scrutiny and are prepared to work with the Legislature, law enforcement, privacy advocates, and New York communities on standards that are enforceable, transparent, and worthy of public trust.

Thank you for considering this statement.

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