NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY ON AUTOMATIC LICENSE PLATE READER SYSTEMS FOR THE NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PROTECTION, GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HEARING
November 9, 2026

Dear Chair Rozic, Chair McDonald, Chair Solages, and Members of the New York State Assembly Committees on Consumer Affairs and Protections, Governmental Operations, and Local Governments,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) for the hearing on Automatic License Plate Reader Systems LPR in New York.

DOT operates four types of LPR systems: Red Light Cameras, Speed Cameras, Weigh-in-motion (WIM), and Bus Lane Cameras. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) operates an additional camera program on their buses that DOT supports. For all four programs, DOT takes New Yorkers' privacy seriously, which is why DOT does not operate license plate readers or any camera technology that captures or stores personal information relating to road users. DOT does not have any contracts with Flock, and DOT's automated enforcement cameras, operated by our partner Verra, differ from ALPRs like Flock in many ways. DOT's enforcement cameras only capture images of license plates for vehicles alleged to have committed a violation. Cameras do not capture any images of drivers, passengers or contents of the vehicles and all violations are sent to the registered owner of the vehicle. After the images are captured, a team of trained evaluators review each violation to validate the details. Photographs from the programs are destroyed after a year or when a violation is adjudicated, whichever is later, as required by state law. NYPD must obtain a court-ordered subpoena establishing that the camera footage is relevant and material to a Grand Jury investigation or prosecution of a misdemeanor or felony. The original subpoena must be hand delivered before relevant evidence can be provided by DOT. The cameras are not interconnected and cannot be searched. The database system connected to these cameras conform to NYC Office of Technology and Innovation's (OTI) cybersecurity standards. In addition, there is no revenue sharing agreement with the contractors, so the vendors DOT partners with have no monetary incentive to issue more violations.

Our cameras are critical tools DOT leverages to advance Vision Zero and are proven to change driver behavior and prevent dangerous crashes. While most drivers never get more than one or two violations, drivers who receive five or more red light camera violations in one year are more than 100 times more likely to be in a fatal or severe injury crash. Mayor Mamdani recently announced that the City has installed red light cameras at 600 intersections citywide, fulfilling its commitment to expand the program and reaching the maximum number of red light cameras permitted under state law. Both the red light and speed camera programs are data-driven and sited based on relevant crash types and reckless driving behaviors at those locations. DOT operates 382 fixed Bus Lane Cameras at 192 locations along bus lanes throughout the city to ensure bus lanes are clear and keep New Yorkers moving on faster buses. There are more than 1,600 on-bus enforcement cameras operated by MTA, with DOT supporting the ACE program by reviewing and mailing out resulting violations, consistent with DOT's role in other enforcement camera programs.

DOT looks forward to continuing to partner with the New York State Legislature to ensure our streets are safe and proven solutions to enforce traffic violations are leveraged effectively.

Sincerely,
Mike Flynn
Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation