



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION CALLING FOR HEARING INTO THE SITE SELECTION OF RED LIGHT CAMERAS

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago City Council approved the installation of automated traffic law enforcement systems, commonly referred to as "red light cameras" throughout the city in 2003; and

WHEREAS, while the cameras might aid in efforts to create safer streets by discouraging drivers from driving through red traffic lights, it is not clear that the cameras are installed at the intersections where they would make the greatest impact to traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, the cameras have generated more than \$300 million in revenue for the City of Chicago since 2003; and

WHEREAS, many in the public are skeptical that these cameras are motivated by concerns for traffic safety, and not by a need for additional revenue; and

WHEREAS, recent news reports have called into question the administration of the contract between camera vendor Redflex Camera Systems and the Department of Transportation official previously in charge of supervising the contract; and

WHEREAS Redflex has collected more than \$100 million in revenue from its contract with the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Sec. 9-102-010(c) of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago authorizes the Department of Transportation, with the advice of the Police Department and the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, to identify intersections where the installation of cameras is warranted; and

WHEREAS, if such cameras are to be used in the City of Chicago, they should be installed according to some data-based analysis indicating the locations where they may make the greatest impact on traffic safety; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that, in order to ensure that red light cameras have been, and will continue to be, installed in the locations where they will improve traffic safety, as opposed to simply where they will generate the most revenue, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council call for a public hearing inviting members of the Department of Transportation, Police Department, and Office of Emergency Management and Communications to address the following queries:

Describe the process by which the Department of Transportation previously determined where to install red light cameras, including the process by which data was collected and analyzed in the decision-making process.

2. Explain how the Police Department, Office of Emergency Management and Communications, and Redflex were consulted during the camera site-selection process, and explain what information and data was sought.
3. Explain what role, if any, considerations of potential revenue played in the selecting of intersections for the installation of red light cameras, and who expressed those considerations.
4. Describe any changes that will be made going forward in the process of selecting intersections appropriate for the installation of red light cameras, who should be included in that decision-making process, and what data should be included to maximize traffic safety.
5. Explain if it is possible to design a data-based formula to select intersections for the installation of red light cameras, removing the human element except where physical inspection is needed to certify that there are not impediments to the actual installation of red light camera equipment.