



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Transportation

FR: Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J.B. Van Hollen".

DT: July 16, 2009

RE: Written Testimony in Support of 2009 Assembly Bill 230 Relating to Electronic Distribution of Driver's Photos

I am writing today to support 2009 Assembly Bill 230. This important legislation would bring the law in line with technology. Once implemented, the bill will protect law enforcement officers, help them protect the public, and do so in a manner that will appropriately protect against inappropriate use of driver's photos.

The TIME system is a computer-based law enforcement communications control center, managed by the Department of Justice. It is the critical information network relied on by law enforcement officers for timely, accurate, on-the-scene information. While law permits the sharing of driver's photos on written request for certain criminal justice purposes, it does not enable real-time electronic access to these records as it does with other DOT records, court records, criminal history records, and a series of other records that aid an officer making a stop or responding to a call. This bill, if enacted, would change that.

As Attorney General, I've had the privilege of traveling the state and meeting with local law enforcement to talk about what we can do at the state level to help them do their jobs better. One issue that's been repeatedly raised is the desirability of the TIME system to carry drivers' license photos. I and my staff agree with these local law enforcement officers: public safety and law enforcement can be considerably enhanced by enabling real-time access to DOT photos.

To implement this bill, absent state or federal funding, the Department will need to delay other projects relating to electronic support of law enforcement. The Department has an ongoing project to improve the TIME system to match modern technology and meet recommended standards that are being used or being implemented nationally. Making DOT photographic records electronically available over the TIME system—a capability enjoyed by our neighbors in Minnesota—will fit into this ongoing project. Make no mistake. While other TIME system improvements will be delayed absent funding, there is probably no single TIME system related project that will be more appreciated by law enforcement than the one that would be mandated by the bill if enacted.

I commend Representatives Hraychuk and Rhoades for their leadership on this bill. And I appreciate the support of the numerous legislators of both parties who are sponsoring this legislation. I am proud to formally support this legislation and I encourage this Committee to support it as well.