

Senator Larry George Senator Brian Boquist

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 13, 2014
Contact: Michael Gay
503.986.1955
503.781.8559

Democrats kill privacy bill, refuse to protect civil liberties

*GPS-specific, time-stamped photos and data of Oregonians
left sitting in government servers*

Salem, OR - Despite the shock of recent civil rights violations that have been exposed nationwide, the Senate General Government Committee refused to take action on a simple bill that would have protected the privacy of Oregonians. Senate Bill 1522 would have limited the amount of time a law enforcement agency could keep data collected from automatic license plate surveillance technology. The committee's inaction allows government agencies to hold data on innocent citizens for an indefinite period of time.

"I'm confident this bill would pass in a bi-partisan way if allowed to the Senate floor," said Senator Larry George (R-Sherwood). "I'm shocked that Democrats on this committee and in leadership are so eager to protect NSA-style data hoarding, violating the privacy of millions of innocent citizens. The Democrats say they care about privacy but time and time again refuse to take a vote that protects privacy. It is outrageous!"

Automatic license plate readers are mounted cameras that snap a photograph of every license plate that passes by, photographing thousands of cars per minute. The photo is converted to machine-readable text and checked against databases, automatically alerting an officer whenever a match is found with a flagged automobile.

When an image is captured, it is also tagged with a GPS location and the time and date showing where and when the photograph was taken. This information is gathered about every car that is photographed, not just those with a flag attached to them, and everyone's private information is stored indefinitely.

Senate Bill 1522 would have limited the amount of time the bulk data could be held by law enforcement agencies.

"One of our most fundamental jobs as legislators is to protect the civil liberties of our citizens," said Senator Brian Boquist (R-Dallas). "The government is quietly making invasions into the private lives of everyday Americans, collecting gigabytes of info about where you drive, what you watch and the things you do in your spare time. Oregon should be willing to say enough is enough, and build protections around the private lives of Oregonians."

###