



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Law and Order Committee Deliberates Report on License Plate Readers



The Law and Order Committee received a report from Flock Group, Inc. regarding license plate reader technology.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee (LOC) received a report from Flock Group, Inc., presented by Cameron Lewis, regarding license plate reader technology to enhance the operations of the Navajo Police Department (NPD) and Criminal Investigation.

“This license plate reader technology will change how the Navajo Nation addresses crime and will improve public safety by recording and storing evidence for violent crimes,” said LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton. “It’s important our people feel safe and that we’re not burning out our first responders.”

Lewis informed the LOC that the technology is compatible with rural areas and will assist NPD across the Nation. The report indicated it would help reduce crimes such as drug trafficking and reckless driving, and aid in missing person cases.

Lewis explained the system identifies a vehicle’s “fingerprint”—its make, model, color, and physical description—which helps determine vehicles involved in crimes. The technology is used in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, and has been adopted by other tribal nations.

LOC Vice Chair Nathan Notah questioned the system’s effectiveness in rural areas, noting the lack of stoplights, which are often required for installing cameras and sensors.

He also asked whether NPD could respond to all alerts and if the cameras could help locate elderly individuals with dementia, expressing concern for missing elders.

Director Michael Henderson addressed the capacity issue, stating that the technology would enhance rather than burden NPD by helping officers collect evidence, apprehend violent criminals, and identify vehicles linked to missing persons.

Council Delegate Herman Daniels asked how the system would integrate with neighboring tribes, particularly the Hopi and Zuni reservations, and whether it would improve cross-reservation law enforcement.

Henderson stated the project is in its initial phase. If the Hopi Nation acquires cameras, their system could integrate with Navajo Nation's. He also noted the system could expand to schools, utilities, and businesses.

Council Delegate Arbin Mitchell raised concerns about the technology's cost and suggested Navajo-owned businesses and chapter houses could invest in it to reduce insurance premiums and boost community safety.

Chair Charles-Newton said she is sponsoring legislation to fund the contract and annual subscription but must work with the Budget and Finance Committee to secure funding.

Lewis assured the LOC that Flock is ready to make any necessary adjustments for implementation. He emphasized the system's potential in missing person cases by sharing vehicle fingerprint data with nearby agencies.

The LOC fully supported the Flock Group, Inc. license plate reader and voted three in favor and none opposed to accept the report. The proposal will now go to the Budget and Finance Committee for funding consideration.

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