



MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chair of the Committee on Judiciary, Law Enforcement, and General Services

Supervisor Justin Bielinski • District 16

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Contact: Eddie Cullen (414)793-0347

Supervisor Bielinski Calls on MCSO to Immediately Disable Its Entire Network of Flock Surveillance Cameras, Move to End Current Contract

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Supervisor and Chairman of the Committee on Judiciary, Law Enforcement, and General Services, Justin Bielinski is calling on the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office to immediately disable and cover its entire network of Flock surveillance cameras on County property and move to end the County's current contract with Flock Safety, citing growing concerns about privacy, transparency, and the company's handling of data collected through its automated license plate reader network.

The call comes as communities across Wisconsin reconsider their relationships with Flock Safety. In Sheboygan, city officials moved to cover the city's 15 Flock cameras and seek termination of its contract after learning that a Flock representative had offered to sell the city five years of traffic-speed and movement data captured by its own cameras. City officials said they were not aware that the cameras were collecting that type of information. Supervisor Bielinski issued the following statement:

"Residents should not have to wait for another disclosure before we act. Even if you have confidence in the Sheriff's Department's use of Flock, the question remains: do we trust Flock itself with this information?"

"What happened in Sheboygan should be a wake-up call for Milwaukee County. When a private company has access to sensitive information about where people travel and is changing its terms around how that data can be used, Milwaukee County residents deserve better than assurances; they deserve accountability. The responsible course is to end this contract now, determine exactly what information has been collected, and establish clear public safeguards before Milwaukee County considers using this technology again."

Supervisor Bielinski's call comes amid growing scrutiny of Flock Safety's automated license plate reader technology, which captures license plates and other vehicle characteristics and stores the information in a searchable database. Recent reporting has raised additional concerns about the technology's expanded search capabilities and the potential for misuse of surveillance data.

Milwaukee County has already begun taking steps to establish greater limits and accountability around Flock technology. On September 1, County Executive David Crowley directed County departments and the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office to limit Flock camera operations on County property and develop stronger standards governing permissible uses, data retention, access, and sharing. The directive also calls for independent audits and enforceable consequences for misuse.

Because the Sheriff's Office has independent authority over its departmental policies, Bielinski is calling on Sheriff Denita Ball to take the next step by immediately disabling and covering the County's Flock cameras and moving to end the current contract. Bielinski and five fellow County Board Supervisors have also introduced a resolution that would prohibit Flock surveillance cameras on Milwaukee County parkland if the Sheriff's Office does not act independently. The resolution would provide the County Board with an independent avenue to remove the cameras from County Parks, where 42 cameras are currently permitted.

Bielinski said these steps should ultimately be followed by termination of the County's Flock contract and a full accounting of the information collected through the system.

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