



POLICE

575 South 10th Street | Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-6000 | F: 402-441-8492 | lpd@cjis.lincoln.ne.gov

February 19, 2021

Senator Brewer, Chair
Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee
Nebraska State Capitol
P. O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

RE: 2021 – LB557, Introduced by Senator Matt Hansen

Senator Brewer and Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I write to you in opposition of LB557.

LB557 is a well-intentioned but flawed effort to increase the accessibility of certain public records to both residents and non-residents of the state of Nebraska. The bill would also make police body-worn camera (BWC) video recordings involving the death of a person being apprehended or in the custody of a law enforcement agency a public record, and thus, subject to public records requests. Although this may increase the immediate transparency of an agency's response, it would only provide the public with one piece of information without the full backdrop of all available information gathered during the investigation.

During these rare and unfortunate instances, investigators often recover and analyze hours upon hours of BWC video associated with the incident. The initial scene investigation is but a small part of the overall investigative process. These types of investigations are extremely complex and require a significant amount of time before any final conclusion can be made.

Providing a limited view of the available evidence to the public and news media prior to a grand jury hearing or court proceeding would substantially and unduly bias the opinions of those responsible for making fair and impartial decisions. Prematurely releasing limited video evidence jeopardizes the right to due process for those individuals involved. We cannot and should not sacrifice the right to due process merely to satisfy someone's curiosity or because a media outlet wants to be the first to break a story. To ensure a fair and impartial judicial process, we oppose LB557.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and thank the committee for their consideration.

Respectfully,

Brian Jackson, Acting Chief of Police

Jason Stille, Acting Assistant Chief



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