

State of South Dakota

EIGHTY-THIRD SESSION LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2008

183P0086

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

Introduced by: Senators Two Bulls, Bartling, Dempster, Garnos, and Katus and
Representatives Juhnke, Bradford, DeVries, Van Norman, and Weems at the
request of the Committee on State-Tribal Relations

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Supporting the use of video cameras in state and local law
2 enforcement vehicles.

3 WHEREAS, the use of video camera equipment in law enforcement vehicles has increased
4 significantly in recent years. State police and highway patrol vehicles around the nation have
5 used federal funding for the installation of video cameras in law enforcement vehicles. By 2003,
6 forty-seven states had received more than \$21 million in federal funding for the purchase of
7 in-car cameras, and currently, 72 percent of state police and highway patrol vehicles used for
8 patrol are equipped with video systems; and

9 WHEREAS, in-car camera recordings provide an unbiased account of events that allow
10 citizens and others to view what actually occurred during encounters between law enforcement
11 personnel and the public. Agencies and others report that such evidence has been invaluable and
12 that the benefits of the in-car video camera far exceeded the original goals; and

13 WHEREAS, the single greatest value of the in-car camera is the positive impact that it has
14 on officer safety. Recordings give officers the opportunity to review their videotapes as a means



1 to self-critique their actions and review their approach to each situation and to any officer safety
2 issues they discover; and

3 WHEREAS, in-car video and audio recordings improve professionalism and training.
4 Officers tend to perform to the best of their ability when they know they are being recorded.
5 Cameras allow officers to more accurately reconstruct situations and obtain exact statements for
6 evidence. The ability to review the recording improves the chances of apprehending offenders
7 in situations where officers have been injured; and

8 WHEREAS, in-car cameras improve the officers' ability to respond to complaints regarding
9 professionalism and courtesy. Most officers have reported that the camera ultimately cleared
10 them of accusations of wrongdoing; very few reported that the camera sustained a complaint
11 filed against them; and

12 WHEREAS, in the context of contacts between law enforcement personnel and Native
13 American citizens, the presence of video recording equipment would serve to benefit all groups
14 by showing what actually transpired on those occasions. While video cameras cannot resolve
15 allegations or instances of racial profiling in all cases, this equipment can clarify what took
16 place in a great many instances and would make a positive contribution; and

17 WHEREAS, the South Dakota Highway Patrol already uses in-car video cameras and
18 continues to update equipment and capabilities in this area. The Highway Patrol in the past has
19 donated surplus video equipment to local law enforcement agencies for installation in their
20 vehicles; and

21 WHEREAS, local law enforcement jurisdictions could benefit by the increased use of in-car
22 video recording equipment:

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Eighty-Third Legislature
24 of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the South

1 Dakota Legislature supports and encourages the installation of video and audio recording
2 equipment in law enforcement patrol vehicles at all levels, including state, municipal, and
3 county vehicles. The Legislature urges law enforcement agencies and state and local
4 governments to seek funding from all potential federal, state, and local sources, to consider the
5 use of surplus equipment if appropriate, and to make full use of this important technology.