

Law enforcement guns

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Good morning,

Just saw the article in Digger about the guns vs body cameras. Gov Ops took testimony from them the other day and we were in the process of writing a letter of support to your Committee. It is my fault you didn't get it before your testimony. I did not realize you were that far along. So I am writing this now without review by the Committee but reflecting our thoughts.

We agree that the body cameras are very important and they should continue to pursue them. We also realize that for some reason they completely underestimated the cost of storage of the data. The industry has figured out that if they make the cameras themselves cheap they will be purchased and then they can charge outrageous amounts for storage - and then the cost of retrieval. They are right about needing a state policy on how they are treated as public records and the retention policy.

We understand that they are not abandoning the idea of cameras but want those two policies in place first and need a larger or ongoing appropriation in order to begin the purchases.

We took the testimony on the need for rifles in the cruisers and agreed that, as much as we might not like it, they were necessary. While this indeed is a departure in the use of the money our assessment was that it was a better use of the remaining funds at this time.

I am not sure how this would normally work if it were in their regular budget. they would justify the need to Judiciary and Gov Ops and then bring it to Approps? I believe Gov Ops would have supported it in a regular budget as well but our thought here was that perhaps it was better to not wait the extra 6 months and that since they did not have all the resources necessary to purchase and use the cameras it made sense to make this switch now.

We intend to take some testimony from an agency that does use them to find out how they have dealt with these two issues. Although our understanding is that many agencies have stopped using them precisely because of these issues.

Again my apologies for not getting this to you sooner.