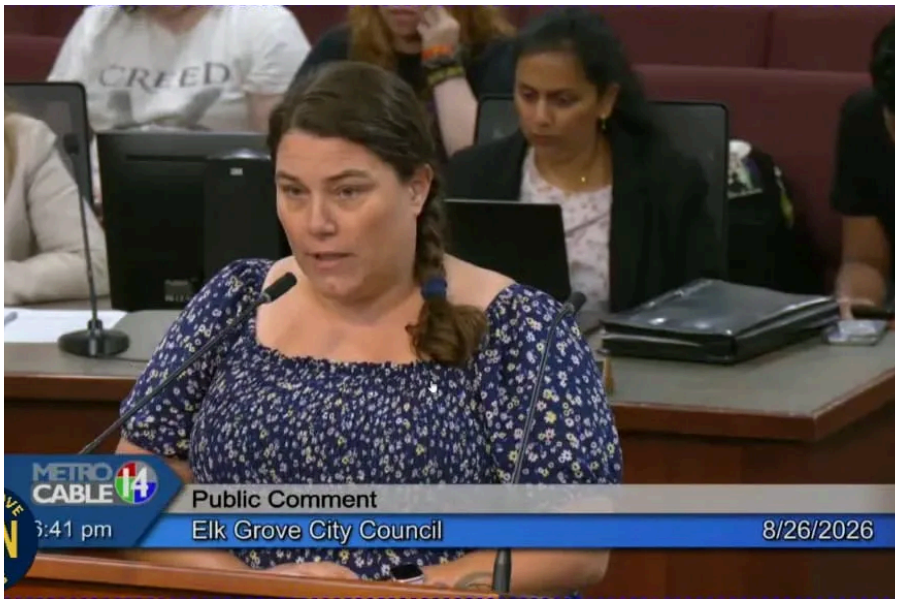
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Bipartisan opposition to police surveillance cameras confronts Elk Grove City Council

Neither the mayor or city councllmen addressed the extensive commentary on mass surveillance in Elk Grove

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One of the 21 speakers encouraged a specific Elk Grove City Councilmember to stand true to their civil rights claims made at a previous city council meeting.

ELK GROVE, Calif. - For nearly 45 minutes, the Elk Grove City Council heard several speakers express concerns about the Elk Grove Police's placement and use of automated license plate readers (ALPR) throughout the city.

All the speakers can be seen in the video below

The 21 speakers made the comments during the public comment section on non-agenda items during tonight's regular city council meeting. Because the item was not on the agenda, the city council did not address the concerns, but all five city council members have previously supported the surveillance technology by extending the city's million-dollar-plus Flock contract.

DeFlock Elk Grove, a local group seeking to remove ALPRs, organized the speakers' appearance. The movement against Flock cameras has become a national issue with broad appeal across the political spectrum.

Typical of that sentiment was expressed by Justin, who identified himself as a six-year Elk Grove resident. While supporting public safety, Justin said people across the political spectrum oppose the surveillance and that it can unfairly ensnare people regardless of political affiliation.

"This is not a partisan issue, people across the political spectrum care about this," he said. "You'll see people in deep blue cities and deep red cities, together, and all separately and independently choosing to vote against these systems because they do not like what they stand for and represent to the harms against the community."

While most speakers highlighted Atlanta-based Flock Safety, whose ALPRs are used in hundreds of municipalities nationwide, many also expressed concern about the technology's misuse regardless of the vendor.

Another speaker, Elk Grove resident Jennifer Tune, singled out Councilman Kevin Spease, noting that during a previous city council meeting he said he is a member of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). According to its website, EFF "is the leading nonprofit organization defending civil liberties in the digital world."

"At a previous city council meeting, Councilmember Spease, you said, 'you are very serious about our civil rights, and you are a member of the Electronic Frontier Foundation,' and I appreciate that," Ms. Tune said.

After citing a 2025 article from the EFF about the hazards of ALPR's and a joint lawsuit with the American Civil Liberties against the city of San Jose, Tune looked towards Spease and said, "if you are truly serious about it, you wouldn't support them here either."

Coincidentally, today the EFF published a story on their website titled "EFF's Policy Position on ALPR Surveillance: Eliminate It and Reduce Its Harms."

On April 8, the Elk Grove City Council unanimously approved a $194,000 extension with Flock through 2028, bringing the total contract value to $1.63 million.

Other speakers argued the cameras violate the Fourth Amendment's privacy guarantees and that, despite law enforcement agencies' assurances

that the data sweeps are not shared, the information has been illegally accessed and used.

With no irony, Elk Grove resident Kevin Barnwell echoed comments about broad opposition to the surveillance technology (see second video below).

"The use of ALPR technologies is an unconstitutional use of surveillance and is uniting the left and right quicker than Donald Trump's insider trading," he said.





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