



2025 SENATE BILL 299

May 30, 2025 - Introduced by Senators JAMES and WANGGAARD, cosponsored by Representatives NOVAK, BRILL, CALLAHAN, DITTRICH, DONOVAN, KAUFERT, KITCHENS, MELOTIK, MURPHY, MURSAU, PENTERMAN, PIWOWARCZYK, WICHGERS and WITTKE. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 165.985 of the statutes; **relating to:** a grant program for the
2 purchase of automated registration plate reader systems.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill establishes a grant program, administered by the Department of Justice, that provides grants to law enforcement agencies to purchase automated registration plate reader systems. Under the bill, to be eligible for a grant, a law enforcement agency must apply for a grant and include in the application a proposed plan of expenditure of the grant moneys. The bill requires DOJ to ensure that at least 50 percent of the grant moneys awarded under the program are awarded to law enforcement agencies located in rural areas.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

3 **SECTION 1.** 165.985 of the statutes is created to read:
4 **165.985 Automated registration plate reader grant program.** (1) In
5 this section:

SENATE BILL 299**SECTION 1**

1 (a) “Automated registration plate reader system” means one or more high-
2 speed cameras combined with data processing to convert images of registration
3 plates and vehicles into computer readable data.

4 (b) “Law enforcement agency” means an agency of a political subdivision of
5 this state or of a federally recognized Indian tribe or band in this state whose
6 purpose is the detection and prevention of crime and enforcement of laws or
7 ordinances and whose employees are authorized to make arrests for crimes or
8 violations of ordinances. “Law enforcement agency” includes the Marquette
9 University police department under s. 175.42. “Law enforcement agency” does not
10 include an agency of the state.

11 (c) “Rural area” means a city, town, or village in this state that has a
12 population of less than 20,000 and that is at least 15 miles from any city, town, or
13 village that has a population of at least 20,000.

14 (2) The department of justice shall award grants to law enforcement agencies
15 to purchase automated registration plate reader systems to be used for public safety
16 and law enforcement purposes. The department of justice shall ensure that at least
17 50 percent of the grant moneys awarded under this section are awarded to law
18 enforcement agencies located in rural areas.

19 (3) A law enforcement agency may apply to the department of justice for a
20 grant under this section and shall include a proposed plan of expenditure of the
21 grant moneys. The department of justice shall review each application and plan
22 and may provide a grant under this section to any law enforcement agency.

23 (END)