

Homeland Security wants to track drivers

By Josh Hicks, Washington Post

The Department of Homeland Security plans to build a national database that would gather information from license-plate readers that scan every vehicle crossing their paths, according to a solicitation last week from the agency.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement would use the technology to help locate and arrest “absconders and criminal aliens,” reducing surveillance hours and enhancing officer safety, according to the request.

License-plate readers, which automatically record information on all vehicles that cross their paths instead of just suspect vehicles, are controversial among privacy advocates. The American Civil Liberties Union issued a report last year criticizing the increased use of such devices, saying they collect vast amounts of data on innocent individuals and could be used for abusive tracking and targeting.

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