



## Racial Profiling Law Could Have Helped Cops End Biased Policing

ACLU of WI Responds to Traffic Stop Data Collection Repeal

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MILWAUKEE, WI – Today Christopher Ahmuty, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin issued the following statement in response to Governor Scott Walker signing a bill that repeals a new law designed to help police managers identify biased policing. The law set up a system to collect and analyze data on the race and ethnicity of motorists when police officers initiate certain types of traffic stops or conduct searches of vehicles. Ahmuty's statement may be quoted as follows:

"Shouldn't Wisconsin law enforcement agencies make it a priority to protect and serve all of the members of the public without bias, including motorists of color?"

"Today Governor Walker signed a bill repealing a law that took effect January 1, 2011 that gave Wisconsin law enforcement managers a new tool to identify biased policing during traffic stops. The new law set up a system to collect traffic stop data and have the Office of Justice Assistance analyze it to determine if minority motorists were being stopped or searched disproportionately compared to non-minority motorists.

"I served on the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance advisory committee that helped design the traffic stop data collection system. Our advisory committee was mostly composed of law enforcement professionals. We conducted listening sessions around the state where we heard compelling testimony from residents who felt they were victims of biased policing. We also heard from many law enforcement professionals who had significant input into the creation of the system.

"Most professional law enforcement leaders nationwide recognize the importance of identifying bias where it exists and addressing it. The Wisconsin legislators and Governor Walker repealed this law without giving it a chance.

"While some small departments may have legitimate technical and financial issues in complying with the new law immediately, assertions regarding expense and labor costs are overblown. It is disturbing that opponents of addressing biased policing chose to repeal the law rather than attempt to make the system work. Their haste calls into question their commitment to solving the problem of racial profiling and bias among law enforcement officers in our state."

The ACLU of Wisconsin will work with law enforcement officials, community leaders, racial justice advocates and any residents of Wisconsin to identify workable solutions to the problem of racial profiling. In response to the repeal of the traffic stop data collection law, the ACLU of Wisconsin will begin an effort to collect the stories from individuals who have experienced biased policing.

The ACLU of Wisconsin has approximately 6,500 members who support its efforts to defend the civil liberties and civil rights of all Wisconsin residents. For more on the work of the ACLU of Wisconsin, visit our [webpage](#). You can also get news and opinion on civil liberties in Wisconsin on our [Cap City Liberty blog](#). Find us on [Facebook and Twitter at ACLUMadison and ACLUofWisconsin](#).

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