



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION**

**R65 - 2021**

***Introduced by City Council on May 5, 2021***

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Supports legislation by State Reps. Dan Miller and Austin Davis to provide more transparency and accountability when it comes to police videos and recording of law enforcement.

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***Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That***

**Whereas** State Reps. Dan Miller and Austin Davis introduced legislation to provide more transparency and accountability when it comes to police videos and recording of law enforcement in Pennsylvania; and

**Whereas** Act 22 of 2017 approved the use of body cameras by law enforcement. This Act improves elements of officer and public safety, it has shortcomings that need to be addressed; and

**Whereas**, according to Representative Miller, "Act 22 was an important bill that I believe has helped de-escalate some situations but at the same time, it decreased transparency by restricting the public's ability to access police video previously subject to the state's Right to Know Law and made it more challenging to get any footage from law enforcement in a variety of ways. Our legislation would reverse much of that and make other important changes."

**Whereas** the Miller and Davis' legislation would:

- Return all non-body camera police video to the purview of the Right to Know Law, as was the case before Act 22.
- Increase the amount of time a person has to request body camera footage from 60 to 180 days.
- Increase the ways a person may formally request such footage.
- Increase response time for such requests.
- Increase appeal rights by providing for review by the Office of Open Records.
- Develop a uniform request form.
- Protect and enshrine the right of citizens to record police officers who are conducting official business without interference from them.

- Codify that citizens cannot violate the law or interfere with police officer responsibilities when making the recording.

**Whereas** this bill would not make any changes to the investigative exemption relating to body camera footage established by Act 22.

**Whereas** these changes are an important step toward increasing police accountability and transparency in the commonwealth while also working to improve police-community relations.”

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved** that Allentown City Council stands in support of these initiatives and urges our local State Representatives to sign on and support this legislation.