

[Floor Situation](#) | [Summary](#) | [Background](#) | [Cost](#) | [Staff Contact](#)

[H. Res. 295, Supporting local law enforcement in their continued work to serve our communities, and supporting their use of body worn cameras to promote transparency to protect both our citizens and officers alike](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, June 9, 2015, the House will consider [H. Res. 295](#), a resolution *supporting local law enforcement in their continued work to serve our communities, and supporting their use of body worn cameras to promote transparency to protect both our citizens and officers alike*, under suspension of the rules. The resolution was introduced on June 3, 2015, by Rep. Al Green (D-TX) and was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUMMARY

H. Res. 295 resolves that that the House of Representatives: (1) recognizes all law enforcement agencies and officers for their tireless work to protect us and make our communities safer; (2) recognizes the potential for the use of body-worn cameras by on-duty law enforcement officers to improve community relations, increase transparency, and protect both citizens and police; and, (3) encourages State and local law enforcement agencies to consider the use of body-worn cameras, including policies and protocols to handle privacy, storage, and other relevant concerns.

BACKGROUND

Recent interactions between police and the public have led to an increased call for the use of police-worn body cameras. Some state and local governments across the country have begun using or testing body cameras with their police departments.¹ The U.S. Department of Justice plans to award nearly \$20 million to dozens of state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies for pilot programs assisting them with training and technical assistance in the use of police-worn body cameras. The Bureau of Justice Statistics also plans to spend \$1 million to study the impact of these cameras.²

¹ For examples, see [Charleston City Paper](#), [Press Democrat](#), and [Miami Herald](#) articles

² See [Washington Post](#) article, "[Justice Dept. will spend \\$20 million on police body cameras nationwide](#)," May 1, 2015

A report by the Police Executive Research Forum and the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services found that increased use of police body cameras can strengthen the policing profession by increasing accountability, professionalism, training, preservation of evidence, and documentation of encounters with the public. The report also asserts that it is critical for law enforcement agencies to carefully consider how body camera technology affects the public's privacy rights, especially when the courts have yet to provide guidance on many of these issues.³

Several mayors, police chiefs, and local officials have raised concerns over the significant costs of securely storing the data from police-worn body cameras, which run into the millions of dollars in some cities and often outweigh upfront costs of acquisition and training.⁴

A 2014 study in the United Kingdom found that over the course of one year, use-of-force by officers wearing cameras fell by 59 percent and citizen complaints against officers decreased by 87 percent.⁵ The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommended an increase in implementation of the use of police-worn body cameras, though it maintained they are not a panacea.⁶

COST

A cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is currently unavailable.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [John Huston](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-5539.

³ See report by Police Executive Research Forum "[Implementing a Body-Worn Camera Program](#)"

⁴ See *Associated Press* article, "[For police body cameras, big costs loom in storage](#)," February 6, 2015

⁵ See December, 2014 University of Cambridge [article](#) describing its Institute of Criminology's [study](#)

⁶ See [Interim Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#), Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015