



2024-2025 ILLINOIS TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN STOP DATA USE AND COLLECTION TASK FORCE FINDINGS



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TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Membership in the Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Data Use and Collection Task Force (Task Force) is statutorily mandated in the Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study Act (625 ILCS 5/11-212(h-1)(2)). The roles and/or organizational affiliations of Task Force members, as stated directly in Illinois legislation, are listed below, along with the Task Force member(s) who fulfilled the legislative membership requirement.

Two academics or researchers who have studied issues related to traffic or pedestrian stop data collection and have education or expertise in statistics:

Jack McDevitt, Professor of Criminology and Director of the Institute on Race and Justice, Northeastern University

Christopher Donner, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice & Criminology at Loyola University Chicago

One professor from an Illinois university who specializes in policing and racial equity:

Tyrone Forman, Professor of Sociology and African American Studies, University of Illinois – Chicago

One representative from the Illinois State Police:

Jody Huffman, Major, Illinois State Police North Central Patrol Command

One representative from the Chicago Police Department:

Vacant

One representative from the Illinois Chiefs of Police:

Joseph Leonas, Chief, Lincolnshire Police Department

One representative from the Illinois Sheriffs Association:

Jim Kaitschuk, Executive Director, Illinois Sheriffs' Association

One representative from the Chicago Fraternal Order of Police:

Vacant

One representative from the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police:

Vacant

The Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, or his or her designee:

Khadine Bennett (Co-Chair), Director of Advocacy and Intergovernmental Affairs,
American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois

Five representatives from different community organizations who specialize in civil or human rights, policing, or criminal justice reform work and that represent a range of minority interests or different parts of the State:

Gregory Chambers, Director of Policy at the Illinois Coalition to End Permanent Punishments

Ciera Bates-Chamberlain, Executive Director, Live Free Illinois

Amy Thompson (Co-Chair), Staff Counsel, Impact for Equity

Two Vacancies

OVERVIEW

Section 5/11-212 of 625 Illinois Compiled Statutes (625 ILCS 5/11-212) requires Illinois police officers to collect certain information each time they conduct a traffic or pedestrian stop. This includes information about the person stopped, such as the police officer's determination of their gender and race, as well as information about the stop itself, such as the reason for the stop and the result of the stop. Police agencies submit this data to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) each year, where it is then compiled, analyzed, and developed into a report by IDOT's contracted statistical consultants. The reports containing stop results are published annually. The collection, analysis, and publication of this information is referred to as the Traffic Stop Statistical Study. All Statistical Study reports are publicly available and can be found on the IDOT [website](#).

Within 625 ILCS 5/11-212, Section H mandates the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) to convene a Task Force to "determine the best use of technology to collect, compile, and analyze the Traffic Stop Statistical Study data." The Task Force brings together academics, police executives, and community advocates to provide feedback to IDOT and their statistical consultants on the collection, analysis, and reporting of Illinois stop data. The [first Task Force report](#) was submitted in March 2022. This is the second report submitted to the Governor and General Assembly before March 1, 2025.

Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Data Use and Collection Task Force

This convening of the Task Force met from July 2024 to February 2025. The legislation does not outline a specific meeting cadence for the Task Force. The group met 11 times on the following dates:

- July 25, 2024
- August 22, 2024
- September 26, 2024
- October 24, 2024
- November 21, 2024
- December 5, 2024
- December 12, 2024
- January 9, 2025
- January 16, 2025
- February 6, 2025
- February 20, 2025

Due to the Task Force's national composition and ongoing state guidance that allows for online meetings, all meetings were held virtually and recorded through Cisco WebEx software. In

conformance with the Open Meetings Act, all meetings could be attended by members of the public by clicking on the link in the meeting agendas. Agendas were posted on the ICJIA website at least 48 hours before the meetings. Meetings followed Robert's Rules of Order for conducting roll calls, taking votes, and adjourning. Per state legislation (625 ILCS 5/11-212(h-1)(2)), ICJIA served in an administrative role for the Task Force. This included inviting members, creating agendas, writing meeting minutes, drafting initial recommendations, and authoring this report. Nominations for the role of Chair came from within the group and were voted on by the group. Once elected, Chairs called meetings to order, facilitated discussion, and participated in planning meetings with the ICJIA team.

Summary of the Convening

During the 2020-2021 convening of the Task Force, members approved 19 recommendations that predominantly encompassed four topics:

1. The data collection forms that IDOT makes available to law enforcement agencies; these forms include the data fields that law enforcement agencies are required to collect, then submit to IDOT when executing traffic and pedestrian stops,
2. Strategies adopted by the State of Illinois for measuring over-representation of minority drivers among those stopped by law enforcement officers,
3. Utilization of Illinois Traffic Stop and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results by law enforcement agencies,
4. Modifications to annual reports made available to law enforcement agencies and the public through IDOT and related strategies used by the State of Illinois to make results available to law enforcement and the public.

The Task Force focused on topics 2 through 4 for the 2024-2025 convening. Members noted that the Task Force spent considerable time during the 2020-2021 convening deliberating on the data collection forms (Topic 1). This resulted in eight recommendations being considered for implementation by the Illinois Racial Profiling Prevention and Data Oversight Board, a separate Board convened by IDOT that guides Statistical Study policy and practice in tandem with the Task Force.

Thus, for the current convening, the Task Force emphasized data products, considering the following questions:

- Is Illinois using an optimal strategy for measuring minority traffic stop over-representation, which is perceived as fair, accurate, and easy to comprehend by law enforcement agencies and members of their communities?
- Is the State of Illinois disseminating Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results in a manner that ensures results are well understood and can be used to facilitate police-community dialogue?

Overall, the Task Force focused on utilizing results: whether the Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study statute is being implemented to provide law enforcement agencies with useful information for assessing their current practices and community advocates to engage local government officials about police conduct.

Task Force meetings primarily included topical discussions, with ICJIA staff documenting Task Force members' thoughts and opinions. These discussions were supplemented as follows:

- Prior to the convening, ICJIA staff conducted 13 interviews with law enforcement representatives across Illinois to learn their thoughts on the Statistical Study; results were presented to Task Force members at the September 26th, 2024 meeting.
- Law enforcement officials on the Task Force assisted in identifying additional law enforcement officials to discuss law enforcement utilization of Statistical Study results at the September 26th, 2024 meeting.
- ICJIA staff and the Task Force co-chairs met with representatives from several American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois chapters throughout the State of Illinois who had experience engaging local police officials on police/community relations; their talking points on the Statistical Study were incorporated into Task Force deliberations at several meetings.
- Matt Kiefer, Clinical Assistant Professor of Journalism at Northwestern University, was invited to the December 12th, 2024 meeting to discuss his experience analyzing and disseminating Statistical Study data and results through media outlets.
- One of the co-chairs suggested that the State of Connecticut has developed an effective model for implementing its statewide racial profiling legislation and, as such, should be invited to describe the model to the Task Force. Ken Barone, Project Manager for Connecticut's Racial Profiling Prohibition Project, spoke at the November 21st, 2024 meeting. He was joined by his colleague, Matthew Ross, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Economics at Northeastern University, for the January 9th meeting. Across the two meetings, Ken and Matthew discussed Connecticut's processes for analyzing stop data and facilitating communication between state leaders, law enforcement, and communities.

This dialogue resulted in six recommendations that the Task Force approved, as described in the Recommendations section below.

Summary - Law Enforcement Feedback

Since the last convening of the Task Force, ICJIA research staff interviewed law enforcement representatives from across Illinois to learn about their thoughts on the Statistical Study. This was based on a recommendation from the previous Task Force report. The interview findings, as well as testimony offered by police representatives on the Task Force, informed the group on current law enforcement perspectives toward traffic stop data collection and analysis. The Task Force learned that although many law enforcement representatives felt that collecting stop data benefits police leadership, analyzing and reporting the data causes concerns.

Namely, police representatives felt that the current benchmarks used in Illinois—or the estimates of the driving population—are inaccurate and misleading. Benchmarking aims to determine the most accurate profile of drivers at risk of being stopped by police, assuming no bias exists. The current IDOT statisticians are The Mountain-Whisper-Light, a consulting group based out of Seattle, Washington. The Mountain-Whisper-Light use a complex methodology to develop their benchmark, and some law enforcement representatives felt there is not enough information on how to correctly interpret the results in their departments or for their communities or local media. One police representative pointed out that his town receives one benchmark while the neighboring town receives a different benchmark, leading to slightly different results for similar communities. He indicated that law enforcement felt confused by the different benchmarks and struggled to identify their applicability for police leaders. IDOT's previously contracted statistical consultants, Alexander Weiss Consulting, used a more straightforward methodology that law enforcement felt could be easily interpreted and used year-to-year to assess change over time. While law enforcement acknowledged that The Mountain-Whisper-Light's methods are more rigorous, they felt more disconnected from the data and its presentation.

Law enforcement also noted that the annual publication of the results makes it challenging for departments to address any disparities throughout the year. Representatives explained that departments with the tools and staffing to review their stops do so already throughout the year, and they felt that receiving an annual report was redundant. Moreover, they shared that the publication of the annual report can potentially amplify animosity between police and communities when the findings indicate racial disparities without additional explanation on how to interpret results.

Summary - Community Feedback

The Task Force also learned from community leaders and stakeholders regarding their thoughts on traffic stop data collection and analysis and their efforts to work with law enforcement agencies in their communities. To accomplish this, the group heard testimony from community partners and journalists interested in or who have worked extensively with stop data.

Community representatives on the Task Force noted that access to the stop data and explanations for reading and interpreting it are needed. Community members would like to examine stop data independently, without the need for statistical software or complex data requests to government agencies. There have been efforts by news agencies and advocacy groups to publish stop data for public consumers, but key stakeholders indicated more can be done to enhance this work. Advocates shared that publishing annual results in a statistically heavy, PDF-only format creates challenges in translating information to their communities. While public dashboards of traffic stop data are available, they each have limitations (e.g., lack of community demographics for comparison, inability to view trends over time).

Finally, community advocates noted that buy-in and compliance from law enforcement are also essential for positive communication between citizens and police. Community representatives

suggested that learning about the causes of compliance issues, including the impact of potential electronic submission or transmission errors, would be of public interest.

Summary – Connecticut Racial Profiling Statutory Implementation

In addition to learning about law enforcement and public utilization of stop data, the Task Force explored how other states analyze and report on this information. This inquiry led the group to Connecticut and its Racial Profiling Advisory Board. Connecticut's Board has been meeting monthly since 2012, and it has demonstrated ample experience in addressing the same challenges encountered by Illinois' Task Force. Connecticut also publishes annual reports, which can be found on [their website](#).

Several Task Force meetings involved reviewing Connecticut's strategy for analyzing and reporting on its stop data. Connecticut's analytic team provided testimony to their processes and lessons learned over the past decade. Their Board has three subcommittees to delineate work; one group focuses on data collection and analysis, one on policy and laws, and one on community outreach. A significant takeaway from Connecticut's presentations was that their analysts use seven different methods to determine if any of their police departments have a racial disparity in their traffic stops. Rather than rely on a single method or benchmark, they use a combination of the seven metrics to identify law enforcement agencies that present the most racial disparity. While some methods are considered more statistically rigorous than others, identifying law enforcement agencies that show the most substantial disparity when combining all metrics is critical for their process. Departments with only a few stops per year can receive a rolling 3-year analysis.

Connecticut's team chooses approximately eight to ten departments from those law enforcement agencies that are identified for further investigation and discussion. This involves a "deep dive" into factors that might influence disparity. They frame this as an open dialogue with law enforcement agencies; some factors creating disparity may be under law enforcement influence, while others may not. Connecticut's analysts look into officer-level analyses, administrative directives and strategy, calls for service, and any other factors that could affect racial disparity in that department. Their state publishes their overall stops and the findings from the law enforcement examinations annually. Before publication, Connecticut's team ensures that each law enforcement agency has the opportunity to review and comment on the report. All comments, even if critical, are noted in their reports for transparency.

As a counterpart to their work with law enforcement, Connecticut's Board hosts six to eight community forums across the state each year, focusing on bridging the communication gap between citizens and their local police departments. The community forums are held in accessible spaces, such as churches, libraries, and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts. Connecticut's analytic team serves as facilitators and moderators of the discussion, ensuring their findings are made clear to the public. These forums are attended by community representatives on the Racial Profiling Advisory Board to provide additional assistance and facilitation as needed between law enforcement and communities. They also educate the public about their rights if they feel they have been profiled with steps on how to file a complaint.

Finally, Connecticut's team urged the importance of independent evaluation to review any impact on public safety from potential alterations to law enforcement strategy. They recognized that their work may have unintended impacts on highway safety, so evaluation was emphasized as another essential piece of their process. Connecticut's team noted that there is no perfect method for analyzing stop data, so it is important to have open communication between stakeholders and be willing to update methodologies year to year, even if this creates challenges in comparing their reports over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the final Task Force recommendations from the 2024 to 2025 convening. Based on the presentations, testimony, and discussions held at Task Force meetings, these recommendations were developed. Task Force members had several opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions on the wording of these recommendations and submit their own. The group voted on seven recommendations and approved six. The recommendation that was not approved can be found in Appendix A.

Recommendation 1:

Heretofore, the Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Data Use and Collection Task Force has convened only to develop and submit its findings and recommendations and then disbanded during intervening time periods. It is recommended that henceforth the Task Force remain active and meet at regular intervals during intervening time periods as well. Task Force activities during intervening time periods may include: (1) overseeing implementation of findings and recommendations submitted in Task Force reports, (2) engaging in research, evaluation, and fact-finding that, based on scope, is too lengthy or complex to confine to the year in which a statutory submission is required, and (3) collaborating more effectively with the Illinois Racial Profiling Prevention and Data Oversight Board (20 ILCS 2715/5).

Information: The Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study statute requires the Task Force to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly every three years (625 ILCS 5/11-212(h-1)(4)). This is the only Task Force deliverable described in the statute. However, the statute generally assigns the Task Force to “undertake a study to determine the best use of technology to collect, compile, and analyze the traffic stop statistical study data” (625 ILCS 5/11-212(h-1)(1)). Because there is no statutorily defined date of Task Force dissolution, and the Task Force must provide new insights every three years, the general requirement to undertake a study implies ongoing analysis. The Task Force finds that to engage in ongoing analysis, it should remain active during years in which no statutory submission is required. Additionally, several ideas proposed by the group require further discussion and resolution. The Statistical Study statute provides no statement barring such activity.

Recommendation 2:

Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study traffic stop results utilize estimates of the racial and ethnic composition of drivers in each law enforcement jurisdiction. At present, a single estimate is applied to each jurisdiction. It is recommended that, instead of choosing one estimate for each jurisdiction, Statistical Study results shall include multiple scientifically accepted benchmarking and disparity measures for every jurisdiction, potentially including (1) the veil of darkness method, (2) adoption of improved estimates of driver population that minimize reliance on residential population totals, and (3) expanded analyses of stop outcomes such as searches. Law enforcement agencies would be considered

to have minority traffic stop over-representation based across multiple measures, as opposed to one measure predicated on a single estimate.

Information: To measure minority traffic stop over-representation, it is necessary to develop a benchmark or baseline against which to compare traffic stop data. Conceptually, the benchmark measures the overall racial and ethnic composition of drivers in a geographic area. By comparing the racial and ethnic composition of persons stopped to the racial and ethnic composition of drivers overall, it is possible to determine whether minority drivers are over-represented. For example, if 80% of persons stopped are African American, but only 50% of persons driving in the area are African American. It can be stated that African Americans are over-represented among those stopped.

However, many factors might affect the demographics of those driving through a community. Shopping districts, universities, major highways, and businesses can impact driver demographics. Further, police strategies to prevent or address crime in particular areas can disproportionately impact specific drivers. A single benchmarking estimate can be challenged for its inability to capture all the factors that could influence police stops. Therefore, utilizing multiple methods helps identify law enforcement agencies that show disparity across all metrics, lessening the likelihood of one test creating false positives or negatives.

Recommendation 3:

Following annual dissemination of Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results, there exist no formal mechanisms to provide support for law enforcement agencies considered to have minority over-representation in traffic and pedestrian stops. It is recommended that the State of Illinois, in collaboration with the Task Force and ICJIA, develop a strategy for offering such support that includes options sufficient to meet varying law enforcement agency needs.

Information: Testimony provided by Connecticut's Racial Profiling Advisory Board analysts emphasized the importance of open discussion and support for law enforcement agencies that showed racial disparities across the seven methodologies. Illinois police stakeholders shared that interpreting and addressing the findings from the annual Statistical Study is challenging due to its complexities and the inability to tell what is driving disparity in their departments. An example of support could be increased communication between the statistical consultants and law enforcement. This communication could be done in partnership with the Task Force to address any communication gaps or confusion resulting from discussing complex statistical data. Law enforcement agencies could be provided more individualized assistance to review their stops and strategies and help them identify solutions within their departments and with their communities.

Recommendation 4:

Following annual dissemination of Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results, there exist no formal mechanisms to provide community advocates and other interested community members support in understanding key results and meaningfully engaging local government officials regarding traffic and pedestrian stops. It is recommended that the State of Illinois, in collaboration with the Task Force and ICJIA, develop a strategy for offering such engagement and support. The strategy should place emphasis on communities where the local law enforcement agency has minority traffic and pedestrian stop over-representation. It is further recommended that, as a starting point, the State of Illinois, in collaboration with the Task Force and ICJIA, conduct a series of focus groups with community stakeholders throughout Illinois.

Information: In recent years, both ICJIA and IDOT examined law enforcement perspectives on traffic stop data collection, analysis, and reporting. A logical counterpart to this work is investigating community perspectives on these topics. Testimony from community advocates and knowledgeable community members indicated that many public citizens do not know how to acquire, view, or interpret annual traffic and pedestrian stop data and reports. Focus groups could be a tool to help gather information from community members. The Task Force and ICJIA should identify a small number of communities to begin with, such as those most impacted by traffic and pedestrian stop racial disparities.

Recommendation 5:

The Task Force finds that the current dissemination strategy for Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results may not ensure that the public is adequately informed on the location of results or educated on how to interpret results. It is recommended that the State of Illinois, in collaboration with the Task Force and ICJIA, formally assess current practices, seeking both short-term and long-term remedies. It is further recommended that the assessment consider the role of media, and the role of members on this Task Force, in creating public understanding of Statistical Study results.

Information: Besides learning about community members' experiences with local government and law enforcement, future follow-ups of this work might involve surveys or interviews with community members to learn how to make it easier to access and consume stop data. The media also serve a critical role in digesting Statistical Study findings and relaying them in ways that are understood by the general public. Until recently, there have been limited partnerships with media agencies. Coordinated framing and messaging on behalf of the Task Force could assist with media collaboration from Task Force members suited to do so.

Recommendation 6:

At present, Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study results include aggregate totals for each law enforcement agency but do not provide information pertaining to individual law enforcement

members or law enforcement units within individual agencies. It is recommended that the State of Illinois, in collaboration with this Task Force and ICJIA, develop an interactive statewide dashboard for police chiefs, sheriffs, and other heads of law enforcement agencies or their designees throughout Illinois that enables them to detect traffic and pedestrian stop patterns for individual officers and law enforcement units. This dashboard should be developed in a manner consistent with the Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Statistical Study statute (625 ILCS 5/11-212) and that protects the identity of individual law enforcement officers.

Information: Although there are publicly available dashboards of traffic stop data, these dashboards provide annual overviews of stops, outcomes, and driver demographics. There exists little for individual police departments to evaluate their officers and stops throughout the year beyond the annual publication of the Statistical Study. Tools that allow law enforcement leadership to review their own stops more frequently are desired. To maintain law enforcement officer privacy, this information would not be publicly available and only be accessible to law enforcement leaders.

CONCLUSION

Collecting, analyzing, and reporting traffic stop data remains an important topic for communities and law enforcement. The Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Data Use and Collection Task Force provides an open forum for academics, police officers, and community representatives to discuss and suggest feedback on Illinois' methods that enhance their accuracy, reliability, and legitimacy. Evaluating high-quality data using multiple scientifically supported methodologies will contribute to faith in the annual Statistical Study findings. The Task Force will continue to meet indefinitely to review and act upon these recommendations. It is recognized that collaboration with other state agencies, as well as IDOT's Racial Profiling Prevention and Data Oversight Board, will be crucial to effect change. Ultimately, the Task Force understands the importance of police accountability and community relations in moving Illinois forward as a national leader in traffic and pedestrian stop data collection and analysis.

APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDATION NOT APPROVED

Appendix A contains a recommendation that was discussed by the Task Force but ultimately voted against:

The Task Force recognizes that anonymized Global Positioning System (GPS) data obtained from cellular phones can contribute to new approaches for estimating driver populations. It is recommended that the State of Illinois assess the costs and methodological feasibility of using anonymized GPS data.

Task Force members described feelings of uncertainty surrounding data privacy, which created their hesitancy in passing this recommendation at this time. Testimony from researchers and academics in this field noted that traffic stop data analysis is heading in a direction that will likely involve GPS or mobility data in the future. Task Force members felt that they would like more time to learn about this method as a possibility. In the future, it may be incorporated under the umbrella of Recommendation 2, which identified other types of alternative benchmarks for the Task Force to review and consider. The Task Force will continue to have conversations around the applicability of GPS data for upcoming years of analysis.