Driver wins $76 after ALPR led to bogus traffic stop, drug searches

A federal jury in Texas recently ruled in favor of a man who sued Bexar County and its sheriff over allegations that the agency ran what the plaintiff's attorneys called an "unconstitutional traffic stop scheme" enabled by "AI-powered" license plate readers.

Late last month, plaintiff Alek Schott of Houston was awarded $76, one dollar for each minute that he was detained. (Schott asked for this exact amount as symbolic compensation.)

"After the stop, I filed a complaint with the Sheriff's Office because I knew what happened to me was wrong," Schott said in a statement after his win. "The department reviewed it, told me they didn't see any violation, and said if I had a problem with it, I should sue them. So I did."

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Internal files add to

evidence of an ExxonMobil climate deception campaign



In an interview, Adler rejected the argument that he was promoting climate denial. “I can’t speak to what API or Exxon’s motivations were,” said Adler, now a professor at William & Mary Law School. “What I can say is the work we did at CEI at the time was very much focused on what was accurate and correct and consistent with the principles the organization was founded on.”

He said it was natural for his organization to seek funding from companies and entities that also supported limited government regulation.

This year, Adler wrote a brief supporting Boulder in the case before the Supreme Court, arguing that its claims were not preempted by federal law and should be allowed to proceed in state court. He did not take a position on the merits of Boulder’s claims.

By 2005, when Exxon was facing public criticism for its

support for groups that questioned climate science, a company spokesperson told Mother Jones magazine that Exxon believed "the scientific evidence on greenhouse gas emissions remains inconclusive and that studies must continue." She also said Exxon had devoted large sums to university research programs, including a planned $100 million to Stanford University's Global Climate and Energy Project.

The following year, documents from the Massachusetts case now show, a colleague arranged a meeting for the spokesperson with two self-identified global warming skeptics.

By the 2010s, Exxon's public position on climate change had evolved. It was no longer questioning science, a position that became harder to maintain as scientists' conclusions grew stronger and the United States joined the Paris Agreement in 2015. In fact, following Sprow's advice, the company had one of its research scientists contributing to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Exxon was fending off concerns from shareholders that it was failing to prepare its business for the risks posed by climate change, so it began work on a "climate risk matrix," the documents show. In 2016, the Exxon scientist who contributed to the UN climate panel warned colleagues of the risk of climate tipping points, the probability of which were "poorly understood but probability is expected to rise with temperature change." He noted that failure to limit emissions would have a growing influence on temperatures beyond 2040 and cited concerns that the impacts of hitting tipping points "would be significantly larger" than the direct effects of heat.

And yet, the Massachusetts case shows, Exxon continued to promote solutions that its own scientists said were unlikely to reach commercial scale. The vast majority of its money instead went to oil and gas, the production of which Exxon plans to expand more than 15 percent by 2030.

Nicholas Kusnetz is a reporter for Inside Climate News. Before joining ICN, he worked at the Center for Public Integrity and ProPublica. His work has won numerous awards and citations, including from the Society of Professional Journalists, the Society of Environmental Journalists, the Overseas Press Club, the Society of American Business Editors and Writers, and others. His articles have appeared in more than a dozen publications including Wired, The Washington Post, Businessweek, The Nation, and The New York Times. Nicholas can be reached on Signal at nkusnetz.15.

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https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/exxonmobils-own-scientists-doubted-climate-fixes-the-company-hyped/

A senator tried to ban gambling on prediction markets—now she’s a Kalshi lobbyist



States defend authority over gambling

The CFTC has tried to block state regulation in court by filing lawsuits against Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. It has also filed briefs supporting Kalshi in appeals court cases.

State attorneys general and governors throughout the country say they view sports bets on prediction markets as nothing more than gambling that should be firmly under the states' regulatory control. "No matter what they call themselves, prediction markets like Kalshi are gambling platforms, plain and simple," New York Attorney General Letitia James, a Democrat, said in July. "By ignoring our laws, Kalshi is running an illegal operation and harming New Yorkers in the process."

In states where sports betting is legal, state governments collect tax revenue on licensed sports gambling. Nevada

Governor Joe Lombardo, a Republican, said in August that “prediction markets offering sports-event contracts constitute gambling and must comply with Nevada’s gaming laws and regulatory framework.”

State leaders also say they want to use their regulatory authority to protect minors and those with low incomes from compulsive gambling. Some states allow sports betting in general but restrict wagers on college teams.

States have sent cease-and-desist letters to Kalshi, saying it offers an unlicensed gambling operation. Kalshi responded by suing states and asking judges to rule that it doesn’t have to follow state laws because it falls under the CFTC’s exclusive jurisdiction.

Minnesota has taken the strongest stand against prediction markets, banning them entirely. A judge blocked the Minnesota law for being too expansive, but said Minnesota may be able to ban other wagers, such as bets on the outcome of reality TV shows or on what TV announcers say during sports broadcasts.

Controversial bets and insider trading

Besides sports gambling, there are many other concerns about specific types of prediction-market wagers that may be contrary to the public interest. Prediction-market bets on clinical trials, flight cancellations, and wildfires have been the subject of protest. While Polymarket faced scrutiny for allowing bets on wildfires, a spokesperson for Kalshi told Ars recently it has never offered markets on wildfires “because they create perverse incentives” and has never offered markets on war, death, or terrorism.

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/a-senator-tried-to-ban-gambling-on-prediction-markets-now-shes-a-kalshi-

lobbyist/

Returning from vacation? The government can search your phone without a warrant.

An Argentinian-American writer and immigration advocate recently sued the federal government, demanding that it delete data that he believes was copied off of his phone when he re-entered the United States earlier this month.

According to the seven-page complaint, Thomas Kennedy said that a Customs and Border Protection agent at Miami International Airport physically searched his bags, questioned him about his books and magazines, and then demanded that he hand over his phone.

“[The agent] threatened me, saying that if I didn’t give him my phone, my interrogation was going to take much longer and they could retain my phone indefinitely,” Kennedy wrote. “I felt like I had no choice, so I handed my phone to the CBP agent.”

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How the Smithsonian became the latest front in Trump's culture war

In November 2021, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History opened an exhibit called "The Electric Dr. Franklin," describing "Benjamin Franklin's pioneering contributions to electrical science." The exhibit explained that, prior to becoming an abolitionist, he had enslaved people in his household. "Benjamin Franklin's remarkable scientific accomplishments were, in part, enabled by slavery," it declared.

The exhibit speculated that Franklin may have used enslaved people in his electrical research. "Franklin wrote about experiments in which he took shocks and used family and friends in these ways, although he seldom identified who in particular assisted him," stated the exhibit, which closed in 2025 but can still be found online. "Indentured servants and enslaved people in his household could also have been used, although we may never know for certain."

It was an eye-catching conjecture: one of the most revered of the Founding Fathers subjecting people held against their will to possibly painful shocks. And it was one of many details singled out for criticism in a blistering 162-page White House report released in July that argued that the museum had fallen victim to an "ideological capture" that "moved the Museum's mission away from straightforward historical education and scholarship toward an extreme political activism that seeks to transform our country."

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Trump administration takes Musk’s side in fight over EU tech rules

The Trump administration is seeking to join Elon Musk’s appeal against a €120 million EU fine of the billionaire’s social media platform X, the latest escalation in the transatlantic clash over Brussels’ efforts to rein in US tech companies.

The US Department of Justice on Thursday filed an application to intervene in a pair of cases brought by Musk and X seeking annulment of the penalty, which will be heard at the EU’s General Court in Luxembourg.

“The European Commission inappropriately attempted to expand its regulatory authority to reach American companies not present or operating within its jurisdiction,” assistant attorney general Brett Shumate said.

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New York defies Trump admin, asks court to shut down Polymarket gambling

New York sued Polymarket today, alleging that it runs an "illegal gambling operation" through its prediction market.

"By running an unlicensed gambling operation, Polymarket has done more than just knowingly violate state law, they have put New Yorkers at risk, especially those underage who are most vulnerable to problem gaming," Governor Kathy Hochul said in a press release announcing the lawsuit.

Polymarket is "sidestepping its obligation to pay taxes like licensed casinos and mobile sports gambling platforms do," New York said. "This tax revenue from gambling regulation funds public schools, sports programs for underserved youth, and problem gambling education and treatment."

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New Jersey fines data center $1.1M after drone pics expose 62 gas generators

This week, New Jersey ordered the operator of one of the East Coast’s largest planned data centers to pay a $1.1 million fine for secretly installing and operating gas generators in violation of the state’s Air Pollution Control Act.

DataOne got hit with the fine after an investigation by The Guardian and Floodlight News in August shared thermal drone footage showing that 45 of the 62 gas generators were operating. None of the generators had permits required for generators with 37-kilowatt capacity or higher, despite running at 1,982-kw capacities more than 50 times higher than the state limit.

States track gas generators like DataOne uses because they emit “carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and other combustion-related pollutants,” officials from New Jersey’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) noted. Those pollutants can worsen asthma, trigger heart attacks, and cause early deaths.

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FCC lets Paramount sell 49.5% equity stake to Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar

The Federal Communications Commission yesterday approved Paramount Skydance's plan to sell large equity stakes to the sovereign wealth funds of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Under US law, companies with licenses to run broadcast stations need FCC approval to have direct or indirect foreign ownership exceeding 25 percent of the company's stock. Paramount says its indirect foreign ownership will reach 49.5 percent after it receives investments from the sovereign wealth funds and filed a petition asking the FCC to waive the foreign ownership limit.

Paramount, the owner of CBS, holds FCC licenses for the 28 local CBS stations that it owns and operates. Paramount is buying Warner Bros. Discovery in a $111 billion deal that is being partially financed with foreign investment but hasn't completed the acquisition because US states filed a lawsuit that aims to block the merger. Trump's Department of Justice approved the merger.

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US government website used Chinese model the FBI called “malicious”

On Wednesday, US government officials removed a Chinese AI search tool that was briefly deployed on the Federal Register website, Reuters reported.

The change came after social media users noticed an apparent contradiction: The National Archives was using one of Alibaba’s Qwen AI models, even as top US law enforcement claimed that such models illegally copy US frontier models. Earlier this month, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) named Alibaba among six leading Chinese firms allegedly conducting “industrial-scale distillation” that the agency says is helping America’s biggest competitor cut costs and development time in the race for global AI leadership.

It’s unclear when exactly the National Archives, which runs the Federal Register website, began offering visitors the option to use a Qwen model to search public comments on proposed regulations. So far, the independent agency tasked with increasing public access to federal government documents has not commented on the removal and did not respond to Ars’ request for comment. The White House and the FBI have also not commented.

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