



April 16, 2026

Director Brendan F. Kelly
Illinois State Police
801 South 7th Street
Springfield, Illinois 62703

Re: Enforcement of Illinois vehicle-registration and traffic-safety laws

Dear Director Kelly:

The Chicago Council of Lawyers writes to strenuously urge the Illinois State Police to enforce Illinois law against vehicles operating on public roads with swapped license plates, obscured plates, or no plates at all.

This issue is not minor and is not simply a *plate* violation. The problem is that vehicles operating without valid, visible plates can evade identification and accountability, and that lack of accountability is often accompanied by patently dangerous driving that places drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians at extreme risk. That combination is inconsistent with Illinois law and with basic public safety.

CCL has personally observed such conduct by Immigration enforcement agents. In addition, CCL has received reports and is aware of very detailed, contemporaneous written reports being made on a frequent basis to the Illinois Secretary of State. These reports specifically identify vehicles believed to be associated with federal immigration enforcement operations regularly leaving the Broadview federal facility with swapped plates or no plates and then being dangerously driven. We recognize that questions of federal authority may arise in some contexts, but there is no public-safety basis for declining to address dangerous driving or the operation of vehicles without lawful, visible registration.

The danger is not theoretical. Public reporting on the 2025 shooting death of Silverio Villegas González during an ICE traffic stop in Franklin Park and the 2025 shooting of Marimar Martinez in Chicago underscores the grave risks that can arise during vehicle-based enforcement encounters involving federal agents. Protesters and observers have reported more recent dangerous conduct by such vehicles. These circumstances reinforce the need for prompt intervention when armed occupants are operating vehicles in a manner that endangers the public.

Accordingly, CCL respectfully asks the Illinois State Police to treat occupants of such vehicles as armed and dangerous and, notwithstanding, to:

- Direct troopers to stop and investigate vehicles operating with swapped, obscured, or missing plates when lawful grounds exist.
- Enforce all applicable traffic laws against dangerous driving, regardless of the identity of the vehicle occupants.
- Ensure that credible 911 calls reporting dangerous driving, especially involving ICE vehicles with no or improper plates, are promptly answered with appropriate dispatch, investigation, and enforcement action.



- Issue clear guidance to personnel that public-safety enforcement does not become optional when the offending vehicle is believed to be connected to a federal agency.
- Advise CCL what steps the Illinois State Police will take to ensure meaningful enforcement and public accountability.

If the Illinois State Police is taking the position that such vehicles should not be stopped or investigated, CCL requests that you identify the legal basis for that position. Silence and non-enforcement are not acceptable responses where the public is exposed to ongoing and frequent but preventable danger.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this public safety matter.

Sincerely,

Chicago Council of Lawyers

cc:

Ginger Hancock
Karen Sheley