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VIPD Looking to Install Devices to Monitor 'Noise Pollution' in Moving Vehicles

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V.I. Police Department Commissioner Ray Martinez on Friday disclosed that the V.I.P.D. in collaboration with the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs is looking into the possibility of using noise-monitoring cameras as part of efforts to control loud music and other "noise pollution" in the territory.

“Commissioner Evangelista and I started researching updated noise sensor devices and related technologies. While the acquisition of handheld and vehicle-mounted sensor devices are the priority, with the closed-circuit television (CCTV) and license plate reader (LPR) cameras we are installing along with plans for red light and speed cameras, we are also looking into the use of noise-monitoring cameras,” Mr. Martinez said.

The announcement was made during hearing on Bill No. 34-0211, [a wide-ranging measure](#) sponsored by Senator Novelle Francis that seeks to curtail loud music and other forms of "noise pollution" not only from vehicles but homes and entertainment facilities. The measure was approved in the Committee on Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety Friday and has been forwarded to the Committee on Rules and Judiciary for further vetting.

Mr. Martinez explained that noise-monitoring cameras are like red-light safety cameras but triggered by sound by using a filter designed to notice noisy vehicles and exhaust. "The technology remains in a standby phase until it detects a noisy vehicle louder than the preset decibel limit," he said. "When it detects one, it captures video, audio, noise levels, and uploads everything to a web server where someone can review it and make a judgment as to whether it is okay or not," he told the committee.

Sharing more insight about the technology, Mr. Martinez further stated, "It is important to note that the technology does not notice voices or conversations regardless of how loud they are, as voices cannot deliver the decibel range necessary to trigger detection."

DLCA Commissioner Richard Evangelista said the department fully supports the reduction of noise from 500 feet to within 100 feet of any church, school, or residential zoning district, as recommended by the new bill.

"The amendments strike a keen balance between the need for peaceful enjoyment of property or space while allowing economic activity to return to our towns, and for entertainment and restaurant venues to thrive throughout the territory," he said. "The new measures also contemplate the implementation of current sound technology to aid in noise abatement by making the regulation of noise more practical."

During the Friday hearing, lawmakers also approved Bill No. 34-0206, an Act amending Virgin Islands Code repealing reciprocal recognition of firearm licenses for persons that own firearms outside of the Virgin Islands. They also approved Bill No. 34-0225, an Act amending Virgin Islands Code to increase the penalties for failure to report certain crimes.