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Cocke County Sheriff's Department
111 Court Ave
Newport, TN 37821

Subject: Request for Body Camera Footage Release and Notification of Tennessee Public Records Law Violation

To Sheriff CJ BALL or Cocke County Sheriffs Department Supervisor,

I am writing to formally request the release of body camera footage from two specific incidents involving my arrest by the Cocke County Sheriff's Department on August 4, 2024, and September 5, 2024, both of which occurred on public roads in Cocke County. I have previously made three requests for the release of this footage under the Tennessee Public Records Act (TPRA), which entitles Tennessee citizens to access public records maintained by government entities.

The Tennessee Public Records Act (T.C.A. § 10-7-503) states that citizens have the right to inspect and receive copies of public records, including body camera footage recorded in public spaces, unless a specific exemption applies. Both incidents occurred in public settings, and, as such, no statutory exemptions appear to apply to my requests. The denial or delay in providing this footage not only infringes on my rights under state law but raises concerns of procedural misconduct within the Cocke County Sheriff's Department.

Specifically:

1. Incident on August 4, 2024: This footage is requested to document actions taken by Lt. Zach Magourik during my arrest, particularly concerning unnecessary force that resulted in physical injury.
2. Incident on September 5, 2024: I am requesting this footage to provide an accurate record of the arrest, during which the deputy reportedly adhered to all procedures and conducted the arrest appropriately.

By withholding this footage without citing a valid exemption, the Cocke County Sheriff's Department is in potential violation of the TPRA and may be obstructing transparency. This lack of access restricts my ability to obtain a full and accurate record of these events, which is critical for the resolution of ongoing legal matters.

I respectfully request that you comply with Tennessee law and release the requested body camera footage within five (5) business days of receiving this letter. Failure to comply may require that I seek intervention through the Tennessee Office of Open Records Counsel or further legal action.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response confirming the release of the footage.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Black