



News Release No. 26

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### **CRIME PREVENTION GETS A BOOST WITH NEW *SEE SOMETHING, SEND SOMETHING*® MOBILE APP** *Virginia 3<sup>rd</sup> State in Nation to Launch Safety Mobile Application*

RICHMOND, Va. – With the month of December being one of the busiest times of the year for the Commonwealth's airports, highways, malls, restaurants, movie theatres, places of worship, and countless festive venues, Virginia residents are encouraged to keep their environments safe. Because suspicious activity can happen anywhere at any time, Virginians now have another means of helping safeguard themselves and their community, especially during the holiday season.



Today, the Virginia State Police launched the new crime prevention mobile application *See Something, Send Something*®. The reporting app enables suspicious, criminal activity to be captured as a photo or written note and sent to the Virginia State Police.

“The fundamentals of investigating and solving a crime haven’t changed,” said Major Rick A. Jenkins, Deputy Director of the Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation, at the press conference held in Prince William County, Va., Friday to launch the app. “But, keeping the public engaged with us through the crime-solving, tip-sharing process has evolved and now so have we. This app is simply the 21<sup>st</sup> century version of the traditional telephone crime tip line or hotline.”

The application, which can be downloaded at no cost for iPhone and Android phone users, also includes information on what to look for and when to report suspicious activity. The service is already available in Pennsylvania and Louisiana. The app does **not** replace 911 and should not to be used for someone needing immediate police action or to report an emergency.

The photograph or information submitted by a citizen via the app goes to the Virginia State Police for review and analysis. If the tip is relevant to an ongoing criminal investigation or incident, then it will be forwarded on to the investigating law enforcement agency. If the tip is unfounded, then the information provided, and the name and phone number of the tip’s provider, are permanently deleted. There is no archiving of tips or collection database.

The app provider, My Mobile Witness, uses patent-pending privacy protection software for safeguarding the integrity of tips and citizens’ personal information. The system allows law enforcement to engage citizens without tracking one’s location or storing personal information. Submitted tips are immediately removed from the mobile device and purged from the My Mobile Witness system once delivered to the Virginia State Police for analysis.

#### **Regional Media Contacts**

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## Media Release

To help encourage Virginians to download and use the app, a 30-second public service announcement has been produced and is available for viewing/download at [www.vsp.virginia.gov](http://www.vsp.virginia.gov).

### **See Something, Send Something® Mobile App Fact Sheet**

**Who receives my tips?** Tips are routed through a network of State Police organizations and state offices of homeland security and preparedness.

**Will somebody send police?** No. If you require immediate police action or other emergency services dial 911 or, to reach the Virginia State Police, dial #77 on your mobile phone.

**Does the service work throughout the country?** Yes, geo-tagged tips are routed to the appropriate participating law enforcement agency or intelligence center.

**Does the App actively track me or my location?** No. Photos and notes are geo-tagged only at the time of submission. The app does not actively track your location or movements.

**Can I remain anonymous?** All information associated with your tip submission will be protected and kept strictly confidential by law enforcement. If information you submit warrants additional investigation, it may be forwarded to the appropriate investigating agency on a need-to-know basis.

**Will somebody contact me?** The system allows citizens to act as additional eyes and ears in the fight against crime, suspicious activity, terrorism, etc. In rare instances, law enforcement may contact you for additional information if your tip is deemed of high value or connected to an ongoing investigation.

**Why is the picture or note removed from my phone after I submit a tip?** This is done to protect potential evidence and proper chain of custody. If you submit a tip of high value the appropriate the participating law enforcement agency retains the only copy.

**Can I save pictures to my library before submitting a tip? Can I recover pictures or notes after they are sent?** No. The app does not allow for a photo to be attached and sent.

**Does Virginia allow an app user to receive alerts?** Not at this time, but is a service being considered as a future possibility.

**Is there a cost associated with using the service?** While there is no charge to download or use the *See Something, Send Something* application for Iphone and Android users, standard data rates apply. Check with your carrier regarding data plans, options and rates.

**Who is My Mobile Witness in the user agreement?** My Mobile Witness is the exclusive provider of the patent-pending *See Something, Send Something* technology used by law enforcement.

**Is my information given to third party advertisers, marketers or anyone other than law enforcement?** My Mobile Witness does not and will not sell your information. It passes information onto law enforcement when and if you submit a tip. Your information is not retained in the My Mobile Witness database. Once routed to the appropriate law enforcement agency, your tip, name and number are immediately deleted from the provider's server. The My Mobile Witness privacy policy is available online at [www.mymobilewitness.com](http://www.mymobilewitness.com).

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