



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ AGENDA ~

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

12:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber

Call to Order

The Public Safety Committee will meet to discuss the following policy order: An amendment to Chapter 2.128 Surveillance Ordinance.

- 1. That the Amendment to Chapter 2.128 Surveillance Ordinance Technology be forwarded to the Public Safety Committee for a hearing.**

WHEREA S: The City Council passed [Chapter 2.128 Surveillance Technology Ordinance](#) on December 10, 2018, which imposed a requirement that the City Manager seek approval from the City Council prior to acquiring or using certain surveillance technology, including Biometric Surveillance Technology and facial recognition software and databases; and

WHEREA S: Notwithstanding this existing check on the City's authority to acquire and use face recognition technology or data derived thereof, the potential threats to residents' civil rights and civil liberties that are unique to face recognition technology warrant its outright ban; and

WHEREA S: Facial recognition software can discriminate based on classes like race and gender; a 2018 report out of the MIT Media Lab and Microsoft "[Gender Shades: Intersectional Accuracy Disparities in Commercial Gender Classification](#)" found that while the "maximum error rate for lighter-skinned makes is 0.8%" in commercial gender classification systems, "darker skinned females are the most misclassified group (with error rates up to 34.7%);" and

WHEREA S: The use of face recognition technology can have a chilling effect on the exercise of constitutionally protected free speech, with the technology being used in China to target ethnic minorities, and in the United States, it was used by police agencies in Baltimore, Maryland, to target activists in the aftermath of Freddie Gray's death; and

WHEREAS State Representative Dave Rogers (whose district includes parts of Cambridge) has
S: filed legislation that would [impose a moratorium](#) on face recognition technology, and as recently as Thursday, July 25, 2019, Representative Ayanna Pressley [introduced a bill](#) before Congress that would:

1. Prohibit the use of biometric recognition technology in public and assisted housing units funded under HUD; and
2. Require HUD to submit a report to Congress that provides analysis on any known use of facial recognition technologies in public housing units; the impact of emerging technologies on tenants; the purpose of installing the technologies in the units; demographic information of impacted tenants, and; the impact of emerging technologies on vulnerable communities in public housing, including tenant privacy, civil rights and fair housing includes HUD federally assisted rental dwelling units;

WHEREAS Three cities have already banned the use of facial recognition technology by
S: municipal authorities, including San Francisco, Oakland (CA), and next door in [Somerville](#); now therefore be it

ORDERE That the attached amendment to Chapter 2.128 Surveillance Ordinance
D: Technology be forwarded to the Public Safety Committee for a hearing as soon as possible.

2. **A communication was received from Emilian Falcon of the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts regarding the Face Surveillance Ban**