

From: [Sarah Edwards](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Please support Ordinance 2021-0091
Date: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 11:03:16 AM

I am a Council District #7 constituent and voter and a faculty member at Green River College. I urge the King County Council to support Ordinance 2021-0091 to ban government use of facial recognition software, which has been shown to be less accurate in identifying people of color, women, transgender people, and gender non-conforming individuals. These are all vulnerable populations who are already at risk of violence and various forms of discrimination in our society, and we should not compound that by using criminal justice tools that have a history of discrimination. Many of my students at Green River College are members of one or more of these populations, and I urge you to protect them from unnecessary and unjust involvement in the legal system by adopting this ordinance. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Sarah Edwards
Auburn, WA

From: [Dianne Hulscher](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Subject: KC 2021-0091
Date: Monday, May 3, 2021 9:37:44 PM

My name is Dianne Hulscher, and I am a constituent in KC district 1. I support the ban of government use of facial recognition technology.

For many reasons, not the least of which it increases the risk of false matches, particularly with Asian and Black faces compared to white faces, it sets up a dangerous precedent.

Once again it is a way of placing black and brown citizens at a disadvantage compared to whites.

Thank you for supporting the government ban on facial recognition technology. technology.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Derek Lum](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Cc: [Savannah Sly](#); [Pradeepta Upadhyay \(Executive Director\)](#)
Subject: Comment on Facial Surveillance Ban
Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 7:15:01 PM
Attachments: [comment 4 20 king county council .docx](#)

Hello King County Councilmembers,

We deeply encourage all of you to vote to protect immigrant and refugee communities and vote in favor of the Facial Surveillance Ban. I have typed up a short letter above outlining how we would fear for the well being of our immigrant refugee community should the government be allowed to utilize such technology.

Thank you all,

Derek

Written Public Testimony:

Hello Members of the King County Council.

My name is Derek Lum and I am testifying on behalf of InterIm CDA. We are a non-profit community development organization that has served low income, immigrant, refugee, and Asian American populations for over fifty years. We are testifying in support of this ban on government use of facial recognition technology.

We are most deeply concerned that the use of this technology could lead to the misidentification and deportation of a community member. Many of our services target the International District, which is overwhelmingly people of color (POC), many of whom are immigrants. Between an extremely large POC population and a residential population that is more than half women, it would be easy for a community member to be misidentified. This could lead to various harms such as deportation, being wrongfully imprisoned, or being placed on a list for surveillance by the federal government. Finally, even mistaken release of information (such as a hack), could lead to grave harm.

We are appreciative to Councilmember McDermott for sponsoring this legislation. I encourage you all to please vote in favor of this legislations. Thank you all.

Best,

Derek Lum, MSW

On behalf of InterIm CDA

MISSION May 3, 2021

OneAmerica
advances the
fundamental
principles of
democracy and
justice at the
local, state and
national levels
by building
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in collaboration
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Members of the King County Council,

I write today to urge you to support Ordinance No. 2021-0091 – an ordinance that would ban government use of facial recognition technology in King County and protect people’s civil rights and civil liberties. OneAmerica joins organizations like the ACLU of Washington in calling out the dangers of mass surveillance, particularly for vulnerable immigrant groups, Muslims,¹ and BIPOC communities, especially Black men.²

OneAmerica is the largest immigrant and refugee advocacy organization in Washington State. Since 2001, OneAmerica has built power within immigrant and refugee communities to advance democracy and justice using the tools of policy advocacy, grassroots leadership, and community organizing. OneAmerica envisions a peaceful world where every person’s human rights and dignity are respected, where communities appreciate differences and stand together for justice and equality, and where each person contributes to the common good.

We stand against the use of facial recognition technology because it invades people’s privacy and gives unprecedented power to the government. Furthermore, the technology is inaccurate. Studies show that facial recognition technologies result in false positives, particularly for people from West and East Africa, East Asia, and in women and children.³ More than half of all immigrants to the United States are female, 27 percent are Asian, and ten percent are African.⁴

Regardless of its accuracy, facial recognition also enables systemic racism and injustice. Government agencies can use facial recognition to track individuals’ movements and associations without their knowledge or consent, chilling free speech and free association, undermining press freedom, and threatening the free exercise of religion. Importantly, it could impact the participation of undocumented individuals in public activism for fear of information being shared between law enforcement agencies and immigration enforcement.

¹ Bobby Allyn, *‘We’re Supposed To Do That: Bloomberg Defends NYPD’s Spying of Muslims after 9/11*, NPT (Feb. 27, 2020), <https://www.npr.org/2020/02/27/810181314/we-re-supposed-to-do-that-bloomberg-defends-nypd-s-spying-of-muslims-after-9-11>.

² See e.g., Kashmir Hill, *Wrongfully Accused By An Algorithm*, NYTimes (June 24, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/technology/facial-recognition-arrest.html>.

³ Patrick Grother et al., *Face Recognition Vendor Test (FRVT) Part 3: Demographic Effects*, U.S. Dep’t. of Com., Nat’l Inst. Of Standards & Tech. (Dec. 2019), <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/ir/2019/NIST.IR.8280.pdf>.

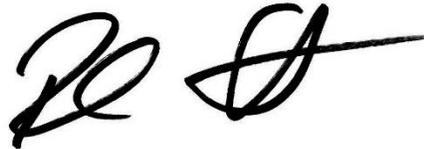
⁴ Jeanne Batalova et al., *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States*, Migration Policy Institute (Feb. 24, 2020), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Demographic,%20Educational,%20and%20Linguistic%20Characteristics>.

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Some local governments already demonstrated their concerns about the discriminatory impacts of facial recognition technology and passed bans on its public and private use.⁵ Cities like Portland, Boston, and San Francisco recognize that facial recognition threatens everyone's privacy and civil liberties and reflect growing public concern about the harmful impacts of facial surveillance.⁶ Their usage in the immigration system could have severe impacts on marginalized communities, including Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitioners and applicants for and recipients of T and U visas.

King County has the opportunity to pass the country's first county-wide facial recognition ban. King County can be a leader in protecting people's civil rights and civil liberties and advancing racial equity. Please support Ordinance No. 2021-0091. I thank you for considering this pressing issue.

Sincerely,



Rich Stolz, Executive Director
OneAmerica
1225 S. Weller St, Suite 430
Seattle, WA 98144
www.weareoneamerica.org

⁵ See e.g. Portland, Oregon Municipal Code § 34.10.

https://cdn.voxcdn.com/uploads/chorus_asset/file/21868277/704_Sep_9_2TC_W_Ord_BPS_2_1_.pdf.

Press Release, City of Portland, City Council approves ordinances banning use of facial recognition technologies by City of Portland bureaus and by private entities in public spaces (Sept. 9, 2020),

<https://www.portland.gov/bps/news/2020/9/9/city-council-approves-ordinances-banning-use-facialrecognition-technologies-city>; Boston, Massachusetts Municipal Code § 16-62,

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6956465-Boston-City-Council-face-surveillance-ban.html>; San Francisco, California Administrative Code - Acquisition of Surveillance Technology

<https://www.eff.org/document/stop-secret-surveillance-ordinance-05062019>.

⁶ Brooke Auxier et al., *Americans and Privacy: Concerned, Confused and Feeling Lack of Control Over Their Personal Information*, Pew Research Center (Nov. 2019),

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2019/11/15/americans-and-privacy-concerned-confused-and-feeling-lack-of-control-over-their-personal-information/>.

From: [Elena Rumiantseva](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Subject: Ban facial recognition
Date: Monday, May 3, 2021 10:59:53 PM

Hello,

My name is Elena Rumiantseva, and I am a constituent in KC district 4 asking for your "Yes" vote on KC Ordinance 2021-0091 that would ban government use of facial recognition technology. I carefully studied the issue by reading local and national publications, and came to the inevitable conclusion that the technology is a danger to our civil and human rights. Councilmember Rod Dembowski, I also would like to thank you as my representative in the county government for cosponsoring this ordinance.

Facial recognition technology time and again has been shown to be less accurate in identifying people of color, women, youth, trans and gender non-conforming individuals, increasing the risk of false matches and ruining lives in the process. This flaw is especially true in Asian and African American communities compared to white communities. While facial recognition technology is advertised as a "neutral" and objective tool, in reality it can amplify existing biases and lead to dangerous outcomes for people, including loss of a job, housing and underage children. The danger of this technology on a societal level is that it allows governments to track people on an invisible, persistent and massive scale without their permission or even knowledge, creating databases used by ICE and other government agencies. This has the potential to undermine free speech, free association, freedom of the press and the free exercise of religion.

I urge KC council to approve this ordinance without watering it down and without delay. Thank you for considering my comment.

Sincerely,

Elena Rumiantseva
KC district 4 constituent