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Commission on Facial Recognition

Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Michael S. Day, Co-Chairs

Public Comment

Government Use of Facial Recognition Technology

Testimony on Face Surveillance Bills (H. 135 and S. 47)

Submitted by the Boston Teachers Union, Local 66, AFTMA, AFT, AFL-CIO  
Erik Berg, Executive Vice President

Dear Senator Eldridge, Representative Day, and Members of the Committee:

I'd like to begin by thanking Rep. Day and Sen. Eldridge, and all the committee members and staff who are here today about this important issue. I am Erik Berg, currently the Executive Vice President of the Boston Teachers Union, and before I came into this role I taught first and second grade for 25 years in the public schools. I am also the dad of two young adults who attended school throughout their career in the Boston Public Schools.

I'm here today to respectfully ask that the Commission recommend that the legislature strengthen existing facial recognition law to ensure Massachusetts schoolchildren, their families, and our educators are not subject to harmful surveillance.

In December 2020, Governor Baker signed into law police reform legislation, which does contain several provisions pertaining to government agencies' use of facial recognition technology. While the Boston Teachers Union supports those

