



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
KIM JANEY

July 30, 2021

Representative Michael S. Day
Co-Chair, Special Commission on Facial
Recognition
State House, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Senator James B. Eldridge
Co-Chair, Special Commission on Facial
Recognition
State House, Room 511-C
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Day, Chair Eldridge and Members of the Special Commission:

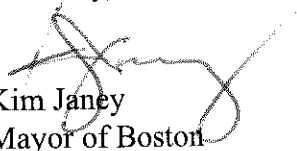
I want to begin by thanking the tremendous work of this commission in undertaking an examination of the use of facial recognition technology by government entities. As you work towards a formal recommendation, I strongly urge you to consider a statewide legislative ban of this type of technology, similar to local ordinances passed in Boston and other municipalities across the Commonwealth.

Last year, the City of Boston implemented its own ban on the use of facial surveillance technology and prohibited any city official from obtaining facial surveillance by asking for it through third parties. In our work leading up to this policy adoption, we found, as I am sure you will, that this type of technology is unreliable and disproportionately impacts low-income black and brown communities. Facial recognition technology is unfairly and unjustly punitive towards people of color and a ban is a critical piece to dismantling systemic racism in the criminal justice system.

Furthermore, the use of facial recognition technology by government entities poses a threat to our basic rights to move about freely. Statewide legislative action is needed to put safeguards in place to prevent facial recognition technology from being used to infringe on the rights of those who reside in and visit the Commonwealth.

Thank you for your thoughtful deliberation on this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or you may reach Alyssa Ring the Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-3817.

Sincerely,


Kim Janey
Mayor of Boston