



January 21 2020

Dear Members of the House Innovation, Technology, and Economic Development Committee:

We're writing on behalf of CAIR Washington, the Washington Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. As the local chapter of America's largest Muslim civil liberties group, we are writing to encourage this committee to oppose the 2020 WA Privacy Act and to support the Face Surveillance Moratorium (SB 5528 / HB 1654).

Our concerns with the 2020 WA Privacy Act relate to the presence of face surveillance language in the bill that we feel is a threat to the safety and privacy of Muslim communities. Too often has technology been used to oppress and surveil communities of color, as was recently demonstrated by law enforcement after 911 with the warrantless surveillance of Muslims. Face surveillance is a powerful tool that communities need the opportunity to weigh in on, which is why we seek to "push pause" on use of face surveillance tools in WA by supporting the Face Surveillance Moratorium (SB 5528 / HB 1654).

It's not just face surveillance that's a concern within the 2020 WA Privacy Act. Examination of the bill reveals vague language around accountability and enforcement that we believe present loopholes that undermine consumer protections. We do not find the 2020 WA Privacy Act to be a bill that meaningfully protects the rights of individuals who seek to control their data.

Technology can easily replicate and amplify racial biases if adequate safeguards are not put in place. Face surveillance technology needs to be seriously assessed for bias before implementation, and community groups need to be part of that analysis. We believe the 2020 WA Privacy Act does not create meaningful protections for the communities of color in Washington and we strongly urge this Committee to oppose the 2020 WA Privacy Act and to support Face Surveillance Moratorium (HB 1654 / SB 5528).

Best regards,

McKenna Lux

CAIR Washington Policy Manager