

January 16, 2020

Dear Members of the Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee:

We at the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project- an organization that exists to provide opportunity and a voice for low-income and homeless people while taking action for economic, social and racial justice -- are writing to urge this Committee to oppose the 2020 WA Privacy Act (HB 2742 / SB 6281), and to instead support the Face Surveillance Moratorium bill HB 1654 / SB 5528.

We are deeply concerned with the face surveillance components of this bill. Face surveillance technology is a powerful tool that can be easily misused or abused to target specific communities or individuals. People experiencing homelessness are likely to get disproportionately harmed by misuse of a technology such as face surveillance. Our job is to protect against future abuses of technology and facial surveillance collection, and with Trump's recent appointment of Robert Marbut to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, it is not farfetched to imagine how these technologies could be used to criminalize homelessness.

Please vote in support of the Face Surveillance Moratorium bill HB 1654 / SB 5528, and defend the privacy of all people.

Oppose the 2020 WA Privacy Act (HB 2742/SB 6281), a bill which would set a problematic standard for face surveillance use, and which also possesses many loopholes that technology businesses can exploit. Beyond our civil liberty and privacy concerns, this bill offers little to no recourse or means of enforcement for consumers seeking to protect their data. Furthermore, the communities most adversely affected by this bill have not been brought into the process to hear concerns and gather input. It is not good practice to draft policy with significant input from the tech corporations and not the populations this would be administered on. Please do better.

We need communities involved in the evaluation and regulation of powerful technologies that are to be used on the public. Due to the facial recognition provisions within, we request that this committee join us in opposing the 2020 WA Privacy Act (HB 2742/SB 6281), We believe the 2020 WA Privacy Act does not create meaningful protections for the WA public, particularly people experiencing homelessness. We strongly urge this Committee to oppose the 2020 WA Privacy Act (HB 2742/SB 6281)and to support Face Surveillance Moratorium (HB 1654 / SB 5528).

Tiffani McCoy
Lead Organizer, Real Change
206-441-3247 x222
tiffanim@realchangenews.org