



No Biometric Barriers to Housing Act

Background

Surveillance technology is often used to track and control vulnerable communities. The installation of biometric technologies on public housing properties poses an acute risk to those already on the margins. In addition to the potential of over-policing and criminalizing those living and visiting these homes, there are significant concerns about the sharing of this data.

Rampant biases in facial recognition technology disproportionately misidentify women and people of color. Using this flawed technology as the basis for everything from building access to potential arrest for perceived trespassing thus poses a unique risk to these groups.

The mission of the Department of Housing and Urban Development is to ensure that all Americans have access to fair and affordable housing, particularly for vulnerable populations who may not be able to secure stable housing on their own. It is paramount that in providing this resource, we do not compromise the privacy or dignity of tenants

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This unregulated and under-researched technology should be banned in public housing units until additional oversight of its development and deployment is possible. This is why we are introducing the [No Biometric Barriers to Housing Act of 2019](#). This legislation will:

- Prohibit the use of biometric recognition technology in most public and assisted housing units funded under the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Require the Department of Housing and Urban Development to submit a report to Congress that describes
 1. Any known use of facial recognition technologies in public housing units
 2. The impact of emerging technologies on tenants
 3. The purpose of installing the technologies in the units
 4. Demographic information of impacted tenants
 5. The impact of emerging technologies on vulnerable communities in public housing, including on tenant privacy, civil rights and fair housing

The policing and criminalization of poverty is already an ugly reality for many people living in these communities. Public housing exists to provide shelter for our constituents, not another opportunity to be wrongly profiled. We simply cannot allow untested and biased technologies to undermine tenants' civil liberties or their quality of life.

Supporting Organizations: NAACP, the National Housing Law Project, National Low Income Housing Coalition, National Action Network, Color of Change