

From: [Paul Liao](#)
To: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#); [Chan, Connie \(BOS\)](#); [Mandelman, Rafael \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Initially disappointed Surveillance Technology Policy was not passed, BUT..
Date: Tuesday, July 12, 2022 10:21:39 PM

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Supervisor Peskin
Supervisor Chan
Supervisor Mandelman:

I was unable to view yesterday's meeting in real time, but I just finished watching a replay of it. Before watching the replay, I had learned of, and was disappointed in, your decision to continue, and not pass, the proposed San Francisco Police Department Surveillance Technology Policy. However, after viewing the recording, I found myself pleased with the vigor at which the SF Rules Committee examined the policy; and I recognized that the policy does address one possible issue of legitimate concern - an issue that definitely warranted a continuance of your deliberation.

Before discussing that one issue, I wish to thank the Committee for its patience in listening to the many ill informed, and truly outrageous, public comments about the proposed policy. Despite the fact that Supervisor Peskin noted that this policy is NOT an expansion of current police department practices, most public comments continued an unreasonable harangue that the policy will rob people of their civil rights. The truth is that a properly designed policy, not only protects the privacy of individuals, but recognizes that modern video surveillance technologies provide the information necessary for law enforcement to better protect people and property in San Francisco. And we know that these same surveillance technologies assure improved police accountability.

The vigorous committee discussion, Starting with Chairman Peskin's comment that the recent Supreme Court's ruling concerning Roe v Wade has opened new conversations about surveillance information, opened my eyes to a key deficiency in the policy. Specifically, the policy presently lacks an assurance that any surveillance information that comes into the possession of the San Francisco Police department will NOT be used by other states to prosecute any person or organization for acts that are not crimes in California.

Once this issue is addressed, it is my hope that the policy will be pass by your committee. I also urge our City to be increasingly proactive in its deployment of technologies, including surveillance technologies, that help assure public safety in ways that also protect the public's rights to privacy. It must be noted that such technologies not only help identify the culprits of crimes (and deter criminal activities), but are a key to reducing the potential for violent confrontation between law enforcement and the public.

Please revise the Surveillance Technology Policy and approve it at your next meeting.

Paul Liao

PS. Below is the text of my original email requesting your support for this policy that I sent to you yesterday.

A recent email message from the ACLU has informed me that a Surveillance Technology Policy will be discussed during Monday's San Francisco Rules Committee meeting.

I urge you to support the Surveillance Technology policy for the following reasons.

If you are a fan of BBC shows such as Morse, Lewis, etc., you know that cameras are often the key to solving crimes. It's also true that here in San Francisco, individual citizens, store owners, and apartment buildings are using cameras to monitor their property in hopes of improving their security and safety. Most are more than willing to voluntarily share the video captured by those camera systems with law enforcement officials, if it helps to enforce laws against crime and/or deter those crimes from being committed in the first place. In addition, we know that cameras can be, and already are, an effective method for enforcement of many laws such as those that require stopping at a red light, for payment of tolls, and for assuring police accountability.

Modern camera technologies could do still more to improve the safety and quality of life in San Francisco. For example, reckless driving and speeding could be greatly reduced, and pedestrian safety improved, if cameras aided law enforcement in the efforts to enforce these laws that protect our safety. Unfortunately at present, despite the efforts of our local representatives, those cameras are not permitted in California. I hope that situation will change in the future.

Consider also how enforcement of traffic safety violations using information captured by cameras would virtually eliminate potentially dangerous, even life threatening, confrontations between police officers and the public. **We should be encouraging the use of these non-confrontational approaches to law enforcement, rather than discouraging them**

There can be privacy concerns that should, and indeed must be, addressed. However, the attached ACLU (to which national organization I send contributions every year) is a hysterical call that sends the mistaken impression that all surveillance cameras should be banned. In my opinion, it sends exactly the WRONG message.

ON MONDAY, PLEASE SUPPORT SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY POLICY
Paul Liao