


F R O M	NAME & TITLE	Steve Sharkey, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE M E M O	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation (DOT) 417 E Fayette Street, Room 527		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 21-0001		

TO: Mayor Brandon M. Scott
TO: Public Safety & Government Operations Committee
FROM: Department of Transportation
POSITION: **Recommend Amendment**
RE: Council Bill – 21-0001

DATE: 2/23/21

INTRODUCTION – Surveillance Technology in Baltimore

PURPOSE/PLANS – For the purpose of prohibiting Baltimore City government from purchasing or obtaining certain face surveillance technology; prohibiting Baltimore City government from contracting or subcontracting with another for the purpose of face surveillance technology; prohibiting any person in Baltimore City from obtaining, retaining, accessing, or using certain face surveillance technology or any information obtained from certain face surveillance technology; requiring the Director of Baltimore City Information and Technology to submit an annual report to the Mayor and City Council regarding the use of surveillance by the Mayor and City Council; providing for certain termination dates; providing for certain penalties; and defining certain terms.

COMMENTS – Council Bill 21-0001 looks to prohibit Baltimore City Government, or any entity contracted by Baltimore City Government, from purchasing or utilizing facial recognition technology. Additionally, the proposed ordinance looks to ban any person within Baltimore City from purchasing or utilizing facial recognition technology. The legislation is a successor to Council Bill 20-0606 that was unable to advance during the previous term. There are number of modifications in Council Bill 21-0001 compared to its predecessor.

First and foremost, Council Bill 21-0001 spells out a variety of exemptions to the surveillance technology exemption. Exemptions specific to Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT) include surveillance technology designed to assist with infrastructure and mechanical control systems as well as surveillance technology associated with parking ticket violations. 21-0001 also would require an annual report be published by Baltimore City Information Technology by June 30th of each year, outlining surveillance technology purchased by individual municipal agencies, and the purpose of those purchases. A sunset provision is built into the bill, automatically expiring the proposed ordinance on December 31st, 2022 unless the City Council decides to extend the legislation for an additional 5 years.

The Department of Transportation is concerned that Council Bill 21-0001 does not specifically identify traffic control devices, such as automated speed, red light, vehicle height or bus lane enforcement cameras, on the legislation’s list of exemptions. Automated enforcement devices help to improve safety of Baltimore City roadways for commuters, pedestrians, and local residents. Additionally, DOT Traffic Division’s Traffic Management Control Center currently operates numerous CCTV cameras across Baltimore City, focused on city thoroughfares, for the purposes of monitoring traffic and helping to coordinate emergency response.

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT POSITION – For the reasons outlined above, the Department of Transportation **recommends amending** Council Bill 21-0001 to include automated enforcement traffic control devices and traffic monitoring CCTV cameras on the legislation’s list of exemptions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Liam Davis at Liam.Davis@baltimorecity.gov or at 410-545-3207.

Sincerely,

Steve Sharkey
Director