

January 15, 2019

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)  
ACLU Foundations of California  
ACLU of Massachusetts  
ACLU of Washington  
New York Civil Liberties Union  
18MillionRising.org  
A New PATH  
Access Now  
ALIGN (The Alliance for a Greater New York)  
American Friends Service Committee  
American Muslim Empowerment Network-Muslim  
Association of Puget Sound  
American Muslims of Puget Sound  
Arab American Institute  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice- Asian Law Caucus  
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area  
Californians United for a Responsible Budget  
Campaign for Accountability  
Casa Latina  
Center for Media Justice  
Center on Policy Initiatives  
Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice  
Color Of Change  
Council on American Islamic Relations, Massachusetts  
Council on American-Islamic Relations, California  
CREDO Action  
Data for Black Lives  
Defending Rights & Dissent  
Demand Progress  
Densho  
El Centro de la Raza  
Electronic Frontier Foundation  
End Solitary Santa Cruz County  
Entre Hermanos  
Fair Chance Project  
Families for Justice as Healing  
Families Belong Together  
Fight for the Future  
Free Press  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom of the Press Foundation  
Government Accountability Project  
Government Information Watch  
Grassroots Collaborative  
Harrington Investments, Inc.  
Harvard Law School National Lawyers Guild  
Human Rights Watch  
Immigrant Defense Project  
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility  
International Committee for Robot Arms Control  
John T. Williams Organizing Committee  
Justice for Muslims Collective  
LAANE (Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy)  
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

Jeffrey P. Bezos  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

David Zapolsky  
General Counsel and Senior Vice President  
Amazon.com, Inc.

Dear Mr. Bezos and Mr. Zapolsky,

We are a coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights and liberties and safeguarding communities. We write today to reiterate our demand that Amazon stop providing its face surveillance product, Rekognition, to the government. Protecting communities and retaining customer trust requires that Amazon act immediately.

Since we sent [our first letter](#) in May 2018, Rekognition has been the subject of widespread attention and opposition. Over [150,000 consumers](#) have signed petitions demanding Amazon stop providing Rekognition to governments. Dozens of members of Congress, including the Congressional Black Caucus, have recognized Amazon's responsibility to protect people from the harms of face surveillance. Institutional shareholders have [sounded the alarm](#) about Rekognition's impact on Amazon's business. More than 400 Amazon employees, including senior engineers, have [made it clear](#) that they do not want to build products like Rekognition that will harm vulnerable communities.

The dangers of face surveillance can only be fully addressed by stopping its use by governments. Face surveillance provides government agencies with an unprecedented ability to track who we are, where we go, what we do, and who we know. Face surveillance gives the government new power to target and single out immigrants, religious minorities, and people of color in our communities. Systems built on face surveillance will amplify and exacerbate historical and existing bias that harms these and other over-policed and over-surveilled communities. In a world with face surveillance, people will have to fear being watched and targeted by the government for attending a protest, congregating outside a place of worship, or simply living their lives.

Instead of acting to protect against the very real dangers of face surveillance, your company is ignoring community concerns and further pushing this technology into the hands of government agencies. It was recently revealed that Amazon has [discussed Rekognition](#) with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a deal that if realized would supersize the government's ability to target and separate families living in our communities. The F.B.I. [is also piloting](#) the use of Rekognition. All the while, you have refused to provide meaningful answers to Congressional inquiries, including basic information about the company's government customers.

Amazon's inaction in response to widespread concerns about face surveillance stands in contrast to the steps taken by its competitors. In

Library Freedom Project  
Lucy Parsons Labs  
Make the Road New York  
Media Alliance  
Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee of  
Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court  
Mijente  
Muslim Justice League  
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Immigration Project of the NLG  
National Lawyers Guild - New York City Chapter  
National Lawyers Guild - Massachusetts Chapter  
New Economy Project  
New York Communities for Change  
Oakland Privacy  
OCCORD (Orange County Communities Organized for  
Responsible Development)  
OneAmerica  
Our Revolution Arlington  
Partnership for Working Families  
Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College  
RAICES  
Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project  
Restore the Fourth  
Silicon Valley Rising  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Brentwood  
Starting Over, Inc.  
SumOfUs  
Tenth Amendment Center  
The Greenlining Institute  
The Legal Aid Society (NYC)  
The Project on Government Oversight  
Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment  
Unitarian Universalist Mass Action  
War Resisters League  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom  
X-Lab

December 2018, [Google announced](#) it will not sell a face surveillance product until the technology's dangers are addressed, with its [CEO Sundar Pichai warning](#) that the tech industry "just can't build it and then fix it." And Microsoft's President Brad Smith [rightly acknowledged](#) the risks associated with face surveillance and the company's obligation to act internally to address potential harms. It is wholly irresponsible to wait for society to develop an "immune response" to technologies like face surveillance, as [Mr. Bezos has suggested](#). As your [employees wrote](#), "we already know" Rekognition will "ultimately serve to harm the most marginalized." The dangers are clear, and so are the steps to address those dangers.

By continuing to sell your face surveillance product to government entities, Amazon is gravely threatening the safety of community members, ignoring the protests of its own workers, and undermining public trust in its business. Amazon must stop providing a face surveillance product to governments.

We look forward to your written response to this letter.

Signed,

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