

From: deee bouchard <deeedeee1963@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2024 1:02 PM
To: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: FLOCK Surveillance System

To the Colchester Board of Selectman -

The surveillance equipment designed and monitored by Flock Safety - which the Colchester Police Department is seeking approval from the BOS, to implemented across Colchester roadways - is currently blanketing American cities and towns with dangerously powerful and unregulated automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) cameras. While these license plate readers have been around for some time, **Flock is the first to create a nationwide mass-surveillance system** out of its customers' cameras where the data gathered is run against state watch lists, FBI databases, the National Crime Information Center, etc.

Do the citizens of Colchester want to be part of a nationwide database?

I would argue the answer to that question is NO!

As an elected official, it is your responsibility to do your due diligence; to research this issue in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of what this proposal entails and how this surveillance technology will impact the citizens of Colchester.

Below, I have include a link to recent publication by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). This 'white paper' details the ACLU's concerns about the proliferation of this technology and specifically of the company Flock Safety. I would urge each of you to take the time to read this paper to gain a better understanding of the dangers and infringements on the privacy of individuals when towns engage in using this type of surveillance system.

The ACLU white paper (link below) is a must read for the Colchester Board of Selectman. I have highlighted two excerpts that raise serious concerns about privacy, individual autonomy and the potential for abuse in the use of this technology.

https://www.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/flock_1.pdf

- Already, the photos taken by Flock's ALPR cameras capture more than just license plates; the photos are used to create what the company calls a searchable "Vehicle Fingerprint." Using a "proprietary machine learning algorithm," the company says, it gathers "vehicle make, type, color, license plate, state of the license plate, covered

plates, missing plates, and unique features like roof racks and bumper stickers.” Presumably that would allow searches for all vehicles that include a particular political bumper sticker, **enabling people to be targeted based on the exercise of their First Amendment-protected free expression rights.**

- Altogether, Flock’s ALPR network adds up to a system of mass surveillance — a system that seems poised to expand beyond just license plate recognition. Mass surveillance simply gives too much power to those who control it. **Such power lends itself too easily to abuse, chilling people who might want to protest those in power or otherwise exercise their freedom of expression, and generally casting a pall over people’s freedom to live their lives without being watched.**

Regards,

Deanna Bouchard

Colchester, CT

Benjamin Franklin wisely said, **"Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."** We are reminded that while safety is important, we should never sacrifice liberty in its pursuit.