



California Bans Law Enforcement From Using Facial Recognition Software For 3 Years

With all the craziness happening in California politics, it is hard to determine the real reason why the State Legislature banned facial recognition software for the next 3 years. Nevertheless, Californians will enjoy a greater measure of privacy than in other states. □ TN Editor

California lawmakers today passed a bill placing a three-year state-wide moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement agencies.

[AB 1215](#), The Body Camera Accountability Act, was introduced earlier this year by assemblymember Phil Tang, a Democrat. Both San Francisco and Oakland previously passed similar bills preventing the use of facial recognition by law enforcement agencies, now the ban's gone

state-wide.

The bill goes into effect on 1 January, 2020, and will be reviewed under a “sunset provision” in 2023.

Tang, according to an [ACLU statement](#), says the bill will protect Californians:

Without my bill, facial recognition technology essentially turns body cameras into a 24-hour surveillance tool, giving law enforcement the ability to track our every movement. Let's not become a police state and keep body cameras as they were originally intended - to provide police accountability and transparency.

US citizens have the right to privacy and the reasonable expectation that public surveillance systems are in place to protect us in the event that a crime is committed.

But AI-powered facial recognition systems aren't designed to monitor public spaces for crimes. As we've seen [in leaked Palantir documents](#), these systems are meant to connect to a database wherein police officers have access to the private details of any citizen. Here's a graphic showing what kind of information law enforcement officers have available to them with the Palantir app.

In essence, these tools give police officers the kind of data and information that a detective 20 years ago couldn't have gleaned with a search warrant and six months to investigate - today there's literally an app for that.

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Scientific American: ‘We Have No Reason To Believe 5G Is Safe’

The 5G industry has spent no funds on consumer safety testing, yet it disparages and vilifies legitimate scientists and studies that are issuing strong warnings about its safety. It’s time the public took notice! □ TN Editor

The telecommunications industry and their experts have accused many scientists who have researched the effects of cell phone radiation of “fear mongering” over the advent of wireless technology’s 5G. Since much of our research is publicly-funded, we believe it is our ethical responsibility to inform the public about what the peer-reviewed scientific literature tells us about the health risks from wireless radiation.

The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently announced through a [press release](#) that the commission will

soon reaffirm the radio frequency radiation (RFR) exposure limits that the FCC adopted in the late 1990s. These limits are based upon a [behavioral change in rats](#) exposed to microwave radiation and were designed to protect us from [short-term heating risks due to RFR exposure](#).

Yet, since the FCC adopted these limits based largely on research from the 1980s, the preponderance of peer-reviewed research, [more than 500 studies](#), have found harmful biologic or health effects from exposure to RFR at intensities too low to cause significant heating.

Citing this large body of research, more than 240 scientists who have published peer-reviewed research on the biologic and health effects of nonionizing electromagnetic fields (EMF) signed [the International EMF Scientist Appeal](#), which calls for stronger exposure limits. The appeal makes the following assertions:

“Numerous recent scientific publications have shown that EMF affects living organisms at levels well below most international and national guidelines. Effects include increased cancer risk, cellular stress, increase in harmful free radicals, genetic damages, structural and functional changes of the reproductive system, learning and memory deficits, neurological disorders, and negative impacts on general well-being in humans. Damage goes well beyond the human race, as there is growing evidence of harmful effects to both plant and animal life.”

The scientists who signed this appeal arguably constitute the majority of experts on the effects of nonionizing radiation. They have published more than 2,000 papers and letters on EMF in professional journals.

The FCC’s RFR exposure limits regulate the intensity of exposure, taking into account the frequency of the carrier waves, but ignore the signaling properties of the RFR. Along with the patterning and duration of exposures, certain characteristics of the signal (e.g., pulsing, polarization) [increase the biologic and health impacts](#) of the exposure. New exposure limits are needed which account for these differential effects. Moreover, these limits should be [based on a biological effect](#), not a change in a laboratory rat’s behavior.

The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) [classified RFR as "possibly carcinogenic to humans"](#) in 2011. Last year, a \$30 million study conducted by the U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP) found "clear evidence" that two years of exposure to cell phone RFR [increased cancer in male rats and damaged DNA in rats](#) and [mice](#) of both sexes. The Ramazzini Institute in Italy replicated the key finding of the NTP using a different carrier frequency and much weaker exposure to cell phone radiation over the life of the rats.

Based upon the research published since 2011, including human and animal studies and mechanistic data, the IARC has recently prioritized RFR to be reviewed again in the next five years. Since many EMF scientists believe we now have [sufficient evidence](#) to consider RFR as either a probable or known human carcinogen, the IARC will likely upgrade the carcinogenic potential of RFR in the near future.

Nonetheless, without conducting a formal risk assessment or a systematic review of the research on RFR health effects, the FDA recently reaffirmed the FCC's 1996 exposure limits [in a letter to the FCC](#), stating that the agency had "concluded that no changes to the current standards are warranted at this time," and that "NTP's experimental findings should not be applied to human cell phone usage." The letter stated that "the available scientific evidence to date does not support adverse health effects in humans due to exposures at or under the current limits."

The latest cellular technology, 5G, will employ millimeter waves for the first time in addition to microwaves that have been in use for older cellular technologies, 2G through 4G. Given limited reach, 5G will require cell antennas every 100 to 200 meters, exposing many people to millimeter wave radiation. 5G also employs new technologies (e.g., active antennas capable of beam-forming; phased arrays; massive inputs and outputs, known as MIMO) which pose unique challenges for measuring exposures.

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San Francisco Bans Cars On Market Street

Market Street is the busiest and most central street in downtown San Francisco. From now on, according to policies set in the UN's Agenda 21 for Sustainable Development, it will be foot-power, bicycles, scooters, buses, etc. □ TN Editor

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Board of Directors on Tuesday voted unanimously to approve the [Better Market Street plan](#), which will ban cars along the downtown strip of Market Street.

The plan, which has [been in the works for nearly a decade](#), will prohibit vehicles from driving on any of Market Street east of 10th Street. The city will instead encourage walking, biking and public transit by investing in new streetscapes, raised and protected bike lanes, and

improved bus and streetcar service.

San Francisco Mayor London Breed expressed support for the plan, noting [in a letter to the SFMTA](#) that Market Street is “our civic spine, where we convene for celebrations and come together to call for change.” She said the plan will help increase safety, transit reliability and attractiveness to the city.



Credit: Better Market Street

The Better Market Street planning team estimates 500,000 people walk on Market Street daily, with 650 people traveling on bike and 200 buses running down the corridor during peak hours. By eliminating cars, planners predict Market Street will not only become a better transportation route, but also “a place to stop and spend time, meet friends, watch people while sitting in a café, or just stroll and take in the scene.”

San Francisco is already no stranger to prohibiting cars on streets for pedestrian recreation. The city is home to two programs — [Sunday Streets](#) and [Play Streets](#) — that temporarily close neighborhood blocks off from cars to encourage “car-free fun” for children, seniors and neighbors. The success of such programs gave the city a window into the possibilities and benefits of a permanently vehicle-free central hub.

Safety is a main driver of the effort, as outlined in Breed’s letter to SFMTA. She noted that five of the city’s most dangerous intersections for pedestrian and cycling collisions are located in the downtown corridor of Market Street. To align with the city’s Vision Zero goals, the plan outlines efforts to install painted safety zones at eight intersections

along Market Street. Bicycle intersection improvements will also occur on four cross-streets.

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