Request for Information (RFI) on Public and Private Sector Uses of Biometric Technologies: Responses

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the RFI public responses received and posted do not represent the views or opinions of the U.S. Government, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), or any other Federal agencies or government entities. We bear no responsibility for the accuracy, legality, or content of these responses and the external links included in this document. Additionally, OSTP requested that submissions be limited to 10 pages or less. For submissions that exceeded that length, the posted responses include the components of the response that began before the 10-page limit.
Dear Dr. Eric Lander and Dr. Alondra Nelson,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the community impacts of artificial intelligence. I strongly support the creation of an AI Bill of Rights as a first step towards protecting people against the harms of many AI tools. Beyond the development of this Bill of Rights, I urge the White House to ensure federal agencies, local and state governments, and private companies abandon—or never use—AI tools like biometric surveillance that violate our rights and deepen structural racism.

Systemic racism is often reflected in the outcome that an AI system is meant to predict, such as in criminal legal system uses, or in housing, employment and credit. For example, in February 2020, a report issued by the Student Borrower Protection Center found that a fintech lender abused borrower’s educational and current employment data in its model, ultimately charging higher interest rates and loan origination fees for borrowers who attended Howard University, a historically Black university, or New Mexico State University, which principally enrolls Latinx students, when compared with a similarly situated New York University graduate [1].

Meanwhile, biometric surveillance and data collection are spreading rapidly in both private and public realms, creating unprecedented threats to privacy and safety. If we don’t put an end to the proliferation of this tech, individual anonymity in public spaces will soon be a relic of the past. Instances of irreversible identity theft (i.e. theft of biometric data) will multiply, and systems of mass incarceration and violent policing threatening the lives of Black and brown people nationwide will continue to be strengthened. Civil rights campaigns to ban the use of facial recognition by law enforcement, airlines, retail stores, and other actors call attention to these dangers and more [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

Like nuclear or biological weapons, biometric surveillance poses a threat to human society and basic liberties that far outweighs any potential benefits. The only appropriate response to such destructive tech – and any other inherently discriminatory and invasive AI tool – is an all out ban [8]. I urge the White House to adopt such a position, and throughout the process of developing an AI Bill of Rights, to center those most harmed by these technologies.

Thank you.

References:
2. https://www.banfacialrecognition.com/
6. https://www.amazondoesntrock.com
7. https://www.baneaproctoring.com
Automation is a powerful tool, and AI a particularly potent expression of it. We need to be very careful what processes we allow to be automated and avoid those that magnify inequalities or strip away civil liberties. Collection of biometric data is a particularly problematic area for automation. The dangers of even a perfectly designed and implemented system are manifold. Meanwhile the systems themselves suffer from deep ongoing bugs that harm some of the most vulnerable among us. While the implementations are hidden from independent review by NDAs and claims of protecting IP while essentially strip mining our citizens for raw data resources converting them into the means towards corporate ends. All at the speed of automation.

Uses of this technology must be transparent, open for public review, and rigorously regulated by all levels of government be they state, federal, or local.

We have ample evidence from the use of existing internet technologies that tech companies cannot be trusted. The very business models used by high tech firms enable sale of our personal data. The algorithms used by these same firms are invasive, biased and discriminatory. Please consider the damage to our freedoms caused by unregulated technology.
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<td>I do not wish to live in a world governed by computers. Let's take the steps that we need to keep our freedoms safe from the tyranny of algorithms.</td>
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<td>Once again, don't let big corporations dictate how the government is run. I'm sure there is already a few politicians with their hands in the corporate pockets, looking to make a BUCK on the taxpayers.</td>
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Constant surveillance is Unamerican.

Please, our privacy is important!

We cannot trust those trained solely in the intricacies of technology to have the best interests of society in mind. We get the tools and society we choose to allow. We need to halt the use of unchecked AI.
Part of our inherent right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness is having the right to our privacy. Unless there is strong probable cause that someone has broken a law, these corporations need to keep their spyware out of our households and communities. I don't even use my real name on grocery store membership cards because it's nobody's damn business what kind of toothpaste I buy. We don't want the USA to be like the East Germany of old where they kept files on their citizens. Creepy.

Everyday, there is a new story of "smart" systems doing real harm. Systems supposedly without bias carry the biases of their creators, and act as a convenient crutch, an excuse for continuing institutionalized inequity. Never in history have private entities, beholden only to themselves, had so much power. We need to put the brakes on it.
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This is not the only thing tech is digging out of us: personal info, clicks, online history, etc. All of this is a violation of us for the sake of multi-billionaire fat pockets.

We deserve our privacy
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<td>Tamara Matz</td>
<td>Tell the White House Ban Dangerous AI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annetta Winkle</td>
<td>We must look out for unforeseen threats</td>
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<td>Lynda West</td>
<td>Protect the people of this nation, please.</td>
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<td>Michael Howard</td>
<td>Please address this important issue!</td>
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<td>Get these damn algorithms out of social media</td>
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<td>Elaine Donovan</td>
<td>Invisible control is the worst!</td>
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<td>Place much better controls on Social Media!</td>
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