



*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

San Diego City Council Unanimously Approves New Surveillance Ordinance and Privacy Board

Another huge win for the TRUST SD Coalition and community members at large in the fight for transparency, accountability, and oversight

November 11, 2020

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San Diego, CA - Yesterday, the San Diego City Council unanimously approved the Transparent and Responsible Use of Surveillance Technology (TRUST) ordinance, as well as the Privacy Advisory Board ordinance, both of which were put forward by the TRUST SD Coalition in conjunction with Councilmember Montgomery Steppe.

This win comes after a year-long effort by the TRUST SD Coalition that began when thousands of San Diego's "smart streetlights" were found to be capturing live video of San Diegans, with little notice to the public and with no oversight. Over 30 community organizations came together to form the coalition and demand accountability for violating the public's trust. By December of 2019, the coalition was drafting a new surveillance ordinance, as well as a privacy advisory commission ordinance, and began a widespread campaign to bring the smart streetlights under council oversight.

In July, the City Council chose to cut funding for the smart streetlights. In September, Mayor Faulconer ordered access to the cameras be cut off.

Now, the two approved ordinances will face a required meet-and-confer process, before returning to City Council for further action.

The TRUST ordinance places all surveillance technology owned or operated by the city under the oversight of the City Council, and establishes a process for review of existing and future surveillance technology.

The Privacy Advisory Board Ordinance establishes a board of community and industry experts to provide informed advice to the City Council.

Members of the TRUST SD Coalition's Steering Committee made the following statements:

“Let us never underestimate the power of concerned community members coming together and making change. The work started because our government and public officials failed us. The People, along with the People's Councilmember Monica Montgomery Steppe, changed the direction in which Surveillance in San Diego was going – even in the face of opposition by the very officials who led us into the quagmire. **Even with this win, the fight continues. We must fight to maintain the integrity of our ordinances for the sake of the People, and that's what we commit to do.**” Geneviève Jones-Wright, Executive Director, Community Advocates for Just and Moral Governance (MoGo)

“I think we are in a new era of governance in San Diego where the community is deeply engaged and the council members recognize the importance of community participation and transparency. **I finally feel like we have an incoming mayor and council that are sympathetic to the concerns of every day San Diegans and are worried about more than their own self interests. This ordinance is a win for the city and all of us who live in it.**” Khalid Alexander, President, Pillars of the Community

“We hear a lot about ‘law and order’ but there is nothing law-and-order about the way these mass surveillance technologies are introduced into our lives, haphazardly and without any care of how they are impacting our communities. The responsible thing to do is involve the public with a community-led process that will include community input. That is the ‘law and order’ any government must have, and practice.” jean-huy tran, Director of Advocacy, We The People San Diego

“The ordinances passed today were a community driven effort to ensure the privacy rights of San Diegans are protected. The TRUST Coalition worked in partnership with Councilwoman Montgomery Steppe to bring forth two ordinances that will change the way the City acquires and uses surveillance technology. **Representing a community that has been subjected to disproportionate surveillance, we are proud of the unanimous vote by council today.**” Homayra Yusufi, Deputy Director, PANA

“For decades, tech companies have been given free reign to design and deploy with little democratic oversight. People are saying that democracy also applies to technology that affects your life, not just to budgets or to who you elect. Engineers might be closest to the wires and the code, but only communities know the complex impacts of technologies.” Prof. Lilly Irani, UCSD, and part of Tech Workers Coalition

“Today San Diegans and their City Council ousted the status quo and instead advanced new policies that will do more to protect San Diego’s citizens and visitors from the harms of mass surveillance. **With the passage of these ordinances, our leaders and our citizens are in unison demanding that the future of mass surveillance be very different from the past.**” Seth Hall, TechLead San Diego

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For facts about the TRUST SD Coalition, please feel free to follow us on Twitter at @SanDiegoTRUST or visit our website at www.SanDiegoTrust.org

The **Transparent and Responsible Use of Surveillance Technology San Diego (TRUST SD) Coalition** was originally formed to address the widespread and secretive use, installation, and acquisition of the Smart Streetlights technology that was deployed all over San Diego County. TRUST SD leads the call for community oversight of the use of all surveillance technology and strong, legally enforceable ordinances to address privacy and civil liberty issues. Accordingly, we wrote two community-focused ordinances that put in place community oversight and transparency essential for our Democracy. We educate community members through community forums and workshops around the county as well as city council members and other government and elected officials through our lobbying efforts. We advocate for community-led solutions to all of the problems we face as a city. We are 100% community-centered and community-driven. **TRUST SD** is made up of 30 local community organizations that represent various sectors of our communities.

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