

Offered by City Councilors Julia Mejia, Miniard Culpepper, Henry Santana, Breadon, Durkan, FitzGerald, Flynn, Louijeune, Murphy, Weber, and Worrell



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS, CONSTITUTIONAL, AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE BOSTON REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER (BRIC), THE ASSOCIATIVE VIOLENCE INFORMATION SYSTEM (AVIS), AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READERS (ALPR), AND PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL JOINT TASK FORCES (JTTF)

- WHEREAS,** As members of the Boston City Council, we have sworn an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and therefore bear a continuing responsibility to ensure that City policies and practices respect the civil liberties and legal protections guaranteed to the residents of Boston; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC) operates as a multi-agency intelligence and information-sharing hub through which the Boston Police Department collects, analyzes, maintains, and disseminates information with state and federal law enforcement partners including but not limited to Joint Terrorism Task Forces of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Anti-Terrorism Task Forces of the Department of Justice, and Regional Terrorism Early Warning Group; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Through BRIC, the City utilizes interconnected intelligence tools to maintain data collected not only through documented field interactions but also via social media monitoring and ALPRs, which may be aggregated through AVIS, previously known as the gang database, linking individuals and incidents based on associations and behavioral indicators to identify patterns in group-related violence; *and*
- WHEREAS,** These interconnected systems collectively shape how individuals are labeled, monitored, tracked, or included in intelligence records. Participation in shared intelligence environments may result in

information collected locally being used for purposes beyond the City's direct control, and in opposition to City values and commitments; *and*

WHEREAS, BRIC operates a Real Time Crime Center that functions as a centralized surveillance hub integrating live camera feeds, automated license plate reader data, social media monitoring tools, and multiple law enforcement databases to enable real-time monitoring, tracking, and analysis; *and*

WHEREAS, Although participation in the JTTF is voluntary for the City of Boston, federal memoranda and related directives, including NSPM-7, have instructed such task forces to investigate and disrupt activities characterized as domestic extremism, including conduct that may involve First Amendment-protected speech or protest; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston Regional Intelligence Center Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Protection Policy only restricts disclosure of certain BRIC records to the public or the subject individual, while permitting dissemination among authorized governmental agencies based on official duties and operational necessity, allowing information to circulate across agencies without corresponding notice or access to the affected person; *and*

WHEREAS, Because data may be collected and maintained without incident (i.e. arrest, charge, or conviction), records derived from associations, location data, or investigative leads may influence law enforcement encounters and other governmental decision-making, threatening an individual's right to due process, equal protection, freedom of speech and association, and protection against unreasonable searches; *and*

WHEREAS, Concerns regarding the scope, impact, and civil liberties implications of BRIC's operations have been raised and documented by community members and civil rights organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts and the Muslim Justice League, whose research, public records requests, and community advocacy have brought increased public awareness to these issues; *and*

WHEREAS, The Boston City Council has an oversight responsibility to ensure that intelligence and surveillance practices operating within the City are transparent, accountable, and aligned with constitutional protections and the City's commitments to supporting the constitutional rights and civil liberties of City of Boston residents; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council hold a series of hearings, policy briefings, and public testimony sessions to examine the civil rights and civil liberties implications of Boston's intelligence and surveillance infrastructure, centering the

perspectives of civil rights experts, constitutional scholars, impacted residents, and Administration officials responsible for oversight and operations. The series should focus on, but not be limited to, examining the governance, funding, transparency, accountability structures, and intelligence-sharing practices of the Boston Regional Intelligence Center, with particular attention to safeguards protecting privacy rights, and freedom from discriminatory surveillance; the structure, evidentiary standards, inclusion criteria, notice procedures, due process protections, removal mechanisms, and documented racial and ethnic disparities associated with the Associative Violence Information System (AVIS); the deployment and regulation of surveillance technologies such as Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR), including data collection and retention policies, query standards, inter-agency access, protections against prolonged location tracking; and the City of Boston's participation in the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), including the legal authority governing such participation, the scope of information-sharing, oversight mechanisms, and alignment with Boston's commitments to civil rights.

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