

## **SURVEILLANCE TOOLKIT: SAMPLE COMMENTS FOR A PUBLIC MEETING**

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*This is a sample public comment that you can customize for remarks at a City Council or Board of Supervisors meeting in support of your strategic goal. This is based on remarks presented by the ACLU of Northern California at an Oakland City Council meeting during the consideration of that City's Surveillance Technology Ordinance. The **blue text** should be customized.*

*As you draft your own remarks, keep in mind that speakers are often given a limited amount of time to present, usually between 1 to 3 minutes (generally, 125 words = 1 minute of speaking time).*

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Good evening,

My name is **NAME** and I represent a community coalition dedicated to protecting civil rights and civil liberties, including the right to be free from intrusive, discriminatory, and dangerous government surveillance.

Our coalition strongly encourages the City Council to vote **YES** on the Surveillance Technology Ordinance before you today. This ordinance is the result of conversations and input from community and city stakeholders, and will ensure that decisions about advanced surveillance technology are firmly under democratic control.

There is an urgent need for this legislation. We know surveillance technologies—particularly when acquired or used in secret, without the input from a diversity of community members and robust oversight—are disproportionately used to harm people of color, immigrants, and political activists.

This ordinance will help ensure that residents get a voice in key surveillance decisions that affect their neighborhoods, lives, and families. Real public safety requires that residents be part of decisions about whether to acquire technologies such as drones or cameras.

Finally, the ordinance will help ensure that our City's precious resources are not spent on costly, ineffective and invasive surveillance that creates more problems than it solves.

We strongly urge the committee to vote YES for transparency, democracy, and basic fairness by approving this surveillance ordinance.

Thank you.