

**ALAMEDA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
TOGETHER FOR ALL AD-HOC COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, March 6, 2025
10:00 a.m.**

Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas, Chair Location: Susan S. Muranishi County Administration Building
Supervisor Elisa Márquez, Vice-Chair Board of Supervisors Chambers
1221 Oak Street, Room 512, 5th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Survey of Existing Data Collection And Retention Practices For Potential Exposure to Federal Executive Orders And Statutory obligations And Impact On Alameda County Communities
[Attachment](#)

Brian Hofer, Executive Director of Secure Justice, presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the concerns about the privacy and data security risks associated with municipal ID and debit card programs in Bay Area cities, including Oakland, San Francisco, and Richmond.

These programs often collect sensitive data without adequately informing participants—particularly undocumented individuals—of the potential risks, such as ICE access through federal laws.

These risks are often the result of oversight, poor privacy literacy in local governments, and a lack of transparent, accessible privacy policies. California’s AB 60 driver's license program is an example of unintended consequences due to poor privacy safeguards, where ICE used DMV data to locate undocumented individuals.

Municipalities must improve data transparency, ensure informed consent, and conduct privacy reviews of contracts and data-sharing agreements. Secure Justice is currently auditing such practices in Alameda County and hopes to deliver a narrative assessment of risks to encourage governments to improve practices rather than terminate essential programs.

Saira Hussain, Senior Staff Attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), discussed how local governments and law enforcement agencies collect and share data with federal entities, often without proper oversight or transparency, particularly through fusion centers, joint task forces, and surveillance technologies.

Fusion centers, like the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC), collect and distribute data across agencies, including facial recognition, ALPR (license plate reader) data, and social media monitoring. These centers have minimal transparency and sometimes no formal agreements with local police departments, creating major privacy risks.

Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) allow local officers to operate under federal rules, bypassing state and local privacy protections. Oakland previously withdrew from its JTTF due to concerns over civil liberties violations, especially targeting marginalized communities.

New Homeland Security Task Forces, formed under recent executive orders, may further expand information-sharing practices under the guise of targeting criminal organizations, raising red flags for potential immigration enforcement.

The use of unregulated surveillance tech (e.g., drones, ALPR, forensic data platforms), is often shared without informed consent or proper safeguards. EFF's Atlas of Surveillance tracks which agencies are using which technologies.

Risks include ICE access to forensic data platforms and ALPR data being shared out of state in violation of California law. There is a need for clear policies, enforcement of state laws, and public transparency to protect the privacy of vulnerable populations.

Lara Kiswani, Executive Director of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center, reported how data collection and sharing practices have historically harmed Arab and Muslim communities through surveillance, profiling, and denial of services. Dual burden: lack of official recognition in government data (due to the absence of a Middle East North Africa (MENA) category in the U.S. Census) and targeted repression through data misuse, particularly by federal agencies.

Arab Resource and Organizing Center concerns:

- Lack of demographic data leads to underrepresentation in healthcare, education, and social services, forcing community groups to fill the gap with their own surveys.
- Data weaponization—through partnerships like fusion centers, JTTFs, and federal surveillance programs—has led to unjust targeting, deportations, and imprisonment of Arab and Muslim individuals.
- Emerging threats include the use of facial recognition, algorithmic bias, and potential travel bans that could use personal data like ethnicity, religion, or country of origin for enforcement.

Arab Resource and Organizing Center called on Alameda County to:

- Minimize sensitive data collection, avoid requiring exact names and addresses, and use anonymized or generalized identifiers.
- Protect student activists from politically motivated surveillance and prevent misuse of university records.
- Strengthen data privacy ordinances and prevent local law enforcement from collaborating with federal agencies without oversight.
- Ensure inclusion of MENA categories in local data collection to improve equity in services.
- Invest in and partner with community organizations to build trust and deliver programs safely.

Musa Tariq, Policy Coordinator at the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) San Francisco Bay Area, addressed the rise in Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism, and how these trends are exacerbated by surveillance practices and inadequate data reporting in Alameda County and beyond.

CAIR concerns:

- Increase in hate incidents: Since October 2023, CAIR has recorded unprecedented complaints of anti-Muslim discrimination—more than 8,000 in 2023, marking a 56% increase from 2022.
- Campus discrimination: Muslim students face harassment, censorship, and excessive policing for advocating Palestinian rights. Many report a lack of support from universities and law enforcement, deepening feelings of fear and isolation.
- Underreporting of hate crimes: The California AG's hate crime report does not list Muslims among the top five targeted groups, primarily because the data relies on law enforcement reports—which many Muslims avoid due to historic mistrust stemming from post-9/11 surveillance and profiling.
- Programs like the FBI's *Countering Violent Extremism* and the *Terrorist Watchlist* disproportionately target Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities. Alameda County law enforcement agencies collect and retain sensitive data with little transparency or accountability, which may be shared with federal agencies and used against community members.

Policy Recommendations to create a safer, more equitable environment for Muslim, Arab, and all marginalized communities

- Establish non-law enforcement channels to collect accurate data on Islamophobic and anti-Arab hate.
- End local-federal surveillance collaboration – Suspend Alameda County’s involvement in Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs), which contribute to profiling.
- Review what data is collected, retained, and shared with federal agencies.
- Support stronger anti-doxing protections and require hate crime data reporting as a condition for police funding.
- Ensure Palestinian suffering is acknowledged in public discussions to counteract anti-Palestinian racism and dehumanization.

Rona Popal, Co-founder & Executive Director, Afghan Coalition, reported on the urgent challenges facing Afghan refugees and immigrants due to recent policy changes and budget cuts.

Afghan displacement spans over four decades due to war and instability, with major migration waves in the 1980s, 1990s, post-2001, and most recently after the U.S. withdrawal in August 2021, which triggered a large-scale evacuation.

Current Challenges:

- **Job Loss:** Many Afghans are employed through refugee resettlement agencies and federal newcomer support programs. As funding is cut, these jobs—and the families relying on them—are at risk.
- **Housing Instability:** Reductions in rental assistance and affordable housing access have left many families struggling to maintain stable living conditions.
- **Reduced Access to Services:** Cuts to legal aid, healthcare, and mental health services hinder Afghans' ability to adjust and rebuild after trauma and displacement.
- **Community Impact:** Despite adversity, Afghan families are working hard to contribute to society. Ensuring their access to employment, housing, and support services benefits not only them, but the broader community.

The Afghan Coalition urged collaboration among policymakers, community organizations, and stakeholders to invest in workforce development, housing, and essential services, ensuring long-term stability and integration for Afghan families.

Speakers

Jackie Cota, Mindy Pechenuk, Jean Moses, Geral Pechenuk and John Guerrero commented on the Survey of Existing Data Collection And Retention Practices For Potential Exposure to Federal Executive Orders And Statutory obligations And Impact On Alameda County Communities presentations.

Supervisor Fortunato Bas announced three focus areas for follow up: 1) surveying data collection and retention practices, 2) review data-sharing policies related to federal task force participation, and 3) evaluate the county’s privacy legislation and policies.

The Supervisor reaffirmed the committee’s mission to protect the health and safety of all Alameda County residents. The Board values free speech however racist or xenophobic comments are not tolerated. Federal actions can be challenged as unconstitutional and hope that justice will prevail through informed and organized community efforts. Resources such as the Alameda Immigrant Legal Education Partnership (acilep.org) and the committee’s District 5 webpage provides updates, meeting videos, and additional support materials.

Purpose:

- ☐ Report progress
- ☒ **Advocacy or Education**
- ☐ Request Together for All ad hoc Committee Recommendation or Position
- ☐ Other:

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Guerrero commented that if ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) arrives with a valid warrant, individuals must comply. Resisting or aiding someone ICE is seeking can lead to felony charges. People are not obligated to comply without a valid warrant.

Brian Hofer, Executive Director of Secure Justice, invited the Committee and others to a free public event on April 12th in Oakland at the Oakstop venue. Organized by Secure Justice and several other groups, the event will offer a privacy self-defense workshop and immigration "Know Your Rights" training for up to 150 attendees. The event will include translators, childcare, and lunch, with registration opening soon via the Secure Justice website.

Mindy Pechenuk criticized Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas and other officials for supporting immigrant programs. Why focus on ICE scare tactics and Trump's immigration policies instead of targeting drug dealers, criminal networks, and fentanyl-related deaths. The Board of Supervisors are promoting a false narrative, ignoring the broader community's needs, and failing to address public safety issues. Called on the Board to protect all residents, not just specific communities.

Jackie Cota criticized the Democratic Party's behavior during President Trump's State of the Union on March 4, 2025. Democrats disrespect national sovereignty, support illegal immigration, and fail to protect women's sports by opposing measures to keep biological men out. Their actions show hypocrisy and political cowardice and betray American values, and harm California, including Alameda County.

Mitchell Margolis, Director of International Rescue Committee, thanked the committee and Supervisor Bas for their work. Supporting immigrants and refugees does not come at the expense of others in the community. The committee's efforts help uplift all members of the community, including addressing broader issues affecting Oakland and Alameda County.

Gerald Pechenuk criticized the Board of Supervisors and Congresswoman Barbara Lee for supporting the \$175 billion war in Ukraine, that money could better support immigrants and local needs. He suggested the County align with President Trump. A successful anti-drug initiative launched by San Francisco Mayor London Breed in May 2023 involved multiple agencies and led to the seizure of large quantities of fentanyl and methamphetamine, as well as arrests tied to drug operations in Oakland.

Board of Supervisors' Committees agendas are available via Internet at: www.acgov.org