

Hearing on
MD SB587
FACIAL RECOGNITION PRIVACY PROTECTION ACT
Oral Testimony of Pooja Tolani
Associate Corporate Counsel, US Government Affairs
Microsoft

Chairman Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings committee my name is Pooja Tolani, I'm an Associate Corporate Counsel at Microsoft, thank you for the opportunity to be here.

We would like to thank you and Senator Sydnor for your leadership and your efforts to restrict the government's use of Facial Recognition technology.

Microsoft has called for new laws to regulate facial recognition technology since July 2018, well before lawmakers across the country began introducing proposals to govern the technology. The company believes that facial recognition offers tremendous benefits for security, public safety, and society, we also think it's important for lawmakers to ensure that the technology will not be used to undermine civil liberties, discriminate against members of protected classes, or otherwise harm marginalized communities.

For those reasons, in June of 2020, Microsoft announced that we would not sell facial recognition technology to police departments until there are laws regulating it.

Microsoft strongly supports your efforts to address this important issue including imposing safeguards like accountability, transparency, training, testing, and public reporting, as well as restrictions on use. However, we believe it is most important to listen to and work with law enforcement and civil society regarding regulation of such technologies. We look forward to hearing the perspectives of those groups and are willing to help in any way we can, including efforts to help foster a dialogue between those important groups.

Thank you for your time.