United States Senate

October 31, 2025

Andrew Jassy
Chief Executive Officer
Amazon.com, Inc.
410 Terry Avenue N.
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Jassy,

Amazon's announcement that it will soon roll out new facial recognition features on its Ring doorbells ignores concerns that I have repeatedly raised with your company about threats that this technology poses to Americans' privacy and civil liberties. In 2019, I asked Amazon whether it intended to integrate facial recognition technology (FRT) into its Ring products but your company declined to answer.[1] Today — with Amazon announcing its plans to begin deploying FRT into its doorbells in December — that silence speaks volumes.[2] This announcement represents a dramatic expansion of surveillance technology, creating vast new privacy and civil liberties risks. Americans should not have to fear being tracked and recorded while visiting a friend's home or walking past a neighbor's house. Amazon should reconsider this decision and abandon its plans to deploy FRT into its Ring doorbells.

Since 2019, I have repeatedly raised concerns with Amazon regarding Ring's troubling privacy practices.[3] Following my investigation in fall 2019, Amazon declined to commit to not selling users' biometric data and admitted it lacked basic oversight mechanisms to prevent users from collecting footage beyond their property lines or of children. Amazon also disclosed alarming gaps in its law enforcement partnerships, including an absence of security requirements for law enforcement agencies accessing user footage, restrictions on third-party sharing, policies limiting indefinite retention of shared videos, and evidentiary standards for requesting footage from users.[4] Finally, Amazon notably refused to answer whether it planned to integrate FRT into its Ring products, now a revealing omission.[5] I appreciated that after my inquiry, Amazon implemented modest reforms, including updating its consent prompt to more clearly notify users that they can decide whether to share footage and ending the practice of proactively forwarding

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[1] Letter from Brian Huseman, Vice President, Pub. Pol'y, Amazon, to U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey (Nov. 1, 2019), https://www.markey.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Response%20Letter_Ring_Senator%20Markey%209.26.19.pdf.

[2] Amazon Staff, *Ring introduces its first-ever 4K cameras and AI feature that helps find lost pets,* About Amazon (Sept. 30, 2025), https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/devices/ring-camera-4k-home-security.

[3] Press Release, Senator Edward J. Markey, Senator Markey Investigation into Amazon Ring Doorbell Reveals Egregiously Lax Privacy Policies and Civil Rights Protections (Nov.19, 2019), https://www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senator-markey-investigation-into-amazon-ring-doorbell-reveals-egregiously-lax-privacy-policies-and-civil-rights-protections.

[4] *Id.*

[5] *Id.*

user-posted incidents to law enforcement.[6] These changes were a step in the right direction but ultimately insufficient.

In 2022, I again wrote to Amazon to address ongoing privacy violations and unchecked data sharing with police departments.[7] Amazon's response again demonstrated glaring failures to protect Americans' privacy. For example, Amazon failed to clarify the range at which its devices capture audio, refused to disable the default setting of automatic audio recording, and declined to make end-to-end encryption the default for consumers.[8] Meanwhile, the company continued expanding its Neighbors Public Safety Service (NPSS), enabling law enforcement to request doorbell footage directly from users. Amazon's response left me deeply concerned about the privacy threats created by Ring doorbells and the company's careless effort to expand those doorbells' privacy-invasive features.

Ring's threats to Americans' privacy and civil liberties will grow dramatically with Amazon's new announcement that it will integrate FRT — coined "Familiar Faces" — into its doorbell cameras.[9] This feature is designed to allow Ring owners to easily identify individuals — such as a friend, family member, or neighbor — who repeatedly appear on their cameras. But in practice, Ring's new FRT will collect biometric data on all individuals who appear in front of the owner's doorbell camera, without any ability for them to consent to such invasive privacy practices. Individuals walking past a home or delivering a package have a right to keep their biometric data private; they do not surrender their privacy simply by appearing on camera. Although Amazon stated that Ring doorbell owners must opt in to activate the new facial recognition feature,[10] that safeguard does not extend to individuals who are unknowingly captured on video by a Ring doorbell camera. These individuals never receive notice, let alone the opportunity to opt in or out of having their face scanned and logged in a database using FRT. To put it plainly, Amazon's system forces non-consenting bystanders into a biometric database without their knowledge or consent. This is an unacceptable privacy violation.

Amazon's far-reaching data collection and invasive surveillance is particularly concerning given Ring's history of collaboration with law enforcement. Amazon previously facilitated police access to consumer video footage, often without warrants or transparency. Now, as federal agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) expand their biometric surveillance programs, Ring's technology potentially creates a new pipeline for

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[6] *See generally* Policing Project, Ring Neighbors & Neighbors Public Safety Service: A Civil Rights & Civil Liberties Audit (2021); Ring Neighbors Makes Major Changes to Its Interactions With Police as Part of Civil Rights Audit, Policing Project (Dec. 16, 2021), https://www.policingproject.org/news-main/2021/12/16/ring-neighbors-audit; Letter from U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey to Jeffrey Bezos, Chief Exec. Officer, Amazon (Sept. 5, 2019); Letter from U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey to Jeffrey Bezos, Chief Exec. Officer, Amazon (Oct. 10, 2019).

[7] Letter from U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey to Andrew Jassy, Chief Executive Officer, Amazon (June 14, 2022), https://www.markey.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/senator_markey_letter_to_amazon_on_ring_audio_and_law_enforcement.pdf.

[8] Press Release, Senator Edward J. Markey, Senator Markey's Probe into Amazon Ring Reveals New Privacy Problems (July 13, 2022), https://www.markey.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senator-markeys-probe-into-amazon-ring-reveals-new-privacy-problems.

[9] *See* Amazon Staff, *supra* note 2.

[10] *Id.*

government overreach. For example, ICE is reportedly implementing FRT to surveil Americans and track individuals it targets for deportation.[11] It is not hard to imagine immigration officials seeking access to Ring's biometric data for immigration enforcement purposes. This potential convergence of private-sector surveillance capabilities with politically motivated law enforcement operations represents the precise privacy and civil liberties danger that I and other FRT opponents have repeatedly warned about.

The best way to mitigate that danger is for Amazon to abandon its plans to roll out FRT in its Ring doorbells. This convenience feature for Ring doorbell owners is not worth the vast surveillance web that it enables. As you consider that request, please respond in writing to the following questions by November 21, 2025:

1) Please detail Amazon's Ring FRT privacy practices:

    a. How will Ring obtain informed consent from every individual whose biometric data is captured by its devices, including passersby, delivery workers, and guests?

    b. How does Amazon notify individuals that their biometric data may be collected without their consent when approaching a home equipped with Ring technology?

    c. How long will Amazon retain biometric data and what policies govern its deletion?

    d. Are Ring owners and all those subjected to video recording, voice recording and facial recognition able to formally request that Amazon delete their data? If so, how will Amazon ensure data is deleted in a timely manner?

    e. Does Amazon use biometric data to train machine learning models or improve facial recognition algorithms? If so, are all individuals subjected to FRT informed and given the opportunity to opt out?

    f. Has Amazon conducted any privacy impact assessments or third-party audits of Ring's biometric surveillance practices?

2) Please describe how Amazon will mitigate harmful biases and discrimination often prevalent when using facial recognition technology:

    a. Does Amazon test Ring's FRT across different demographic groups, including accuracy rates and potential biases? If so, does Amazon publicly disclose those results?

[11] Lily Hay Newman et al., *Security News This Week: ICE Rolls Facial Recognition Tools Out to Officers' Phones,* Wired (June 28, 2025), https://www.wired.com/story/ice-rolls-facial-recognition-tools-out-to-officers-phones/.

b. What steps has Amazon taken to ensure Ring's biometric technologies do not disproportionately harm communities of color, immigrants, or other vulnerable populations?

3) Please describe Amazon's policies for sharing facial recognition and biometric data with law enforcement:

a. Does Amazon share biometric data — including any outputs of facial recognition use collected by Ring doorbells — either voluntarily or in response to legal process, with law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)?

b. Can law enforcement request access to Ring doorbell live streams from Amazon? If so, does Amazon share live stream access with law enforcement agencies, including DHS, either voluntarily or in response to legal process?

c. Does Amazon notify users when law enforcement requests access to biometric data collected by Ring devices?

d. Will Amazon share any biometric data or data collected from Ring's FRT through NPSS?

e. Please identify how many of each of the following entities use the NPSS: (i) police departments; (ii) fire departments; (iii) public health agencies; (iv) animal services; (v) agencies that primarily address homelessness, drug addiction, or mental health; and (vi) others (please specify).

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator