

CALPRIVACY INFORMATIONAL HEARING - APRIL 30, 2026

# Location Information and the Threat to Civil Rights

Jake Snow — Senior Staff Attorney  
ACLU of Northern California

# Where we are going

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< 1 > What our locations reveal.

< 2 > How government and corporations secretly track our locations.

< 3 > Policy approaches to address the harms.

# The Scale of Surveillance

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## PEOPLE

Data brokers have records associated with **five hundred million** mobile devices worldwide.

## LOCATIONS

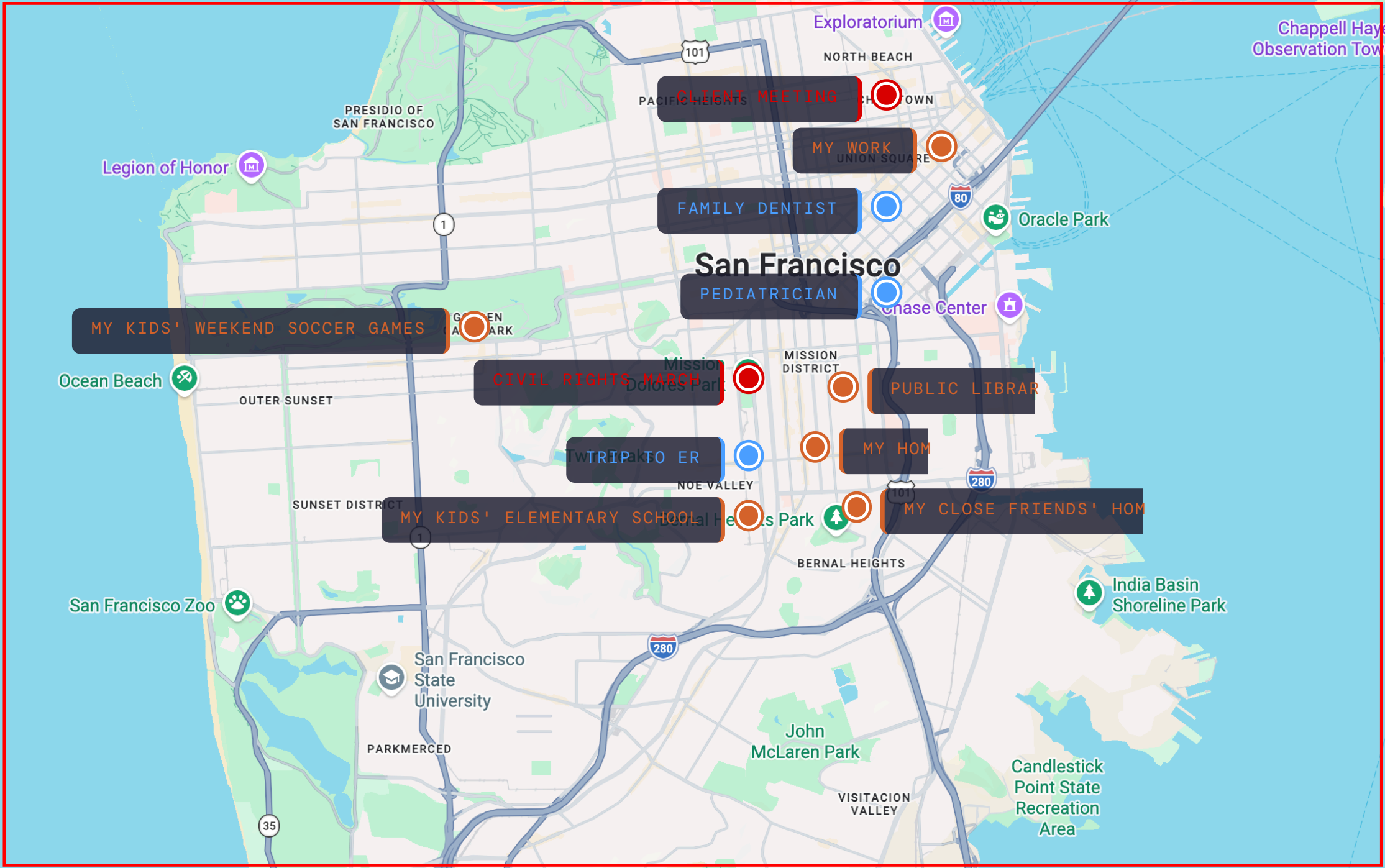
**Billions** of daily location points available for purchase and analysis.

[Uncovering Webloc: An Analysis of Penlink's Ad-based Geolocation Surveillance Tech](#)

# What our locations reveal

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**My location information  
for nearly a year**



# Infereneces From My Locations

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## Places

- Home
- Workplace
- Restaurants
- Schools
- Parks
- Shopping centers
- Medical care facilities
- Political activities

## Routines of Movement

- When and how I go to my office
- Routes to children's school
- Means of transportation (car, bike)
- Travel and vacation (where, when)
- Appointments (doctor, dentist, therapy)
- Regular activities (Neighborhood movie night, family breakfast at a favorite diner)



MOTHER JONES

## ICE detained a 5-year-old Minnesota boy and used him as “bait”

ICE agents detained Liam Conejo Ramos, a preschooler, a 5-year-old on his way home from school on Tuesday and used him as “bait” to knock on his front door to see if anyone was home, according to school officials in Minnesota.

[www.motherjones.com/politics/2026/01/liam-ramos-ice-arres...](https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2026/01/liam-ramos-ice-arres...)



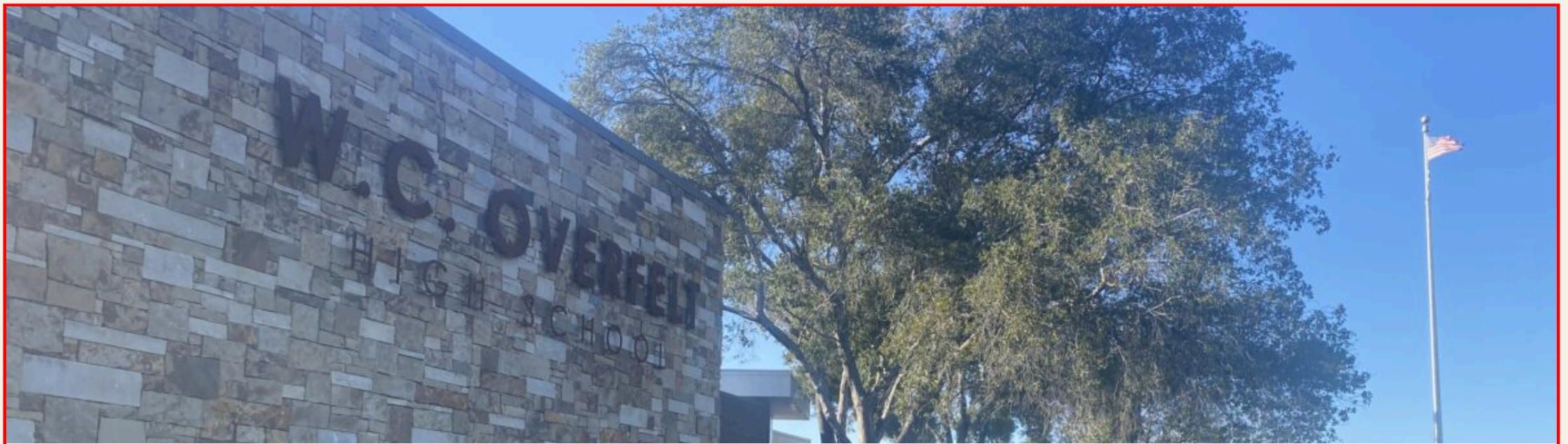
VOICE OF SAN DIEGO

## The Learning Curve: Another ICE Arrest Near a School

August 7, 2025 at 12:30am

On Wednesday, the Chula Vista Elementary School District sent out a letter to parents notifying them that ICE had arrested an adult outside a school. The person arrested was a parent dropping their child off at Camarena Elementary, according to a school official.

[voiceofsandiego.org/2025/08/06/the-learning-curve-another...](https://voiceofsandiego.org/2025/08/06/the-learning-curve-another...)



## SAN JOSÉ SPOTLIGHT

# ICE fears keep San Jose students away from school

August 6, 2025 at 9:00pm

Students have dropped out of summer and afterschool enrichment programs, opting to stay home in fear of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents detaining their family and friends, according to people working in San Jose school districts.

[sanjosespotlight.com/ice-fears-keep-san-jose-students-awa...](https://sanjosespotlight.com/ice-fears-keep-san-jose-students-awa...)

**How commercial surveillance  
becomes government surveillance.**

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THEMARKUP.ORG

## There's a Multibillion-Dollar Market for Your Phone's Location Data – The Markup

September 30, 2021 at 8:00am

Companies that you likely have never heard of are hawking access to the location history on your mobile phone. Collectors, aggregators, marketplaces, and location intelligence firms, all boast about the scale and precision of the data that they've amassed.

[themarkup.org/privacy/2021/09/30/theres-a-multibillion-do...](https://themarkup.org/privacy/2021/09/30/theres-a-multibillion-do...)

## Means of Control

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*Our public spaces are blanketed by networked cameras and other surveillance systems put up in the name of public safety or personal security. And pretty much everything that emits a wireless signal of any kind—and today that list has grown to include routers, security cameras, televisions, home entertainment systems, Bluetooth keyboards, wireless headphones, and every single tire of every car manufactured since the mid-2000s, to name a few—can be and often is being covertly monitored.*

— BYRON TAU, MEANS OF CONTROL, 2024

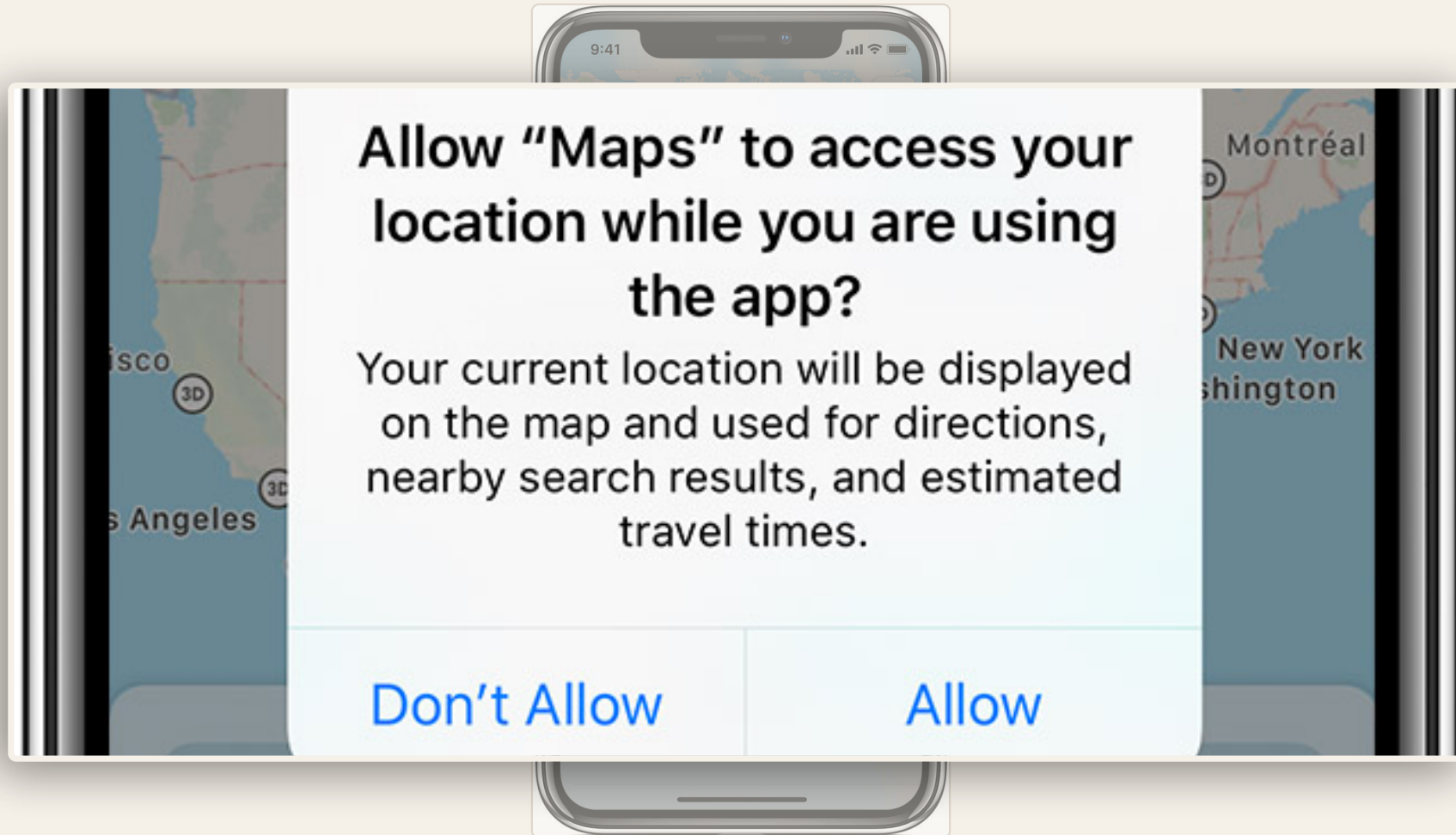
# Cell Site Location Information



4G LTE TOWERS IN SACRAMENTO

# Apps Collection

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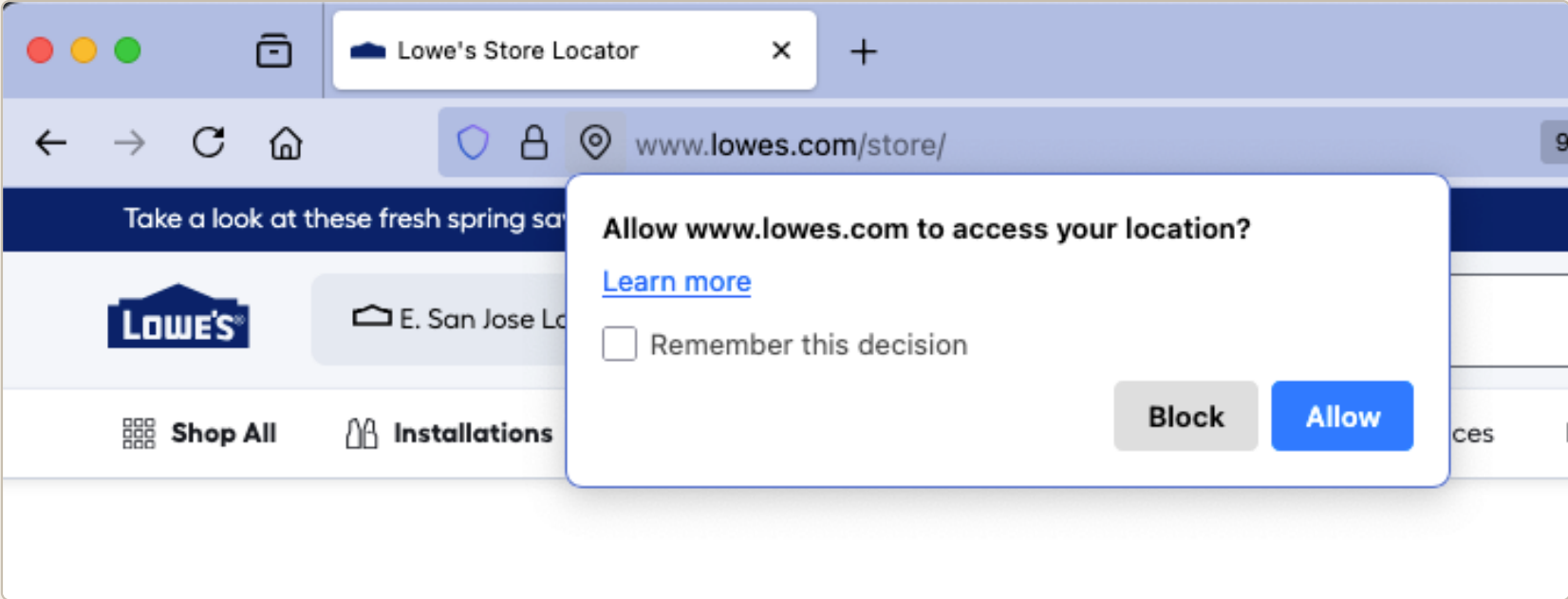
LOS ANGELES TIMES

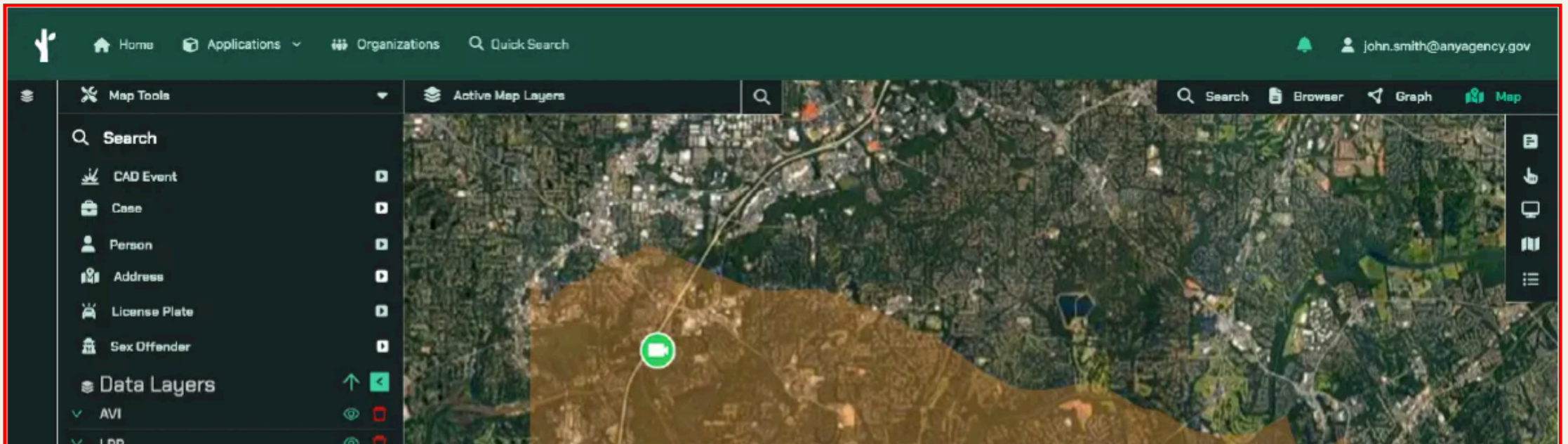
## Muslims reel over a prayer app that sold user data: 'A betrayal from within our own community'

November 23, 2020 at 7:57pm

[www.latimes.com/business/technology/story/2020-11-23/musl...](https://www.latimes.com/business/technology/story/2020-11-23/musl...)

# Web browser





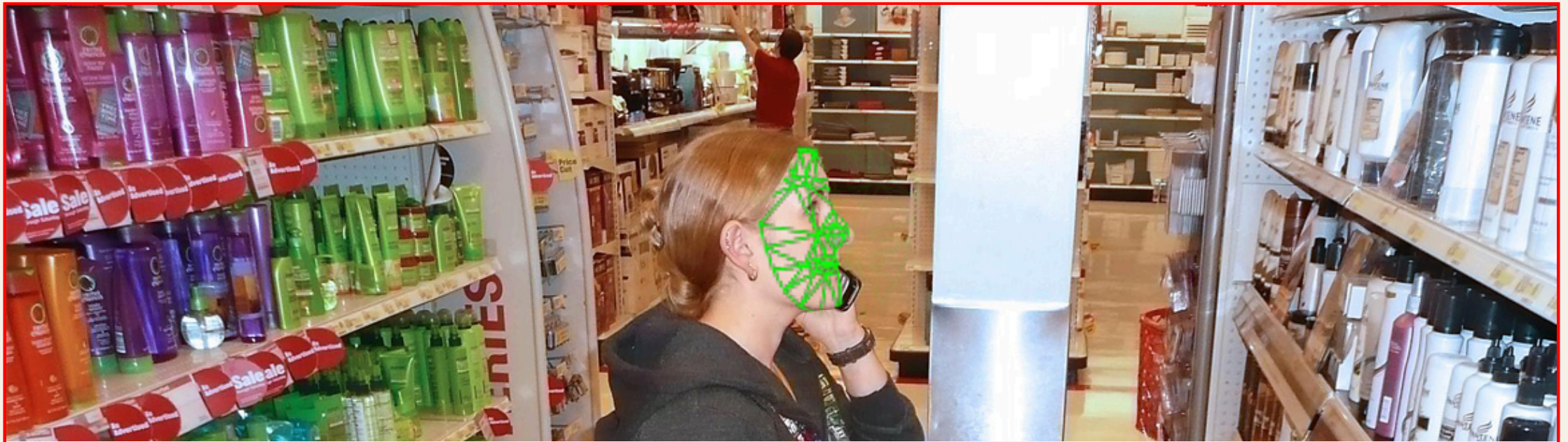
404 MEDIA

## License Plate Reader Company Flock Is Building a Massive People Lookup Tool, Leak Shows

May 14, 2025 at 1:55pm

The news turns Flock, already a controversial technology, into a much more invasive tool, potentially able to link a vehicle passing by a camera to its owner and then more people connected to them, through marriage or other association.

[www.404media.co/license-plate-reader-company-flock-is-bui...](http://www.404media.co/license-plate-reader-company-flock-is-bui...)



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

## Are Stores You Shop at Secretly Using Face Recognition on You?

March 26, 2018 at 8:03pm

[www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/are-stores-you-shop-...](http://www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/are-stores-you-shop-...)

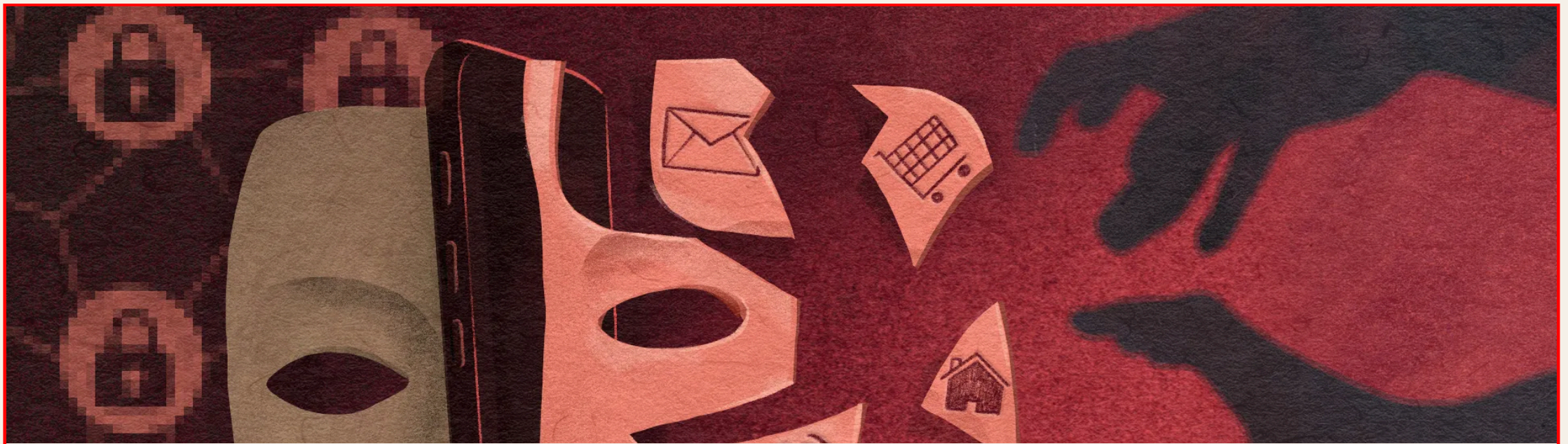
# Ad-based Location Surveillance

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<https://www.iccl.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Americas-hidden-security-crisis.pdf>





VICE

## Inside the Industry That Unmasks People at Scale

July 14, 2021 at 1:00pm

Tech companies have repeatedly reassured the public that trackers used to follow smartphone users through apps are anonymous or at least pseudonymous, not directly identifying the person using the phone. But what they don't mention is that an entire overlooked industry exists to purposefully and explicitly shatter that anonymity.

[www.vice.com/en/article/industry-unmasks-at-scale-maid-to...](https://www.vice.com/en/article/industry-unmasks-at-scale-maid-to...)

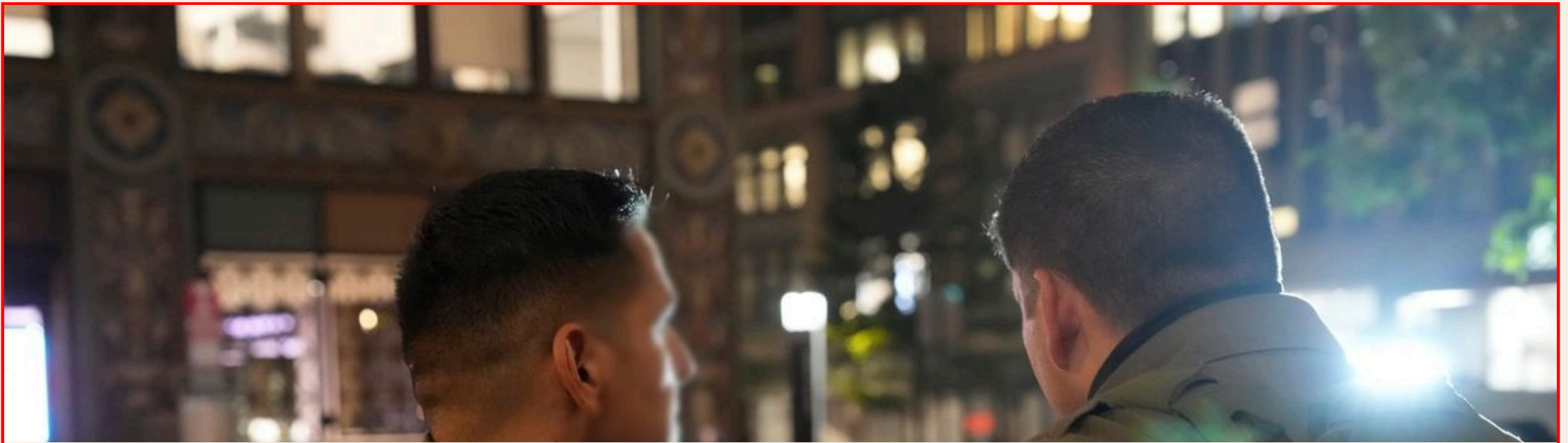


THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

## **WSJ News Exclusive | Federal Agencies Use Cellphone Location Data for Immigration Enforcement**

February 7, 2020 at 12:30pm

[www.wsj.com/articles/federal-agencies-use-cellphone-locat...](https://www.wsj.com/articles/federal-agencies-use-cellphone-locat...)



404 MEDIA

# CBP Tapped Into the Online Advertising Ecosystem To Track Peoples' Movements

March 3, 2026 at 2:03pm

[www.404media.co/cbp-tapped-into-the-online-advertising-ec...](http://www.404media.co/cbp-tapped-into-the-online-advertising-ec...)



ARS TECHNICA

## FBI started buying Americans' location data again, Kash Patel confirms

March 19, 2026 at 7:57pm

Three years after saying it had stopped buying location data of Americans without a warrant, the FBI acknowledged it has restarted the purchases.

[arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/03/fbi-started-buying-am...](https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/03/fbi-started-buying-am...)

# RON WYDEN

WYDEN.SENATE.GOV

## **Wyden, Espailat and 70 Democrats Call for Investigation of ICE, DHS Warrantless Purchases of Americans' Location Data**

Test

[www.wyden.senate.gov/news/press-releases/wyden-espailat-...](http://www.wyden.senate.gov/news/press-releases/wyden-espailat-...)

# Location Surveillance in 2026

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- < 1 > Vanishingly few effective limits on the collection of location info.
- < 2 > Location information is a valuable mechanism of surveillance and control.
- < 3 > Location information is especially dangerous in the hands of a violent authoritarian government.

**Thank you.**

# **Policy approaches to address the harms.**

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# Policy approaches

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## COLLECTION

Opt in with strong data minimization.

## DELETION

DROP is very valuable for vulnerable people with knowledge, but it also shows the limits of opt-out.

## SALE

Outright prohibition on sale.

NOTICE

## One kind of notice

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NOTICE

## Another kind of notice

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By approaching  
the edge you  
agree to our  
Cliff Policy.

NOTICE

## Transparency Alone Cannot Avoid Making Judgments About Privacy and Safety

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By approaching  
the edge you  
agree to our  
Cliff Policy.



# Lessons on Enforcement

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**SB 34** Scores of violations of ALPR law over years despite a PRA and AG opinion.



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

# **Dozens of Police Agencies in California Are Still Sharing Driver Locations with Anti-Abortion States. We're Fighting Back.**

February 13, 2024 at 8:37pm

[www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/dozens-of-police-age...](https://www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/dozens-of-police-age...)



THEMARKUP.ORG

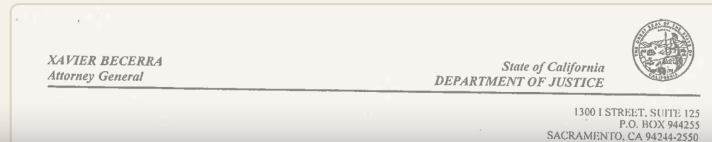
## Websites break California privacy law at ‘industrial scale,’ survey finds

April 21, 2026 at 8:00am

A new audit has found that websites across the internet may be failing to abide by California privacy law, ignoring a requirement to not track visitors who set a privacy control.

[themarkup.org/privacy/2026/04/21/websites-break-californi...](https://themarkup.org/privacy/2026/04/21/websites-break-californi...)

# Necessity of a Private Right of Action



asked to take on the new role and obligations of a regulator (the AGO's role has been and is that of an enforcer). The Attorney General's Office must be given a sufficient and realistic amount of time to issue strong, enforceable regulations.

Finally, the CCPA does not include a private right of action that would allow consumers to seek legal remedies for themselves to protect their privacy. Instead, the Act includes a provision that gives consumers a limited right to sue if they become a victim of a data breach. The lack of a private right of action, which would provide a critical adjunct to governmental enforcement, will substantially increase the AGO's need for new enforcement resources. I urge you to provide consumers with a private right of action under the CCPA.

Providing Californians with privacy protections is critically important now more than ever. However, the CCPA as it currently applies to the Attorney General's Office presents unworkable obligations and serious operational challenges. If we fail to address these issues with the CCPA as outlined above, it is the people of California who stand to lose.

Sincerely,

[https://ia802902.us.archive.org/30/items/ag-becerras-letter-re-california-consumer-privacy-act/ag-becerras-letter-re-california-consumer-privacy-act\\_text.pdf](https://ia802902.us.archive.org/30/items/ag-becerras-letter-re-california-consumer-privacy-act/ag-becerras-letter-re-california-consumer-privacy-act_text.pdf)

**Thank you.**