



September 30, 2026

Dear Members of the Milwaukee Common Council, Mayor Johnson, Chief Norman, and Board of Fire and Police Commissioners:

The undersigned community organizations call on the City of Milwaukee to **end its contract with Flock Safety** and establish a framework requiring transparency, public participation, and Common Council approval *before* the acquisition or deployment of any AI-powered surveillance technology in our city.

In May 2025, many of the organizations signing this letter [urged the Common Council to adopt a Community Control Over Police Surveillance \(CCOPS\) ordinance](#). We warned that Milwaukee was acquiring and deploying increasingly powerful surveillance technologies without meaningful opportunities for public input or democratic accountability. We specifically raised concerns about how these technologies could be misused, how surveillance data could be shared with third parties, and how the federal government could potentially access information collected locally.

Those concerns were not hypothetical.

Since our first letter, Milwaukeeans have seen firsthand what can happen when powerful surveillance technology is placed in the hands of law enforcement without sufficient transparency and independent oversight.

For example:

- In February 2026, Milwaukee Police Officer Josue Ayala was [criminally charged](#) for improperly using MPD's Flock system 179 times to search for information about his former partner and that person's former partner. Prosecutors said Ayala repeatedly used "investigation" as the justification for his searches despite there being no legitimate law enforcement purpose. Ayala ultimately resigned from the Milwaukee Police Department.
- In July, just days before Ayala was [sentenced](#), MPD Internal Affairs Detective Tehrang Chapman was [charged with misconduct in public office](#) after allegedly conducting 20 unauthorized searches through MPD's Flock system over the course of a year. What makes Chapman's case particularly troubling is that he worked in Internal Affairs and participated in the investigation of Ayala for misusing the same surveillance technology.
- At the September 17th Fire and Police Commission [meeting](#), MPD could not definitively answer whether ICE gained side-door access to Milwaukee's Flock data to detain our neighbors at any point since MPD began its contract with Flock in 2022.

These cases demonstrate why automated license plate readers (ALPRs) cannot simply be treated as another piece of police equipment. AI-powered ALPRs take photos of vehicles that are uploaded into a searchable cloud-based system. ALPRs catalogue the make, model, color, and other distinguishing features like bumper stickers or bike racks. ALPRs allow the government to engage in the dragnet, warrantless collection of likely millions of images of vehicles and plates of people driving to work, church, union meetings, medical appointments, and protests in Milwaukee that are stored by a multibillion-dollar company for AI-powered searches and predictive analytics. ALPRs enable users to reconstruct individuals' patterns of movement and associations. When access is abused—or used as intended—the consequences can extend far beyond the person whose information was searched.

And Milwaukee is not alone.

Across the country, communities have raised serious concerns about Flock's handling of surveillance data and the company's representations about how the technology operates.

- At an [Oshkosh](#) Common Council meeting in April, a Flock executive denied that their ALPR system could create heat maps of a vehicle's movements—leading the council to approve a contract that night, only to discover the next morning that Flock had made false statements. The Council then unanimously voted to rescind its Flock contract just 24 hours after their initial approval.
- In [Sheboygan](#), city officials moved to terminate their Flock contract after learning that the company had attempted to sell data collected from the city's cameras, including information about traffic volume, vehicle types, and speeds. The police department said it had not consented to the sale and believed the conduct violated its agreement with Flock.
- [Boston](#) recently announced that it would not continue using Flock after discovering that a data-sharing function had been enabled during a pilot despite a contractual agreement requiring that sharing to be disabled. According to Boston officials, the feature had been enabled by the vendor in error and could have allowed other law enforcement agencies to access data collected by Boston's cameras.
- This past week, even the [U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee](#) held a hearing as part of an [investigation](#) into the proliferation of AI-powered surveillance cameras, though the CEOs of major surveillance technology companies including Flock Safety and Axon Enterprises [failed to attend](#).

Milwaukee residents packed Fire and Police Commission meetings on [May 7th](#), [September 3rd](#), and [September 17th](#), and every single public comment voiced opposition to Flock in our city. [The writing is on the wall](#).

Milwaukee must end its Flock contract.

Our city would join the growing list of Wisconsin jurisdictions that have ended their relationship with Flock, including: Appleton, Ashland, Chetek, Cottage Grove, Dane County, De Pere, Fitchburg, Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac County, Fox Crossing, Grand Chute, Kenosha, Kaukauna, Lake Mills, UW-Madison, Manawa, Manitowoc, Marinette, McFarland, Menasha, UW-Milwaukee, Monona, Neenah, North Fond du Lac, Oconomowoc, Oneida County, Oshkosh, UW-Oshkosh, Racine, Racine County, Ripon, Sheboygan, Stevens Point, Stoughton, Sturgeon Bay, Sun Prairie, Verona, Waukesha, Waupaca County, Waupun, and Winneconne.

We recognize that law enforcement may identify legitimate investigative uses for automated license plate readers. But the question before the city is not whether Flock can ever be useful. It is whether Milwaukee should continue entrusting a multibillion-dollar company with a powerful surveillance infrastructure after repeated concerns about misuse, data sharing, and the accuracy and transparency of the company's representations about its technology.

The experiences of Milwaukee and other communities show that contractual promises alone are not enough.

Milwaukee also desperately needs a framework for procurement of surveillance technology moving forward.

MPD has used Flock since 2022. Every Flock sole-source, no-bid contract amendment and extension in 2023, 2024, and 2025 bypassed Finance & Personnel Committee approval and, as a result, bypassed democratic accountability.

A framework similar to CCOPS would ensure that these decisions receive the democratic scrutiny they deserve. Before the city acquires, funds, or deploys surveillance technology, the public and Common Council should receive meaningful information about how the technology works, where it may be deployed, what information it collects, how long that information is retained, who can access it, how it can be shared, what it costs, and what potential impacts it may have on civil rights and civil liberties.

There should be a public hearing and an opportunity for the Common Council to approve or reject the proposed technology before it is acquired and deployed.

Approved technologies should also be subject to regular public reporting, including information about how they are used, how often data is shared, where the technology is deployed, complaints or concerns received, and violations of applicable policies.

At the bare minimum, the people of Milwaukee—through their elected representatives—deserve a meaningful say before AI-powered mass surveillance technologies become part of the city's permanent infrastructure.

We urge you to end Milwaukee's contract with Flock Safety and establish a framework to ensure that future surveillance technologies are acquired and deployed only with transparency, public participation, and democratic approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

African American Roundtable
American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin
Black Leaders Organizing for Communities
Black Lives Matter Grassroots Milwaukee
Breaking Barriers Mentoring Inc.
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
Com Force MKE LLC
Comité Sin Fronteras
Diverse and Resilient, Inc.
EXPO of Wisconsin
Fair Wisconsin
First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Freedom Road Socialist Organization – Wisconsin
Grassroots North Shore
Great Lakes Urban Empowerment Center
Indivisible MKE
Indivisible South Shore
Jewish Voice for Peace - Milwaukee
Leaders Igniting Transformation
League of Women Voters – Milwaukee County
LULAC Wisconsin
Metcalf Park Community Bridges, Inc.
Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression
Milwaukee Area Service and Hospitality Workers Union
Milwaukee DSA
Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope
Milwaukee Turners
Moorish Science Temple of America Unity Temple 31
Muhammad Mosque 3
NAACP Milwaukee Branch
Pathfinders Milwaukee, Inc.
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
Progressive Baptist Church
Rid Racism Milwaukee
Shorewood Resists
Southeast Wisconsin Indivisible
Southside Organizing Center
Students for a Democratic Society – UWM
Students for Justice in Palestine – UWM
Voces de la Frontera
Wisconsin Council of Churches
Wisconsin Justice Initiative
Wisconsin Muslim Civic Alliance
Wisconsin Resist
Working Families Power