

Communication from Public

Name: Mohammad Tajsar, ACLU of Southern California

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 04:30 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: The ACLU of Southern California categorically opposes the acceptance of the LA Police Foundation's donation of a so-called "Quadruped Unmanned Ground Vehicle," or robot dog. This vehicle is a form of military surveillance equipment that has been tried and rejected by community members in New York City, and the ACLU of Southern California stands with other community organizations who demand LAPD not be allowed to repeat this experiment on the communities here in Los Angeles. We oppose this acquisition for three reasons. First, SPOT, developed by BostonDynamics, is a surveillance tool that includes sensors and software, as well as a microphone and a camera that captures images and terrain. The data collected by the robot can and will be used against community members in pernicious ways, as is the case with the plethora of other privacy-invading surveillance tools the LAPD currently deploys. Second, this robot dog has already been tried and rejected in the city of New York. The NYPD ended early a lease of the vehicle due to community pressure and protest around its use of the device in poor neighborhoods. We have no reason to believe the same will not occur here in LA, given LAPD's incessant interest in policing and overpolicing poor neighborhoods around the city. Third, and finally, even though this item is styled as a donation, the inevitable use of City resources to maintain, staff, and deploy this technology are all resources the City can use in more meaningful and impactful ways to actually improve the lives of the most vulnerable here in Los Angeles. Instead of consistently funding LAPD's adventures in surveillance technology, this Council should stop investing in failed policing strategies and instead fund affirmative, supportive, and well-researched alternatives to surveillance in order to actually improve public safety in the City—alternatives that do not involve funding the LAPD. Do not be fooled by this so-called "donation." Accepting the robot dog will invariably result in entrenching even more money in a Department that deserves none of it, despite the existence of proven strategies that we know will actually help uplift the lives of so many in Los Angeles out of economic and social precarity, like investing in housing, jobs, schools, and economic support. Please join the ACLU of Southern California and the many other community organizations speaking on this issue in rejecting this donation.

Communication from Public

Name: Ashley Brim

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 03:25 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: Please deny LAPD's request to accept a Robot Dog donation from LA Police Foundation. Laying aside for a moment the fact that these robots are a tool of war and have no place in our city, I think it is important to reflect on LAPD's sordid history with surveillance tools they already have. LAPD has a history of using tech to cause disproportionate harm to Black and Brown communities. Some examples: their abuse of the gang database, their persistent use of drones in disproportionately Black and Brown neighborhoods, and their use of PredPol software that is known to employ a racist algorithm. The people of LA have been very clear in recent elections that they are not interested in giving LAPD more resources. Unmanned robotic devices like SPOT have been tried and rejected in NYC and the SF BOS recently had to walk back their approval of police robot dogs after public outcry. As our representatives we are counting on you to deny this request of more resources from the LAPD.

Communication from Public

Name: Carter Moon

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 05:47 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: There is no universe in which a robot surveillance dog increases public safety and trust in the LAPD. This tool is only meant to further militarize the LAPD and make every day working class Angelenos the "enemy" the department sees as a threat. I have no doubt that councilmembers who are bought by the LAPPL like Traci Park and Tim McOsker will vote yes to give more power to their paid masters, but I would hope the rest of the council has enough sense to reject something as nakedly dystopian as this. Why should the same department who couldn't handle detonating fireworks safely be trusted with a deadly military weapon like this? Would a robot attack dog have saved the life of Keenan Anderson, or any of the other people who have already been slaughtered by our deadly police force this year? Shame on anyone who would approve such a weapon in the hands of a reckless and dangerous department.

Communication from Public

Name: Francisco Espinosa

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 07:02 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: I'm writing in opposition to the acquisition of the killer robot dog by LAPD. LAPD are already the deadliest force in the country, the last thing this City needs is even more ways that they can abuse their power. Please vote against the killer robot dog.

Communication from Public

Name: Eliot Phillips

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 07:54 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: My company works with large industrial robots and small quadrupedal robots. They are only safe in controlled environments and should not be operated in public. They are inherently dangerous and only gain a factor of safety through pre-choreographed moves in controlled spaces that do not have humans present. If we do adopt quadrupedal robots, they will be a sophisticated tool that blame can be deflected to instead of human operators or department management that owns and operates them. The robot manual itself warns that no one should be within 6 ft of it while also stating by its very nature the robot attracts bystanders. It also identifies all eight joints of the robot as "pinch points" and that "Fingers may break or get amputated if caught in joints". This is a warning they're issuing to people trained to operate the robot; the public encountering this robot will not be trained on the many ways it can maim them. This style of robot is not a generic device made by many manufacturers. It's made by only a few companies and requires specialized training and support. This donation bypasses standard methods of procurement while guaranteeing the manufacturer locked in contracts for training and maintenance. I recommend the council REJECT this donation. It will be detrimental to the City of LA and the safety of its citizens. Respectfully submitted, Eliot Phillips Electrical Engineer

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 03/06/2023 09:26 PM

Council File No: 22-1438

Comments for Public Posting: Robot dogs are not going to help keep us safe. I absolutely hate this idea. We should not be putting resources into this. I want a safe community but this is not the way to do this. They don't have discretion in the way humans do. You can't talk to a robot dog and explain the situation. I cannot see how a situation could possibly deescalate with a dog. I also don't understand if people are supposed to take orders from a robot dog. Or if I am just now going to walk around Los Angeles and by doing so consent to being monitored by these dogs. The only use case I could even potentially see is a rescue situation. And that is it. I do not want these robots being used by the police