

## Big Brother or Barney Fife?

June 7, 2019

Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Louisiana, New Hampshire — these are the states that have shouted a big NO to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's citizen scanning agenda and its database of 640 million faces.

"As the FBI amasses hundreds of millions of photos for its facial recognition program (with little in the way of safeguards)," asks J. D. Tuccille in *Reason*, "is it also going to force us to bare

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our faces for cameras as we move through an increasingly surveilled country?"

Tuccille suggests wearing hats big enough to cover our faces from intrusive cameras.

Most states do not prohibit surveilling people



*en masse* or at random. And though Kimberly J. Del Greco, deputy assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division, assures us of the operation's above-board character — "there have been no findings of non-compliance, and no observations of unauthorized requests" — the possibilities of abuse are *precedented* . . . by past government surveillance.

So, is it any solace that it has so far proved wildly inaccurate?

Sure, the aforementioned Del Greco claims the FBI's algorithm is 99 percent accurate. But another study found one system in place with a sorry 98 percent *inaccuracy* rate. "It's a creepy police state as administered by Barney Fife," writes Tuccille. And while that is "pretty damned funny," it would be not even a little bit funny if "you're arrested based on a bad match."

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For these are not supposed to be the United States of Big Brother.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.