

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS SHARON DURKAN, HENRY SANTANA, BENJAMIN WEBER, BREADON, COLETTA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, WORRELL, AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE LOCATION SHIELD ACT

WHEREAS, Every day, unregulated data brokers buy and sell personal location data from apps on our cellphones, revealing where we live, work, play and more; to protect our privacy, safety and access to essential health care, Massachusetts State representatives have proposed H.357/S.148, a bill that will ban this practice called the Location Shield Act; *and*

WHEREAS, Our incredible smartphones, Androids and iPhones, keep track of where we go, every minute of every day, revealing the most sensitive and intimate things about us; that personal location data can be used to provide useful services like maps, fitness tracking and taxi rides; however, it can also be exploited for profit and extremist agendas, putting every cell phone user at risk; *and*

WHEREAS, Data brokers are allowed to buy this information, repackage it and then sell it to anyone with a credit card; there are no state or federal laws prohibiting this practice; *and*

WHEREAS, Our personal location information reveals the most sensitive and intimate things about each of us and we all deserve legal protections to keep that information private; *and*

WHEREAS, Unscrupulous data brokers have already bought, repackaged and sold the location data of people visiting abortion clinics; since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, this puts patients and providers in Massachusetts at risk of prosecution and harassment; *and*

WHEREAS, Since the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision, data brokers have come under increased scrutiny. In 2022, reporters revealed that several companies were selling detailed location data and demographic information about people who visit abortion clinics; *and*

WHEREAS, In 2019, reporters revealed that bounty hunters and debt collectors have purchased location data for years in order to stalk and harass people; *and*

WHEREAS, In 2021, an extremist right-wing organization bought location data to target gay Catholics and tracked a specific priest to several locations including gay bars and publicly outed him; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council supports the passage of the Location Shield Act, H.357/S.148, sponsored by Senator Cynthia Creem and Representative Kate Lipper-Garabedian, an act that protects the safety of our constituents, their access to reproductive health, religious liberty, freedom of expression and protection from harassment by banning the sale of cellphone location information; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council urges the State legislature to take prompt action for the passage of this legislation; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the City Clerk is hereby requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to our entire State delegation.

Filed on: 03/15/2024