



For Immediate Release

November 23, 2020

Media Contact: Vera Parra, [vera.parra@justfutureslaw.org](mailto:vera.parra@justfutureslaw.org), 917-519-7656

## **Report Exposes Hyper Surveillance Biometric Technology Used By ICE To Target Immigrant Communities**

*A [new report](#) uncovers ICE's widespread use of a little known program called EDDIE [EAGLE Directed Identification Environment], which uses portable technology devices to capture biometric data including fingerprints as well as facial and iris recognition.*

A [new report](#) released by [Mijente](#) and [Just Futures Law](#) uncovers exclusive information acquired through a Freedom of Information of Act (FOIA) lawsuit on a mobile app called "EDDIE" that allows Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to take in real-time fingerprints, facial scans and biographic information. EDDIE is a dangerous weapon in the hands of law enforcement agencies that have used it to ramp up detentions and deportations, targeting Black and Brown immigrant communities during raids, traffic stops, and checkpoints. The FOIA lawsuit also yielded information about an international mobile biometric program called BITMAP (Biometric Identification Transnational Migration Alert Program) that is being deployed against thousands of migrants, including children.

EDDIE is a key component of DHS's massive, increasingly militarized, biometric collection enterprise that feeds into vast, secretive databases. Surveillance technology is a growing industry and a new frontier for police, ICE, and the private companies. "EDDIE is a critical part of a growing data infrastructure that supports ICE's raids into our communities," said **Jacinta Gonzalez, senior campaign organizer with Mijente**. "ICE agents use EDDIE to gather fingerprints from folks on the ground—often not the people they are targeting—and that data ends up in software made by Palantir, servers made by Amazon, and all manner of other tech provided by private companies to surveil immigrants. This data dragnet must end."

EDDIE began as an Obama-era biometric program, and was expanded under the Trump administration, which made carceral technologies, like EDDIE, a core part of its ICE enforcement strategy. Over the last four years, as the country has witnessed the widespread abuses of immigration enforcement, calls to abolish ICE have gained increasing popularity. "We have seen ICE and CBP deploy military-grade weapons and technologies on civilian protesters, including Black and Brown communities, during the 2020 racial justice uprisings," said **Paromita Shah, Executive Director of Just Futures Law**. "It is clear that ICE and CBP cannot be given access to these dangerous forms of surveillance technology. The incoming administration can reverse course to stop the windfall of billions of dollars to corporations that advance intrusive, exploitative tech surveillance."

###

*Just Futures Law is a womxn of color-led immigration law project rooted in movement lawyering. Mijente is a political home for Latinx and Chicana people who seek racial, economic, gender and climate justice.*