

From: [Arthur Koch](#)
To: [SFPD, Commission \(POL\)](#)
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To the SFPD commission,

From Arthur Koch, District #9

San Francisco does not need police "robo-dogs"

SFPD is proposing to buy a robotic dog produced by [Boston Dynamics, called 'Spot'](#), at a base price of \$74,500. The Department offers no rationale for acquiring this robot, which it may not acquire until it has proposed a use policy and the Board of Supervisors approves it. SFPD's [use policy for its existing robots](#) is very broad, and could arguably be used in nearly any situation (outside of direct lethal force).

State law AB481 requires the local governing body (in SF, the Board of Supervisors) to determine that policies for equipment such as robots meet criteria that include safeguarding civil liberties, cost effectiveness compared to alternatives, and the absence of a reasonable alternative to meet the same public safety needs. The Police Commission should ask for information to inform those findings.

- How will the SFPD use this surveillance equipment?
- Given that the robot dog does not have the utility of one of the department's bomb disposal robots, why would this robot be useful?
- What can this robot do that other devices it already has at its disposal cannot do?
- Does the potential limited use of this device justify its expenditure?
- How does the SFPD intend to safeguard civil rights and civil liberties in deploying this robot into communities that may already be overpoliced?