

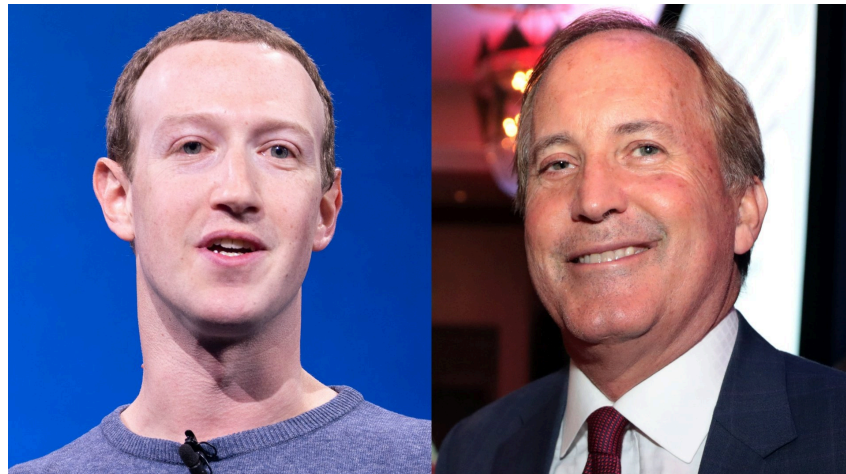
Texas Attorney General Paxton Secures Historic \$1.4 Billion Settlement with Facebook (Meta) Over Unauthorized Biometric Data Collection

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced on Tuesday that his office has secured a monumental \$1.4 billion settlement with Meta, formerly known as Facebook, to halt the company's unauthorized collection and use of the biometric data of millions of Texans.

By Jim Hoft

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The \$1.4 billion settlement, to be paid over five years, underscores Texas's unwavering stance on protecting the privacy rights of its citizens and sets a precedent for holding major technology companies accountable for their actions.

Attorney General Paxton's office has been at the forefront of numerous high-profile legal battles, including antitrust lawsuits and stringent enforcement of privacy laws.

This landmark settlement is the largest ever obtained by a single state and marks the most substantial privacy settlement an Attorney General has ever achieved.

"This historic settlement demonstrates our commitment to standing up to the world's biggest technology companies and holding them accountable for breaking the law and violating Texans' privacy rights," Paxton said in a press release. "Any abuse of Texans' sensitive data will be met with the full force of the law."

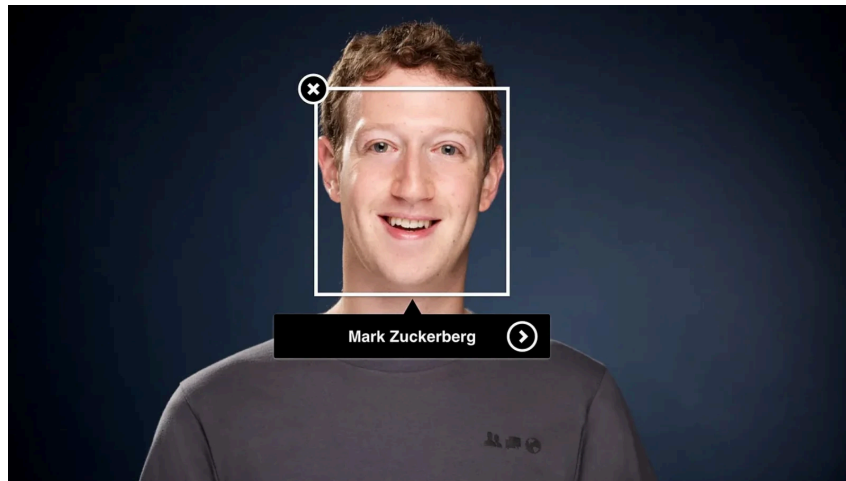
According to the [press release](#), the settlement is in response to Meta's violation of Texas's

“Capture or Use of Biometric Identifier” Act (CUBI) and the Deceptive Trade Practices Act.

The [lawsuit](#), initiated by Paxton in February 2022, accused Meta of unlawfully capturing the biometric data of millions of Texans without obtaining the informed consent required by law.

“Facebook has been storing millions of biometric identifiers (defined by statute as “a retina or iris scan, fingerprint, voiceprint, or record of hand or face geometry”) contained in photos and videos uploaded by friends and family who used the social media app. By this illegal activity, Facebook exploited the personal information of users and non-users alike to grow its empire and reap historic windfall profits. The company repeatedly captured biometric identifiers without consent billions of times, in knowing violation of Texas’ Capture or Use of Biometric Identifier Act and the Deceptive Trade Practices Act,” [according](#) to Paxton.

In 2011, Meta introduced a feature called Tag Suggestions, intended to enhance user experience by simplifying the tagging of photos with the names of individuals. This feature, however, was automatically enabled for all Texans without clear explanations of its workings.



For over a decade, Meta’s facial recognition software analyzed virtually every face in photographs uploaded to Facebook, recording facial geometries without user consent. Despite being aware that CUBI prohibits the capture of biometric identifiers without prior notification and consent, Meta continued its practices.

This is not the first time Meta has faced legal challenges over its biometric data practices. In 2020, Facebook users accepted a \$550 million privacy deal over the same “Tag Suggestions” feature.

The lawyers representing Facebook users requested a judge approve the settlement in their class-action lawsuit, which claimed that Facebook illegally gathered biometric data through the photo-tagging tool.

[According](#) to CDR Info, class members received between \$150 and \$300, amounting to 15% to 30% of the possible recovery on an individual claim. Plaintiffs sued in 2015, alleging that the

feature violated the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA).