December 14, 2016

Public Relations Department
Corporate Communications Division
Canon
One Canon Park
Melville, NY 11747

Dear Canon,

We, the undersigned documentary filmmakers and photojournalists, are writing to urge your company to build encryption features into your still photo and video camera products. These features, which are currently missing from all commercial cameras on the market, are needed to protect our safety and security, as well as that of our sources and subjects worldwide.

Without encryption capabilities, photographs and footage that we take can be examined and searched by the police, military, and border agents in countries where we operate and travel, and the consequences can be dire.

We work in some of the most dangerous parts of the world, often attempting to uncover wrongdoing in the interests of justice. On countless occasions, filmmakers and photojournalists have seen their footage seized by authoritarian governments or criminals all over the world. Because the contents of their cameras are not and cannot be encrypted, there is no way to protect any of the footage once it has been taken. This puts ourselves, our sources, and our work at risk.

Many technology companies have in recent years embraced encryption technology, often including it in their products and enabling it by default. Indeed, encryption has, in some sectors, become an industry-best practice. Apple’s iPhones encrypt all data stored on them by default, as do many phones running Google’s Android operating system; text messages and voice calls made with WhatsApp, iMessage, FaceTime, and Signal are all protected using end-to-end encryption technology; and laptops and desktop computers running modern versions of Microsoft Windows and macOS encrypt all data stored by default too.

However, we face a critical gap between the moment we shoot our footage and the first opportunity to get that footage onto more secure devices.
As filmmakers and photojournalists who value our own safety and the safety of our sources and subjects, we would seek out and buy cameras that come with built-in encryption. Adding these data security features to your product line would give your company a significant competitive advantage over other camera manufacturers, none of whom currently offer this feature.

Beyond the commercial motivation for adding encryption features, we know your company has commendably committed to corporate social responsibility. Building encryption into your products is not just about helping the filmmakers and photojournalists who buy them, but about making the world a better place. As filmmakers and photojournalists, we use our lenses to hold powerful people to account — and ultimately to change society for the better. Encryption features will allow us to continue to tell the most important stories, from some of the most dangerous places in the world.

You can help us reach that goal by starting to work towards building encryption into your camera products.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signed,
Over 150 Filmmakers, Photographers, and Media Workers Around the World

Lynsey Addario, Photojournalist, Freelance
Avi S. Adelman, Photojournalist/Editor, TheRightToPhotographInPublic.com
Cecilia Aldarondo, Assistant Professor of Film, Skidmore College
Chase Alexander, Filmmaker, Freelance
Ra’anan Alexandrowicz, Filmmaker, Independent
Alejandro Álvarez Cadilla, Director/Cinematographer, Independent
Anthony Arnove, Producer, Independent
Craig Atkinson, Documentary Filmmaker / Director, Vanish Films
Barbara Attie, Documentary Filmmaker, Attie & Goldwater Productions
Julia Bacha, Creative Director, Just Vision
Joslyn Barnes, Filmmaker, Louverture Films
Amy Benson, Filmmaker, Independent, Nonfiction Media
Amy Berg, Filmmaker, Independent
Pietra Brettkelly, Documentary Director/Producer, Independent
Emad Burnat, Filmmaker/Developer/Producer, Independent
Bruni Burres, Senior Consultant/DFP, Sundance
Rebecca Cammisa, Director, Documentress Films
Gloria Carrión Fonseca, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Peggy Case, Producer, Independent
Carlos Cazalis, Documentary Photographer, Freelance
Leyland Cecco, Photojournalist/Filmmaker, Independent
Jessica Chermayeff, Producer/Director, Independent
Michael Christopher Brown, Photographer, Magnum Photos
Brenda Coughlin, Producer, Praxis Films
Eric Daniel Metzgar, Filmmaker, Independent
Amlan Datta, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Guy Davidi, Filmmaker/Director/Producer, Independent
Jessica Devaney, Producer, Independent
Romona S. Diaz, Documentary Filmmaker, CineDiaz, Inc.
Peter Dicamp, Photographer/Co-founder, Everyday Africa and The Everyday Projects
Anita Doron, Filmmaker/TED Fellow, Independent
Sara Dosa, Producer/Director, Signpost Pictures
Andrew Droz Palermo, Director/Cinematographer, Independent
Sandi DuBowski, Director, Films That Change The World
Negin Farsad, Filmmaker/Comedian, Independent
Kristen Feeley, Labs and Artist Support Director, Sundance
David Felix Sutcliffe, Nonfiction Filmmaker, Independent
Field of Vision
Clayton Filipowicz, Videographer, Independent
Patrick Forbes, Director of Documentaries, Oxford Film
Jošt Franko, Photographer, Freelance
Morgan J. Freeman, Filmmaker/Founder, 11th Street Productions
Pedro G. Garcia, Documentary Editor, Independent
Christy Garland, Director, MurmurMedia
Megan Gelstein, Senior Program Director, Catapult Film Fund
Howard Gertler, Producer, Independent
Alex Gibney, Filmmaker, Jigsaw Productions
Jim Goldberg, Photographer, Magnum Photos
Linda Goldstein Knowlton, Filmmaker/Director/Producer, Skylight and Directors Guild of America
Fred Grace, Producer, Fat Rat Films
Christopher Gregory, Photographer, Freelance
Mark Grieco, Documentary Filmmaker/Director/Photographer, Independent
David Gross, Photojournalist, ZUMA Press, Freelance
Katey Grusovin, Producer/Director/Writer, Independent
Irene Gutíérrez, Executive Producer/Director/Filmmaker, Independent
Dean Hamer, Director, Qwaves Films
Kiana Hayeri, Photojournalist/Freelance, Freelance
NC Heikin, Director, Independent
Matthew Heineman, Filmmaker/Director/Producer, Independent
Seth Herald, Photojournalist, ZUMA Press
Tom Hurwitz, Director/Producer, American Society of Cinematographers
Cristina Ibarra, Filmmaker, Independent
International Documentary Association
Alina Ioana Vasillu, Journalist, Constan a noastră (Romania)
Mai Iskander, Director/Cinematographer, Iskander Films
Niam Itani, Producer, Placeless Films
Tabitha Jackson, Director and DFP, Sundance
Kirsten Johnson, Filmmaker/Cinematographer, Independent
Judy Karp, Sound Recordist, Independent
Deborah Kaufman, Filmmaker, Snitow-Kaufman Productions
Mark Kendall, Follow Your Nose Films
Sonia Kennebeck, Filmmaker, Independent
Gelareh Kiazand, Videographer/Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Simon Kilmurry, Executive Director, International Documentary Association
Geoff King, Photojournalist, Independent
Alison Klayman, Filmmaker, Independent
Vivian Kleiman, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Brian Knappenberger, Writer/Director, Luminant Media
Adi Lavy, Documentary & New Media Director, Israeli Documentary Filmmakers Forum
Rob Lemkin, Filmmaker, Old Street Films
Elisa Levine, Director, Out of Frame Films
James Longley, Filmmaker, Daylight Factory
Avram Ludwig, Producer
Asa Mader, Filmmaker
Anne Makepeace, Director/Producer, Makepeace Productions
Jeff Malmberg, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Margarita L Martinez, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Matthew Matthew Lawrence, Photographer, Independent
Daniel McCabe, Director/Cinematographer/Photographer, Independent
Susan Meiselas, Photographer, Magnum Photos
Arturo Mendicuti Barroeta, Filmmaker, Caribou Films
Flannery Miller, Producer/Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Gabriel Miller, Director/DP, Kindred Media
Margarita L Martinez, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Matthew Matthew Lawrence, Photographer, Independent
Minette Nelson, Co-founder, The Filmmaker Fund
Bao Nguyen, Director/Cinematographer, Independent
Mona Nicoara, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Orwa Nyrabia, filmmaker, No Nation Films
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Gabriel Miller, Director/DP, Kindred Media
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Khaliah Neal, Producer, Independent
Minette Nelson, Co-founder, The Filmmaker Fund
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Orwa Nyrabia, filmmaker, No Nation Films
Ed Ou, Photojournalist, Getty Images
Trevor Paglen, Photojournalist, Independent
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Sierra Pettengill, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Esther Podemski, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Laura Poitras, Filmmaker, Field of Vision
Pj Raval, Filmmaker/Cinematographer, Independent
Jeff Reichert, Director/Producer, Independent
Geoffrey Richman, Documentary Film Editor
Jed Riffe, Producer/Director/Writer/Transmedia Storyteller, Jed Riffe Films + Electronic Media
Marcia Rock, Director, News & Documentary, NYU Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
Richard Rowley, Executive Producer, Divided Films
Bernardo Ruiz, Documentary Filmmaker, Quiet Pictures
Ashley Sabin, Filmmaker, Carnivalesque Films
Holen Sabrina Kahn, Filmmaker, Independent
David Sampliner, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Carlos Sandoval, Filmmaker, Camino Bluff Productions, Inc.
Garret Savage, Filmmaker, Independent
Justin Schein, Producer/Director, Shadowbox Films Inc.
Andréa Schmidt, Journalist / Filmmaker, Independent
Nancy Schwartzman, Documentary Filmmaker App-Founder, Independent
Martha Shane, Director and Producer, Independent
Chuck Shultz, Documentarian, BluePrint Productions
Marc Silver, Director / DP / Creative Director, Independent
Douglas Sloan, Director, Icontent Films
Kathryn Smith Pyle, Filmmaker, Independent
Alan Snitow, Filmmaker, Snitow-Kaufman Productions
James Spione, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Scott Squire, Filmmaker, Independent, Nonfiction Media
Christopher St. John, Producer, Charlotte Street Films
Josh Stearns, Documentary Producer and Director, Independent
Brett Story, Director and Filmmaker, Independent
Aiden J. Sullivan, Founder and CEO, Verbatim Photo Agency
Jon-Michael Sullivan, Photojournalist, Independent
Johnny Symons, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent/Persistent Visions
Saeed Taji Farouky, Documentary Filmmaker, Independent
Rahdi Taylor, Film Fund Director, Sundance
Jennifer Taylor, Producer and Director, Specific Pictures
Mircea Toma, President, ActiveWatch
Joel Van Haren, Director of Photography, Freelance
Rosadel Varela, Producer, Independent
John Vink, Photographer, Magnum Photos
Sweta Vohra, Television Producer, Al Jazeera International
Orlando von Einsiedel, Director, Grain Media
Anat Vovnoboy, Documentary Director, Independent
Matthew Weigand, Photojournalist, Independent
Ryan White, Filmmaker, Tripod Media
Alex Winter, Director, Independent
Pamela Yates, Creative Director, Skylight
Amy Ziering, Documentary Filmmaker, Chain Camera Pictures
Malika Zouhali-Worrall, Director and Editor, Independent
Abbas, Photographer, Magnum Photos