

WHY ADVOCATES AND LAWMAKERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT INVOLUNTARY MICROCHIPPING

If you do not believe the threat of involuntary microchipping is real, please take a moment to read over the following disquieting developments. Taken together, they reveal a focused effort to promote human microchipping. The time to nip this trend in the bud is now.

- In 2005, VeriChip tried to chip the residents of Orange Grove Center, a facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee, that cares for the developmentally disabled. VeriChip offered to inject the devices for free to promote its product, but was ultimately rebuffed when the public questioned whether it was ethical to chip people who could not give informed consent. [1]
- Also in 2005, Tommy Thompson, former Secretary of Health and Human Services and 2008 presidential candidate, joined the board of directors for the VeriChip Corporation. He has used his Bush administration connections to promote the device, and has appeared on national television suggesting that every American should receive a VeriChip implant to link to their electronic medical records. Thompson also suggested using the VeriChip to replace dog tags in our armed forces. [2]
- The VeriChip Corporation claims to have been in talks with the Pentagon about implanting RFID tags into military personnel. [4]
- VeriChip CEO Scott Silverman publicly suggested that the U.S. government adopt the VeriChip implant to tag and track legal immigrants and guest workers. [Note: It is unclear to us how chipping undocumented immigrants will solve the problem of illegal immigration.] [5]
- The Congressional Record shows that Colombian President Álvaro Uribe told Senator Arlen Specter that he would consider chipping guest workers before allowing them to leave Colombia for the United States. [6]
- During the September 2005 Supreme Court confirmation hearings for Justice John Roberts, Senator Joseph Biden commented, "Can a microscopic tag be implanted in a person's body to track his every movement? There's actual discussion about that. You will rule on that — mark my words — before your tenure is over." [7]
- In 2004, employees of the Mexican Attorney General's office were asked to receive a chip implant to access a secure document room. Eighteen were actually chipped, and those who refused were reportedly reassigned. [8]
- In 2006, two employees of CityWatcher, a Cincinnati, Ohio, video surveillance company were implanted with VeriChips to access a secure room. While the company reportedly did not require the workers to get chipped, the incident worried employees around the country. Could employers make taking a chip a condition for employment? [9]
- New Jersey's oldest and largest insurer, Horizon Blue Cross and Blue Shield, is currently working with the Hackensack Regional Medical Center and VeriChip to develop a business case for the chipping of people. Privacy and civil liberties advocates caution that insurers could one day require customers to get chipped, or they could offer significant premium penalties for those who refuse. [10]
- IBM holds a major stake in the VeriChip Corporation. IBM has sworn public documents on file at the United States Patent and Trademark office detailing how marketers and government agents can track humans with RFID technology. [12] [13]
- IBM and VeriChip have set up a test laboratory in Austin, Texas, to explore the case for human chipping. [14]

- Since the VeriChip Corporation recently took its stock public, it's under increasing pressure from its share holders to generate revenues. VeriChip has announced plans to devote \$8 to \$10 million of its IPO proceeds to promote the chipping of people. [15] At a recent Florida Marlins baseball game, VeriChip purchased a prominent bill board reading "Microchip Implants Save Live." Hundreds of thousands of people were exposed to this message and likely believed it, despite the fact that no one's life has been saved by an implanted microchip. No mention was made of the serious potential health downsides of the implant. [16]
- Other companies that offer implant technology to identify and track lab rats, cattle, and pets could follow the pattern of the VeriChip Corporation and begin promoting human identification and tracking. One such company, Somark, has developed "chipless" RFID that can be injected into skin like a tattoo to track animals from a distance through radio waves. The company has suggested its product would be ideal for tracking members of the military. [17]

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