

Nebraska Lawsuit Raises Questions About Baby Monitors and Privacy

September 30, 2025 - Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers has filed a lawsuit against Lorex, a home security camera company whose devices are sold at major U.S. retailers including Costco, Best Buy, Kohl's, and Home Depot. The suit alleges that Lorex marketed its cameras as "private by design" and safe for use in sensitive spaces such as children's bedrooms, while failing to disclose that the products rely on technology from Zhejiang Dahua Technology, a Chinese surveillance firm that has faced U.S. restrictions.

Dahua was placed on the U.S. government's "entity list" in 2019, limiting imports of some of its equipment. Officials cite national security concerns and the company's role in surveillance programs tied to human rights issues in China. Nebraska's lawsuit argues that Lorex cameras are nearly identical to Dahua models and that consumers were misled into believing they were buying a safe, independent product. Lorex, which was owned by Dahua until 2022, has said it will contest the case, insisting that it takes customer privacy seriously.

The core of the case revolves around what consumers were told. The lawsuit contends that Lorex promoted its devices for highly private uses, such as monitoring infants, without warning families that the cameras were tied to a foreign surveillance company. Privacy experts say the concern is not only what the cameras capture, but how secure they are. Baby monitors and home cameras often connect to the internet, and if the systems behind them are insecure or controlled by outside firms, they could provide a window into household routines, conversations, and personal details.

So far, there is no public evidence that Lorex devices have been hacked or that video feeds from American homes have been accessed by foreign governments. Still, security researchers note that consumer devices can serve as weak points in a household network. Even if attackers are not interested in what a child is doing in their crib, they may be able to use a poorly secured camera to move into other devices on the same Wi-Fi network, such as laptops, phones, or smart speakers. In that way, cameras in private rooms are not just a potential invasion of privacy, but also a stepping stone to broader data collection.

Nebraska officials say the issue is one of honesty as much as it is one of security. "This marketing is deceptive, as Nebraskans are not warned about security risks," Hilgers said when announcing the lawsuit. Privacy advocates note that the placement of such cameras in bedrooms raises the stakes. Parents assume the feeds are private, and they may use the devices to watch their children, speak through built-in microphones, or record video that ends up stored online. If that trust is misplaced, the result is more than a faulty advertisement—it is a potential compromise of the most personal areas of family life.

The outcome of Nebraska's lawsuit may influence how states and retailers handle products linked to companies under U.S. sanctions. Florida's attorney general has already opened an investigation into Lorex, suggesting the issue will not stay confined to one state. For families, the lesson may be simpler: a product marketed as safe and private is only as secure as the companies behind it, and what they choose to tell—or not tell—their customers.

by Jim Malmberg

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