

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks on Signing an Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence

October 30, 2023

Vice President Kamala D. Harris. Good afternoon, everyone. Please have a seat.

To our President, Joe Biden; Members of Congress; members of our administration; and our private sector and civil society partners:

As leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector, I believe we have a moral, ethical, and societal duty to make sure that AI is adopted and advanced in a way that protects the public from potential harm and ensures that everyone is able to enjoy its benefits. Since we took office, President Biden and I have worked to uphold that duty.

Before generative AI captured global attention, President Biden and I convened leaders from across our country, from computer scientists to civil rights leaders to legal scholars and business leaders, all to help make sure the benefits of AI are shared equitably and to address predictable threats, such as algorithmic discrimination, data privacy violations, and deep fakes.

We named it the "Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights." After which, President Biden and I had extensive engagement with the leading AI companies to help ensure the private sector commits to the principles in the blueprint and to establish a minimum baseline of responsible AI practices.

We intend that the actions we are taking domestically will serve as a model for international action, understanding that AI developed in one nation can impact the lives and livelihoods of billions of people around the world. Fundamentally, it is our belief that technology with global impact requires global action.

Tomorrow I will travel to the United Kingdom to represent our Nation at the Global Summit on AI Safety. There, we will work with our allies and our partners to apply existing international rules and norms with a purpose to promote global order and stability and, where necessary, to build support for additional rules and norms that meet this moment.

Let us be clear: When it comes to AI, America is a global leader. It is American companies that lead the world in AI innovation. It is America that can catalyze global action and build global consensus in a way that no other country can. And under President Joe Biden, it is America that will continue to lead on AI.

And there are many ways to define the leadership of our President, Joe Biden——

[At this point, the President raised his eyebrows.]

——as even a quick review of his most recent—*[laughter]*——as even a quick review of his most recent victories makes clear. From creating technology innovation hubs in 31 communities across our Nation, to expanding America's semiconductor industry, to making the largest investment ever in climate in America's history.

So just a few points to say that President Biden is a leader with a vision for our future. He has the ambition to meet the challenges of the moment here and around the globe. And he has the courage and skill to lead us forward, including on AI.

And with that, it is my great honor and privilege to introduce our President, Joe Biden.

The President. Thank you. Please.

I'm going to remind you of that. I'm teasing. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Kamala, for that introduction and for your leadership on this issue.

Auto Industry Labor Agreements

Before I begin, I want to explain why I was delayed a few minutes. I have just spoken with President Fein of the United Auto Workers. And let me say a few words about the UAW and the Big Three automakers—Ford, General Motors, and Stellantis. They have reached a historic agreement and a hard-fought faith—agreement that was really battled for a while. But it was all done in good faith.

And these record agreements reward auto workers who gave up much to keep the industry working and going during the financial crisis more than a decade ago. These agreements ensure the iconic Big Three can still lead the world in quality and innovation.

Due to the commitment and solidarity of the UAW workers willing to exercise their right—their right to collectively bargain, they've won a record contract with over a 30-percent increase in wages, greater retirement security, and more paid leave, and a commitment by the Big Three to create more full-time, middle class jobs and invest tens of billions more dollars in plants and factories, building an automobiles future here in America.

I applaud—*[applause]*—I applaud the UAW and the leaders of the automobile companies for agreeing that all the workers on strike and all those who were walking the picket lines on behalf of the UAW brothers and sisters can come back to work immediately even before the vote is taken.

Ultimately, the final word on this contract will be for the UAW memberships themselves in the days and coming weeks as they vote. But here's what I know and what I shared with the United Auto Workers I met in the picket line: I've always believed that the middle class built America and that unions built the middle class. And that's especially the case for United Auto Workers who built the iconic automobile industry.

For too long, in my view, the economy hasn't worked for working people and for middle class folks. Because when they do well, by the way, everybody does well. That's why I came into office determined to build an economy—to build from the middle out and the bottom up, instead of the top down.

It's a critical piece of worker power. And it's showing how collective bargaining works by providing workers a seat at the table to honor their contributions to their employees'—their employer's success by securing pay and benefits they can raise a family on and retire with dignity and respect. It's showing how collective bargaining works for companies, how a strong relationship between workers and management can mean record profits leading to record contracts.

We're also seeing it across the board for the UAW workers—we're seeing this everywhere—rail workers, port workers, Teamsters, writers, health workers, and workers on other industries organizing and—by collective bargaining.

Folks, look, today's historic agreement is yet another piece of good economic news showing something I've always believed: Worker power—worker power—is critical to building an economy from the middle out and the bottom up, and so is economic growth.

We just learned that our economy grew 4.9 percent in the last quarter—the highest growth in 2 years—just as inflation continues to come down. We have more to do, but we're finally beginning to build an economy that works for working people, for the middle class, for the entire

company—the entire country, including the companies. Because when we do that, the poor have a ladder up, the middle class does well, and the wealthy still do very well. We all do well.

And that brings me to today's announcement.

Artificial Intelligence

Folks, I want to thank Kamala again for the work she's done through her entire career to protect people from harm and to promote responsible innovation. She's traveling to the United Kingdom, as she pointed out, this week, where she'll highlight how America is setting the standard for AI safety, security, and trust.

I want to thank all of you for joining us here. Some of you—members of my Cabinet, Members of Congress—including the Senate Majority Leader, Chuck Schumer, who has been a real leader on this. Chuck, thank you, pal. You've—and State and Senate—and local officials; leaders in technology, business, labor, academia, civil rights, and civil society.

And we'll see more—well, you know, I know you know this, but we're going to see more technological change in the next 10, maybe the next 5 years than we've seen in the last 50 years, and that's a fact. And it's the most consequential technology of our time. Artificial intelligence is accelerating that change. It's going to accelerate it at warp speed.

AI is all around us. Much of it is making our lives better. And AI is helping the National Weather Service predict weather events, helping Webb tech—the Webb—the Webb Telescope manage half a million miles of galaxies away—billions of light-years away.

I found out when I was turning on my phone and saw that, I thought: "My God, what is this? Science fiction." [Laughter] No, I'm serious. You—didn't you have the same thought when you saw it? [Laughter]

AI is helping millions of commuters find the shortest route home as well. [Laughter]

But, you know, in some cases, AI is making life work—worse. For example, using teenagers' personal data to figure out what will keep them glued to their device, AI makes social media more addictive. It's causing what our Surgeon General calls a "profound risk of harm" to their mental health and well-being.

Over the past years, Kamala and I have met with a range of experts, many of whom are here today—and I thank you for coming here today—on the risks and the incredible opportunities of AI. One thing is clear: To realize the promise of AI and avoid the risks, we need to govern this technology, not—and there's no other way around it, in my view. It must be governed.

That's why we're here today.

I'm about to sign an Executive order. An Executive order that is the most significant action any government anywhere in the world has ever taken on AI safety, security, and trust. This order builds on the critical steps we've already taken to ensuring the AI Bill of Rights to bring together leading AI companies who agreed to voluntarily make certain commitments to make sure AI is safe and a system is secure.

With today's Executive order I'll soon be signing, I'm determined to do everything in my power to promote and demand responsible innovation.

First, the Executive order is about AI safety and security. Today I am invoking what's called the Defense Production Act that Federal Government uses in the most urgent of moments, like mobilizing the nation during—a nation in time of war or developing COVID vaccines during the pandemic.

This Executive order will use the same authority to make companies prove—prove—that their most powerful systems are safe before allowing them to be used. I want to—before allowing them to be used. That means companies must tell the Government about the large-scale AI systems they're developing and share rigorous independent test results to prove they pose no national security or safety risk to the American people.

At the same time, I will direct the Department of Energy to make sure AI systems don't pose chemical, biological, or nuclear risks at the same time.

Look, in the wrong hands, AI can make it easier to—for hackers to exploit vulnerabilities in the software that makes our society run. That's why I'm directing the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, both of them, to develop game-changing cyber protections that will make our computers and our critical infrastructure more secure than it is today. And that's why my administration has taken decisive steps to prevent cutting-edge—these cutting-edge AI chips from being used to undermine our national security, which is possible.

Second, the order is about making sure that AI systems can earn the American people's trust and people's trust around the world.

All too often, already—it's already happening that AI devices are being used to deceive people. Deep fakes use AI-generated audio and video to smear reputations, speak—spread fake news, and commit fraud.

With AI, fraudsters can take a 3-second—and you all know this—3-second recording of your voice—I've watched one of me on a couple—[*laughter*]. I said, "When the hell did I say that?" [*Laughter*]

But all kidding aside, 3-second recording of your voice and generate an impersonation good enough to fool—you know, I was going to say your family—fool you. [*Laughter*] I swear to God. Take a look at it. It's mind-blowing.

And they can use it to scam loved ones into sending money because they think you're in trouble. That's wrong. Everyone has a right to know when audio they're hearing or video they're watching is generated or altered by AI.

Thanks to this order, the Department of Commerce is going to help develop standards to watermark and clearly label AI-generated content. Just say this—that's how it was generated: AI-generated. That way, you can tell whether it's real and it's not. And when your loved ones hear your voice on the phone, they'll know it's really you.

Trust matters. Trust matters.

Third, this Executive order is about protecting your fundamental rights to—like privacy. Without safeguards, AI can put your privacy at greater risk. That's why I've called for new protections on your personal data. With this Executive order, my administration is going to help develop—develop leading-edge technology to make those protections as strong as possible.

Look, privacy is not the only right at risk. Without the right safeguards in place, AI can lead to discrimination, bias, and other abuses.

That's why, with the help of civil rights leaders here today, this order directs several actions to protect Americans' civil rights and their safety. That means clear guidance for landlords and Federal contractors and Federal programs to prevent the bias in AI tools that can be used to make decisions on whether or not someone qualifies for housing or benefits or a job.

We'll develop the best practices for AI use to ensure fairness in the criminal justice system as well. And, when appropriate, the Justice Department and the Federal Civil Rights offices will investigate and prosecute AI-related civil rights violations.

A fourth thing this order does: It will ensure that emerging technology works for consumers and for workers. For example, to protect patients, we'll use AI to develop cancer drugs that work better for—and cost less. We'll also launch a safety program to make sure AI health systems do no harm.

To protect workers, this order directs the Government to help make sure AI isn't used to shortchange workers. I've also asked for a comprehensive report on the potential impact of AI on the labor market and how to help workers whose jobs have been disrupted.

We're going to support workers in every industry by defining their rights and defending them—to a fair wage, to organize, and as these other—more technologies emerge.

And, finally, we're going to make sure America leads the world in innovation and attracts the top talent to stay at the cutting edge. And because AI's challenges and opportunities are global, we're going to keep advancing American leadership globally.

In meeting around—in meetings around the world, I've heard from leaders, and I've been going around the world a lot lately. *[Laughter]* It's good to be home. *[Laughter]*

And we're looking—but leaders around the world, as they approach me—I mean it—in any country, they ask: "Is the United States going to show the way in AI? Will the United States lead?" I'm sure Kamala is going to hear this when she's in the United Kingdom later this week.

And we'll continue to work closely with allies and partners, including the United Nations, the G-7—and the G-7, which just set out the first-ever international code of conduct to safely guide AI development.

Look, let me be clear: This Executive order represents bold action, but we still need—we still need Congress to act. We need Congress to act.

I want to thank—I just want to thank Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer here. Chuck, you've been—you've taken the reins on this issue like no one else could. You've developed legislation to harness the power of AI while keeping Americans safe. Tomorrow I look forward to meeting with you and the bipartisan group that you've put together to bring down to the White House to underscore the need for congressional action.

I'm going to continue to call on Congress to pass bipartisan legislation to stop Big Tech from collecting personal data on our kids and teenagers online; to ban—*[applause]*—to ban targeting advertising to children; to limit the personal data these collectors—these—these companies collect on us.

Folks, let me close with this. We face a genuine inflection point in history, one of those moments where the decisions we make in the very near term are going to set the course for the next decades. And with the position we lead the world, the toughest challenges are the greatest opportunities.

Look, there's no greater change that I can think of in my life than AI presents as a potential: exploring the universe, fighting climate change, ending cancer as we know it, and so much more.

As artificial intelligence expands the boundary of human possibility and tests the bounds of human understanding, this landmark Executive order is a testament to what we stand for: safety, security, trust, openness, American leadership, and the undeniable rights endowed by our Creator that no creator—no creation can take away, proving once again that America's strength is not just the power of its example [example of its power; White House correction] but the example of its power [power of its example; White House correction].

Look, I know we can meet this moment with hope and not fear because of all of you—and I mean it sincerely—because all of you here today, many of you are the originators of this technology. And all across America, the people are focused on this.

You're the reason why—and I mean this sincerely—you're the reason why I've never been more optimistic about America's future. We just have to remember who in God's name we are. We're the United States of America. And there is nothing—nothing—beyond our capacity when we do it together.

So God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Now I'm going to go over and sign that.

[The President moved to the signing table.]

Thank you, thank you, thank you. "Executive Order—Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence."

[The President signed the Executive order.]

Thank you.

[The President returned to the podium and spoke as follows.]

I really want to thank all the businesses who are here and all the people who've—involved in developing AI. You've been incredibly responsible. Thank you, thank you. And thank you for educating us on this as well. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

[The President left the podium and greeted audience members. As he was leaving the room, several reporters shouted questions as follows.]

Anti-Semitism

Q. Mr. President, how concerned are you about the rise in anti-Semitism?

The President. Very concerned.

Q. Can you—and the mob at the Russian airport——

Q. Do you agree with Netanyahu?

Anti-Semitism/Russia

Q. The mob at the Russian airport, Mr. President—your response?

The President. Oh, I didn't—*[inaudible]*—today?

Q. No, over the weekend. Your response to the anti-Semitic mob at the Russian airport?

The President. *[Inaudible]*

Q. Netanyahu—*[inaudible]*—it's not time for a truce. Do you agree with that?

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy. A reporter referred to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Artificial intelligence development, consumer and other security protections, signing the Executive order.

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