scramble to figure out what to do, and the scammer tells them: You can just pay the fine at the crypto machine, and here is where to go to use that service.

Through it all, the scammer runs them through everything they need to know to take their life savings, thousands and thousands of dollars, and to insert it as cash into this machine—this crypto ATM machine—sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars. They purchase cryptocurrency and send it off to the scammers' digital wallet, never to be seen again.

Once that happens, the money is gone. There is no way to get it back, and there is little hope in tracing the transaction to the actual scammer.

These types of scams led to nearly $247 million in losses last year, a 31-percent increase over the previous year, and the crypto ATM companies know their kiosks facilitate this fraud.

I am not a big fan of vaping, but I do want to say this. There is a vaping store in my hometown of Springfield, IL, that finally despaired of all of the older people who came in in tears, shoveling money into the crypto ATM machine. The owner of the premises was given $300 a month for allowing crypto ATM machines in his business, but he couldn't take it anymore. Too many people were clearly being scammed, and he was party to it. And he had it removed.

A large crypto ATM operator, Bitcoin Depot, wrote in its filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission exactly what I have said. They said:

Our products and services may be exploited to facilitate illegal activity, such as fraud, money laundering, gambling, tax evasion, and scams.

That is as close to a confession as you can get.

The SEC filing, though revealing, doesn't give the whole picture. It doesn't tell the actual human story.

Imagine a person who is retired, up in years, worried day to day whether their Social Security check is going to stretch far enough, and now loses thousands of dollars in their life savings to the scam.

In Illinois, an elderly woman with MS lost $40,000, her entire life savings, to a government grant imposter scheme facilitated by a crypto ATM. Since the woman can't get around very well—listen to this—the scammer called an Uber to pick her up and drive her to the local crypto ATM—how kind to drive your victim straight to the crime. They took her personal information as well. She is devastated, since this is all the money she has been able to save in her entire life, and there is no way to recover it from the crypto ATM.

Elaine, a 76-year-old woman from Florida, was a victim of crypto ATM scam after her late husband's death. She looked up the Apple support number to try to secure his Apple accounts, but, unfortunately, the number she called was an imposter. The criminal convinced her that she was the victim of identity theft and told her to immediately take $30,000 out of her bank account and deposit it into a crypto ATM. Now she is recovering not only from her financial loss but also from the loss of her husband.

Many States, including Minnesota, Iowa, and North Dakota, have decided to make a move, since Congress has not. They have passed State legislation to try and crack down on those crypto ATM scams. Just a few days ago, I am happy to report, my home State of Illinois passed a similar State law.

Now, it is time for Congress, because 13 States have acted, to learn something from their example. We must act so that all Americans know the risk of crypto ATMs and have proper documentation when seeking help from law enforcement to try to get their hard-earned cash back.

That is why I am pushing for a vote on my amendment to the GENIUS Act, which would create commonsense guardrails to prevent crypto ATM fraud and empower law enforcement to combat these scams. My amendment would require crypto ATM operators to register with the Federal financial regulators, provide warnings to customers about scams, and create daily transaction limits so customers cannot lose their entire life savings in an instant.

With my amendment, crypto ATM operators would not be able to simply turn a blind eye to the fraud that is happening at their crypto ATM machines. We must put an end to these scams.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support my amendment to stop scammers in their tracks and provide protections for people whom they represent.

I want to say a word to the industry. You have 13 States now that are trying to do what we should do on a national basis. Let's establish this national Federal standard that applies in every State in the Nation to protect people from this exploitation that is clearly growing in intensity by the day. Let's protect senior citizens and many others who have been scammed using crypto ATM machines.

Cryptocurrency has its detractors, and it has its champions, but I hope we can all stand together on a bipartisan basis to say that we are not going to help scammers steal money from unsuspecting people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AI CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the critical need for regulation of artificial intelligence.

This work period, the Senate is poised to take up the House's reconcili-ation package, a disastrous proposal that strips healthcare away from tens of millions of Americans and dismantles our country's clean energy revolution, all to deliver tax cuts to billionaires.

But buried nearly 300 pages into this bill is something quite shocking: a blanket, 10-year ban on States and local governments from regulating artificial intelligence. That is right. Rather than proposing any plan to address the risk of this powerful and fast-evolving technology, my Republican colleagues have chosen to block the States and to block local governments from acting. They don't want to do anything, but they want to block anyone else from acting as well.

They would tie the hands of Governors and tie the hands of State legislators who are stepping up to protect their constituents from the unchecked harms of AI, without any plan of their own to regulate these technologies here in Congress.

In fact, just this morning, 260 State lawmakers—half Republicans and half Democrats—from all 50 States, sent a letter to Congress opposing any provision which can block them from acting to protect their citizens. And just a few weeks ago, 40 State attorneys general sent a similar letter to congressional leaders urging Congress to reject the 10-year moratorium.

These State leaders are right. This provision would be devastating for our country.

The broad preemption language could prevent States from prohibiting social media platforms from targeting teenage girls with ads for dangerous weight-loss drugs, enacting common-sense protections against algorithms that unjustly deny a senior citizen medical care, and safeguarding workers from discriminatory hiring practices driven by biased AI tools.

One expert warned that the language is so sweeping that it could undermine contract law and break the internet itself.

Let me be clear. This is a recipe to repeat the failures from the last decade—failures driven by our failure to hold Big Tech accountable for its abuses.

How has that worked out for us? Well, today, thanks to our failure to regulate Big Tech, we have a privacy crisis, a youth mental health crisis, and a teenage mental health crisis in our country, and the Surgeon General of the United States points the finger at social media as a major part of the problem that we have with teenage and youth mental health issues in our country.

Thankfully, in the face of Federal inaction, States have led. States have stood up. They have moved to protect young people online, secure consumer privacy, and confront algorithmic bias.

But this provision that snuck into this bill that we are going to consider over the next month—this provision snuck in the bill—would erase that

progress. It would roll back years of hard-won protections and prevent future action, just when it is needed the most, just when it is becoming very clear to the entire country that there is a sinister side to cyberspace, as well as a good side. Yes, we want it to do wonderful things in our society, but we also know that it can cause great harm as well.

So instead of shutting down State leadership, instead of shutting down State legislators and shutting down Governors across the Nation who want to work on this issue, Congress itself should step up to start to put the protections in place for our entire Nation. We must pass legislation that confronts the real harms of artificial intelligence, while ensuring that the United States remains the leader on this important and promising technology.

We want to reap the benefits of AI. We want to have AI be used across our society, but we also want to protect against the harmful effects of AI if it is put in the wrong hands to be used for the wrong purposes.

That is why I authored the AI Civil Rights Act, the most comprehensive AI legislation introduced in the U.S. Congress, which ensures that artificial intelligence serves the public good, not private profit exclusively. The bill would ensure that the AI age does not supercharge the bias and discrimination already prevalent today.

Specifically, my legislation establishes new rules when companies use algorithms to make decisions on jobs, on housing, on healthcare, on banking, on the criminal justice system, and other important aspects of our lives.

The AI Civil Rights Act is a balanced approach that requires companies to detect and address bias in their algorithmic decisions without stifling innovation.

Make no mistake, we can have an AI revolution while also protecting the civil rights and liberties of everyday Americans. We can support innovation without supercharging the tracking and targeting of young people online. We can promote competition while safeguarding our environment.

But with their blanket, 10-year ban on State AI regulation, Republicans are choosing a sledgehammer over a scalpel. They are choosing Big Tech over kids, families, seniors, and disadvantaged communities across this country.

We cannot allow this to happen. I am committed to fighting this 10-year ban with every tool at my disposal, and that is by ensuring that it is going to be clear that this 10-year ban on State AI regulation is a policy change that has no impact on the Federal budget.

What does that mean if this provision that has been stuck in this bill has no impact on the Federal budget? Here is what it means: It means that that provision cannot be included in a reconciliation bill.

If Senate Republicans keep the House language in their reconciliation bill, I will raise a point of order against it. I will raise a point of order saying that it is in violation of our rules that this kind of a change can be built into this legislation.

When my Republican colleagues are ready to have a serious conversation about AI regulation, my door is wide open. We should be discussing this on a bipartisan basis. But this backdoor AI moratorium, it is not serious. This backdoor moratorium is not responsible. This backdoor moratorium is not acceptable. There is too much at stake.

We can't say for 10 years there is no regulation at the State level if they can see harms that are being committed. They must have the right to be able to legislate. And there is one way for us to avoid it, of course. We could legislate. We could pass national legislation. But at this point, I still see no appetite on the Republican side for that to even commence as a serious discussion.

So with that, I just want to put the Senate on notice that I am going to raise a point of order if, in fact, this AI moratorium on any State legislation remains in the bill.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BOULDER, COLORADO ATTACK

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, our Colorado community is reeling from a heinous hate crime against the Jewish community in Boulder, CO.

On Sunday, 12 Coloradans were badly injured after a suspect threw Molotov cocktails, incendiary devices, into a crowd, specifically targeting the Jewish people there—a targeted, anti-Semitic attack.

The 12 individuals were part of a peaceful march in Boulder that happens every week to call for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza.

The suspect has since told investigators that he planned the terrorist attack for over a year; that he specifically wanted to target the Run for Their Lives group, this group that had been meeting every week lobbying for the release of hostages.

Bottom line, this attack was not random. It was a deliberate hate crime against the Jewish community that was planned for months. The scope of that hatred is unconscionable.

These were men and women who dedicated their time to advocating for innocent hostages who have been now held in captivity for over 600 days. Most importantly, the demonstrators were motivated by a desire for peace and were operating in a peaceful fashion.

Let me repeat that. These men and women wanted peace. Instead, they were met with horrifying and senseless violence.

The upswing in violence targeting the Jewish community needs to be condemned at every level. And now, anti-Semitism and the hate that comes with it has taken root at home in Colorado. But Colorado is not alone. Our country is still mourning the recent assassination of two Israeli Embassy staff members who were shot as they exited an event at the Capital Jewish Museum just a little over a week ago.

And just this past April, the Pennsylvania Governor's mansion was firebombed as Gov. Josh Shapiro and his family celebrated Passover inside.

These are just a few of the recent and most visible anti-Semitic attacks. According to the Anti-Defamation League, anti-Semitic incidents have reached a record high since the October 7, 2023, attack.

It is absolutely unacceptable for anti-Semitism to exist in our country. And yet, the Jewish community in Colorado and the Jewish community across the United States has to live with the daily fear of targeted terrorist attacks and escalading calls for violence against the Jewish people.

We need to do more to protect the Jewish community in Colorado and across the country and make sure that they feel safe in the aftermath of this horrific attack.

Across the country, Jewish people are angry. They are terrified. Jewish Coloradans woke up this morning feeling unsafe—unsafe to go to school, unsafe to go to work—wondering what and if there is a path forward.

In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote:

> The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it.

Colorado has always been a State that embraces difference and always will be. The answer to this violence is not to turn to the comfort of simple or black-and-white answers, backing into our corners and spreading more fear and more hatred. Now is the time to double down on our commitment to unity in the face of our differences. It is the only way we can guarantee safety and peace for our Jewish community and for every community.

Now, what does that mean in real terms? It means fully investigating this hate crime and making sure the suspect is fully prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. It means zero tolerance for anti-Semitism in Colorado schools, our workplaces, or in our public spaces. It means taking a lesson from the 12 demonstrators who were victims in Sunday's attack. Through peaceful action, they stood up for their beliefs, supported one another, and helped our country take small but meaningful steps forward. They wanted to end this descending spiral of violence. The rest of us should too.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.