

But what does he want? He wants our industries to be collapsed, our industries to be held to a different standard—not one word from China—and espousing policies like this electric vehicle subsidy for the richest Americans, while, at the same time, there are people flying around in private jets to global conferences to talk about climate change.

Spare me the hypocrisy.

And for all of those reasons and many, many more, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). The objection is heard.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am not going to go through a rebuttal of the factual misstatements to which we have just been treated, but I will add that I have objections to the IRA bill as well. We can all have objections to parts of the IRA.

But the fact is that fossil fuel emissions continue to cause harm; they continue to cause danger. And the warnings that I have described are now very real.

We can do nothing about it, and that has been the plan in the Senate ever since Citizens United dialed up the fossil fuel industry to influence us with dark money.

But if we are going to do something about it, we must start somewhere, and I would recommend that we start with some really simple facts, like the ones that I brought to the Senate floor just now.

These are serious warnings. Senators who wish to change the subject or distract us or prevent us from responding in any way to these serious warnings—well, that is everybody's choice. But I do think these warnings are serious enough that they merit attention.

So if you don't like my suggestion, let's do something different. But let's just not sit here and do nothing.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, moving off of this vigorous debate between my two friends on a topic that I think actually is of equal importance.

For most of the last decade, conversations about artificial intelligence were largely conversations about the future, but today they are conversations about the present.

AI is already changing how we work, how we learn, how we defend ourselves, how businesses compete, and, candidly, how Americans live their daily lives.

AI is writing software, discovering drugs, managing supply chains, helping defend our networks. It is already reshaping the economy, the workplace, and our national security.

The question is no longer whether artificial intelligence will transform our society. The question is whether Congress will help shape that transformation or spend the next decade scrambling to catch up after the fact.

Now, I have spent a lot of time on this issue over the last several years. Before entering public service, I spent my career in technology. I remain convinced that AI has enormous potential to improve lives, accelerate scientific discovery, strengthen our economy, and help America compete.

And I share the concern of many Americans that the impacts of this technology on our country and on our culture could also, if we don't get it right, be catastrophic.

Let's start with being honest with each other. We are not going to put this genie back in the bottle, and the amount of disruption this technology will bring over the next 5 years is beyond jaw-dropping.

I believe Congress made a similar mistake once before. We largely stood on the sidelines as social media reshaped our politics, our economy, our kids. We waited until the problems became so obvious before we began asking whether there should have been some rules of the road put in place first.

We cannot afford to make that same mistake again. That is why today I am introducing a legislative agenda—a series of bills—built around four simple principles:

First, we need to build the infrastructure for America's AI future responsibly. The AI revolution depends on enormous amounts of physical infrastructure—particularly massive data centers being built in the Presiding Officer's State, many being built already in Virginia. These facilities place extraordinary demands on electricity, water, and local communities.

Communities should not be asked to shoulder the cost of the AI revolution without knowing what they are signing up for. They deserve to know exactly what is being built in their backyard and a full understanding of what these facilities will mean for their electric grid, their water supply, their air quality, and local infrastructure.

My Data Center Tax Accountability and Disclosure Act fixes the problem. It gives people the facts before they need to make decisions about their communities.

My bill will ensure transparency about data center electricity and water consumption, backup power generation, and setbacks in residential communities, so as these data centers get built, they are not built right on top of residential neighborhoods—candidly, all information communities should have when planning and building decisions are being made.

And part of the way we will make this new standard be met, if Congress is going to provide special tax breaks that allow companies to write off the cost of building these facilities far faster than they otherwise could, these subsidies should come with conditions.

Companies receiving that taxpayer support—whether we want to call it bonus depreciation or accelerated depreciation—should meet strong stand-

ards for efficiency, sustainability, and accountability because American leadership in AI cannot come at the expense of the communities that make that leadership possible.

Second, we need to promote competition, safety, and consumer trust. If AI is going to become the interface through which Americans shop, bank, communicate, receive medical advice, and navigate the internet, then people need confidence that these systems are working for them and not exploiting them. That means a couple of things:

First, we need to preserve competition, especially when it comes to AI agents. We have seen what happens when a handful of dominant technology companies are allowed to become gatekeepers. Markets become less competitive, consumers have fewer choices, and innovation suffers.

As AI agents increasingly act on our behalf online, Americans, not big tech companies, should be able to decide which services they use and, candidly, where their data goes.

I plan to introduce new legislation to establish clear rights and responsibilities for these emerging AI agents so they can compete fairly while meeting strong standards for privacy, cyber security, and security protection.

Second, we need meaningful safeguards against abuse.

AI has extraordinary power and potential to improve lives, but it also makes it a lot easier to generate convincing fraud, exploit children, violate people's privacy, and create harmful content at unprecedented scale.

There is absolutely no legitimate use for an AI system capable of generating child sexual abuse material or non-consensual intimate images—no use at all.

Companies developing these systems have a responsibility to build effective safeguards into their products—not after the harm occurs but before these systems are released. My legislation would establish a process to verify that AI models cannot generate child sexual abuse material or nonconsensual intimate images. And how to do that? By preventing the Federal Government from buying systems that fail those basic safeguards and giving survivors a meaningful path for justice when the protections fail.

We have seen some of this already start to emerge in terms of chatbot. If you think social media wreaks havoc with your teenagers, think about a chatbot that might consciously or unconsciously encourage your child to do self-harm.

As AI-generated content becomes increasingly sophisticated, we also have to protect our financial markets and our democratic institutions from fraud, deception, and manipulation, which is why, in the upcoming weeks, I will reintroduce my bipartisan legislation to require financial regulators to address the uses of AI-generated content that could disrupt financial markets. And it is coming.

If the United States wants to lead the world in AI, we can't simply build the best models; we need to build the most trusted ones. History shows that transformative technologies succeed not only because they are powerful but because people have confidence in using them. Congress has a responsibility to help create this confidence by ensuring that there are clear rules of the road before problems arise.

Third, we need to prepare America's workforce for the economy AI will generate.

This may ultimately become the defining economic challenge of our time. It is also why Senator ROUNDS and I introduced bipartisan legislation creating an Economy of the Future Commission to help our country develop a long-term strategy for artificial intelligence and other transformative technologies.

These changes won't happen overnight, and they won't be confined to one industry. We need a national strategy equal to the scale of the challenge because while there is every reason to believe that artificial intelligence will actually create new industries and new jobs over the long run, history tells us that technological revolutions rarely unfold smoothly.

This transition can be enormously disruptive. Workers whose skills are no longer in demand don't experience the benefits of productivity gains quickly; they experience uncertainty, they experience layoffs, and they experience the challenge of building a new career while supporting a family.

Some of the workers most exposed to this disruption may actually not be the ones traditionally exposed, as we thought about the internet in terms of low-skill jobs in rural communities. Today, unemployment amongst recent college graduates has risen to levels that should concern us all. As a matter of fact, I will bet that we will hit 30 percent recent college graduate unemployment in the next 2 years. I hope I am wrong, but if I am not wrong, we are in a heap of trouble.

Many of the occupations most vulnerable to generative AI are the very white-collar, entry-level jobs that have long served as the first rung on a career ladder—jobs in business, finance, marketing, software development, customer support, and other knowledge positions. If those entry-level opportunities begin disappearing faster than the new ones are created, we risk leaving an entire generation of young Americans struggling to gain a foothold in the workforce.

We cannot simply assume that the market will sort it out on its own in a short-enough time. That is why today I am proposing a National Workforce Transition Fund to help workers navigate this period of technological change. This fund would support worker retraining, portable training accounts, employer redeployment programs, tuition assistance for high-demand careers—frankly, if we could get

half the folks in college that are majoring in business to switch to healthcare fields, that would be a step in the right direction—and also add innovative approaches to help workers adapt to this AI economy.

I am also introducing legislation to strengthen American's pipeline of homegrown STEM talent by helping universities create accelerated pathways into doctoral programs in critical technologies like AI, cyber security, semiconductors, and quantum.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Investing in the American Workers Act because we need to rethink the incentives in our Tax Code. Today, our Tax Code makes it a heck of a lot easier for companies to invest in machines than in people. That doesn't make sense in an AI economy. If businesses benefit from the productivity gains AI creates, they should also have a strong incentive to invest in the workers who make those gains possible. Our goal here is not to stop technological progress; the goal is to make sure every American person has an opportunity to gain from this.

Let me come to my final point. I realize we are approaching the vote, but I was supposed to start 30 minutes ago.

Finally, I want to talk about artificial intelligence through the lens of national security.

From my years on the Senate Intelligence Committee as chair and vice chair, I believe AI is one of the most consequential strategic technologies our country will confront in the coming decade. AI is rapidly becoming foundational to intelligence collection, cyber security, military planning, scientific research, and again, America's long-term competition with China. It will help analysts process information at a scale that no human workforce ever could. It will strengthen our ability to deter cyber intrusions, identify emerging threats, and support our military.

If properly developed and secured, AI can become one of America's greatest strategic advantages, but we would be naive to believe our adversaries aren't racing toward the same goal. China has made artificial intelligence a national priority. So has Russia, Iran, North Korea, and more specifically, international criminal organizations.

The same frontier AI models that accelerate scientific discovery can also identify cyber vulnerabilities, automate sophisticated cyber operations, and lower the barriers—

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). May we ask the Members to take their conversations off the floor?

Mr. WARNER. Thank you, Mr. President. I have only got a couple more minutes. I will wrap up as quickly as possible.

Maybe my colleagues might want to even listen to some of this because I think we actually have some good ideas here that cross both sides of the aisle.

The same frontier AI models that accelerate discovery can also figure out

where the vulnerabilities are in our systems. That is why we cannot approach frontier AI models the same way we approach ordinary software updates. The most advanced AI systems deserve a higher standard of security before they are widely deployed.

I am proud to say that many of my friends inside the administration are recognizing this after the release of Mythos.

My Secure AI Development Act would establish mandatory, secure testing for our most advanced AI networks and models; improve the way the government and industry actually work together because neither team, public or private, can do this alone; strengthen information sharing between AI developers and the Federal Government; and establish a voluntary AI safety incident reporting system modeled after the aviation system. That is one of the reasons why people climb on airplanes so regularly in this country—because they know that works. It would also strengthen protections against foreign adversaries trying to steal some of the best of these frontier models.

One of the greatest lessons I have learned on the Intelligence Committee is that our national security failures often come when we recognize the threat but fail to act.

We cannot continue to punt on this issue. I have never seen a technology advance as quickly as AI. Traditionally, the promoters of that technology say it is coming, it is coming, and then it takes another 10 years. In the case of AI, the leading figures are saying it is coming, and it is coming even faster than they expected. We don't have months or years to get this right.

We need to combine the best of our innovation but also with some guardrails. As I started at the beginning, I think most of us would agree we would have a heck of a lot healthier generation of young people if we put some guardrails on social media. Social media is tiny compared to the power, both good and bad, around AI.

So I have laid out here a series of ideas and legislation. I look forward to working with folks on both sides of the aisle. There is no Republican or Democrat version of AI. But if we don't take these issues up now, if we are still having this conversation at the end of the year or next spring, I believe it will be too late.

I urge my colleagues to take a look at my ideas. If you have better ones, I welcome them. Let's move forward on this critical issue.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor and reserve the time to come back another time to finish the other 6 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thank you, Senator WARNER.

The Senator from Idaho.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately execute the order in relation to the Westercamp nomination.

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

Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Kara Marie Westercamp, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

VOTE ON WESTERCAMP NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Westercamp nomination?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL).

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 201 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Armstrong	Graham	Moreno
Banks	Grassley	Murkowski
Barrasso	Hagerty	Paul
Blackburn	Hawley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hoeven	Risch
Britt	Husted	Rounds
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Justice	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sheehy
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Lummis	Tillis
Curtis	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McCormick	Wicker
Ernst	Moody	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—48

Alsobrooks	Heinrich	Reed
Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Bennet	Hirono	Sanders
Blumenthal	Kaine	Schatz
Blunt Rochester	Kelly	Schiff
Booker	Kim	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Collins	Klobuchar	Slotkin
Coons	Lujan	Smith
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Fetterman	Murray	Warren
Galleo	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Cramer McConnell

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Louisiana.

HONORING DREW HANSON

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, Scripture says that "greater love has no one

than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Deputy U.S. Marshal Drew Hanson was a member of the Western District of Louisiana's Fugitive Task Force.

More importantly, he was a husband, a father, and tragically he was shot and killed while arresting a man on sexual battery charges. Deputy Hanson displayed the greatest love; love for his country, love for justice, love for others.

The man who murdered him took his life, yes. But no criminal, no weapon can take a man's honor, courage, or legacy.

Mr. President, I ask for a moment of silence for Drew's family, for his friends, for his community, as we know they are grieving tremendously.

(Moment of silence.)

IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT ACT

Mr. President, when I go back to Louisiana, I meet with people around the State. Some things stand out. I went to a business once, and there was a fellow working. And the gentleman who was taking me around his business said: That guy over there 20 years ago got out of prison, and he has been the greatest employee we have ever had.

There is nothing that is more of an anti-recidivism program than somebody getting a job and keeping a job and learning how to feed their family in an honest way.

The same employer told me that they went to Fort Polk, an Army facility in Louisiana, and recruited the young men and women upon their separation because they just knew how to work with a team. They just knew how to work within a command structure. They had leadership ability, and he really made—his business made a real effort to get those people into a job.

Now, those are happy stories of people getting out of jail, getting out of the service. It could be a trailing spouse who otherwise might have a problem finding a job, but in this man's employment, they got a great job.

Now, in other cases, we hear of veterans having a difficult time being placed. We find that those people coming out of prison have a difficult time. Those people coming off of welfare have a difficult time getting a job.

And if you are coming off of welfare and you have a difficult time getting a job, you are more likely to go back on welfare. If you are the trailing spouse and every 6 months you have moved and then your husband or your wife separates from the military, the trailing spouse has a difficult time because you look at the work record; she or he has been moving every 6 months. It is difficult for that employer to take a leap on someone with that kind of a record.

All of these people can benefit from the Improve and Enhance the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Act, which we call WOTC. WOTC is a bill that makes it easier to get a job if you are someone who, for one reason or another, might have a difficult time doing so.

So we have mentioned the spouse of someone in the military. Again, they had to relocate so often that their work history looks like they can't keep a job. But WOTC would give an employer a Federal tax credit if they hire that military spouse, benefiting the employee, the employer, and rewarding that spouse who sacrificed just as much as the servicemember.

So instead of making service a barrier to employment, WOTC rewards it for providing the military spouse the opportunity to build a stable, rewarding career. And in our country, that is how we should treat those who served our country in the military.

Now, there are others whose circumstances prevent them from getting a good job; the mom who took off to raise children and is now getting back into the workforce; the lower income family coming off of welfare.

WOTC provides an incentive, a little bit of a buffer, a little bit of a credit in terms of whether you hire that person. If there is an extra expense, if there is a little bit more turnover in that group of people whom you hire, the WOTC would—that tax credit, work opportunity tax credit—benefit the company.

Now, I truly believe my observation in life that one of the most meaningful ways to strengthen a person's future, to support their family, and to uplift their community is by taking the skills that you know you have and finding a job in which you can meaningfully use those skills; a job in which you are happy to go to work and you are happy to come home. Yes. You love your vacation, and you love your weekend, but you are proud to have that job.

That is why in the Working Families Tax Cuts bill, if you received SNAP benefits and you are able-bodied and you can work, then you should. But WOTC helps those who have been out of the workforce rejoin the workforce and supports the businesses along the way.

When somebody gets a good job, they get more than an income. They find stability. They become independent. They have self-respect. They have a tool with which to achieve the American dream. And that is why I think we must reauthorize WOTC, which expired last December.

People of my State and across the country support this bill and have contacted my office asking that Congress reinstate it, so that military spouse or the servicemember newly separated from the service, the working mom, the low-income family, the person being separated from jail, all these have the opportunity to work hard, contribute to society, to rejoin society's workforce, and succeed, despite the challenges they might face.

This is good for America. This is good for business. This is good for society.

Now, I wake up every day, and I think: What can I do to make life better for the people of my State and my country?