## 1

#### Interpretation: The affirmative must defend an unconditional right to strike. This means that the Affirmative must defend that anyone regardless of job or occupation has a fundamental right to strike.

Merriam Webster ND, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unconditional> //sid

not conditional or limited : [ABSOLUTE](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/absolute), [UNQUALIFIED](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unqualified)

“Unconditional” necessitates the absence of narrowing restrictions.

US Legal ‘ND (US Legal; dictionary of legal terms of art; US Legal; “Unconditional Law and Legal Definition”; https://definitions.uslegal.com/u/unconditional/; Accessed: 10-30-2021; AU)

Unconditional means **without conditions**; **without restrictions**; or **absolute**. For instance, unconditional promise is a promise that is unqualified in nature. A party who makes an unconditional promise must perform that promise even though the other party has not performed according to the bargain.

#### Violation – They only grant the Right to Strike to big tech workers. That by definition is a condition since they condition the right to strike on a particular occupation.

Jensen ’18 (Eric; co-director of the Stanford Rule of Law Program, in collaboration with USAID, The Asia Foundation, and Stanford Law School; April 2018; “Introduction to the Laws of Timor-Leste”; Stanford Law School; <https://law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Timor-Leste-Constitutional-Rights.pdf>; Accessed: 10-30-2021; AU)

If individuals want to defend their rights at work, the Constitution gives them the right form trade unions and to strike. Individuals are free to join and participate in professional associations that are peaceful. This includes trade unions. Individuals in trade unions have a right to organize their unions independent of the government or their employers. Trade unions should be free and independent, and individuals have the right to set the unions’ internal structure freely. Independent trade unions are important to allow individuals to organize with other workers to collectively defend their interests and their rights. It is important that they are independent so that they reflect the individuals’ interests and not the employer’s or the government’s interests. Individuals have the right to strike. If they feel that their employer is not respecting their rights or interests, employees can refuse to work in protest. The Constitution creates a duty that during a strike, the employer still has to maintain equipment and provide for safety. Individuals’ right to strike is **limited by the law**. The Constitution states that the right to strike is **conditional** on the strike being **compliant** with legal regulations that the government creates. This means that the **government can pass laws** that limit **when and how** individuals can exercise their right to strike. The right to strike is important to give individuals the power to defend their labor rights.

#### Vote Neg –

#### 1] Limits – there are endless conditions the aff can place on the right to strike – i.e based on occupation, national holidays, location of strike, etc. That makes the topic untenable since the Aff can just infinitely specify any condition or permutation of conditions which makes predictable preparation and in-depth clash impossible.

#### 2] Neg Ground – specifying scenarios lets affs spike out of core, reduction-based disads like Bizcon and Small Businesses. Links are already non-existent on this topic – letting affs impose restrictions on RTS makes it even narrower.

#### 3] TVA – Defend an unconditional RTS in the US.

Drop the Debater –

[1] sets a precedent that debaters wont be abusive

[2] DTA is the same since you drop the aff

Voters:

[1] Fairness – constitutive to the judge to decide the better debater, only fairness is in your jurisdiction because it skews decision making

[2] Education – the only portable education from debate that we care about

Competing Interps - T is a binaristic question, you’re either topical or ur not

No RVI – yiou shouldn’t win for being topical

## 2

**Global tech innovation high now.**

**Mercury News et al 6/4** [Mercury News and East Bay Times Editorial Boards, June 4, 2021, “Editorial: How America can Win the Global Tech War” <https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/06/04/editorial-why-silicon-valley-needs-endless-frontier-bill/> //gord0]

The nation that wins the global tech race will dominate the 21st century. This has been true since the 1800s. Given the rapid pace of innovation and tech’s impact on our economy and defense capabilities in the last decade, there is ample evidence to suggest that the need for investment in tech research and development has never been greater. China has been closing the tech gap in recent years by making bold investments in tech with the intent of overtaking the United States. This is a tech war we cannot afford to lose. It’s imperative that Congress pass the Endless Frontier Act and authorize the biggest R&D tech investment in the United States since the Apollo years. Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Santa Clara, made a massive increase in science and technology investment a major part of his platform while campaigning for a seat in Congress in 2016. Now the co-author of the 600-page legislation is on the cusp of pushing through a bipartisan effort that has been years in the making. Khanna and his co-authors, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind., and Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisc., are shepherding the bill through the Senate, which is expected to approve it sometime later this month. That would set up a reconciliation debate between the House and Senate that would determine the bill’s final language. The ultimate size of the investment is still very much up in the air. Khanna would like Congress to authorize $100 billion over a five-year period for critical advancements in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity, semiconductors and other cutting-edge technologies. The Senate is talking of knocking that number down to $50 billion or $75 billion. They should be reminded of China Premier Li Keqiang’s March announcement that China would increase its research and development spending by an additional 7% per year between 2021 and 2025. The United States still outspends China in R&D, spending $612 billion on research and development in 2019, compared to China’s $514 billion. But the gap is narrowing. At the turn of the century, China was only spending $33 billion a year on R&D, while the United States was spending nearly 10 times that amount. The bill would authorize 10 technology hubs throughout the nation designed to help build the infrastructure, manufacturing facilities and workforce needed to help meet the nation’s tech goals. Building tech centers throughout the United States should also create more support for the industry across the country. Tech’s image has taken a beating in recent years — the emergence of the term “Big Tech” is hardly a positive development — and the industry will need all the support it can muster in Congress. The United States continues to have a crucial tech edge over its competitors, most notably China. The only way we can hope to win the 21st century is to make significant investments in research and development that will spark the next wave of innovation.

**Violent strike efforts are increasing – they slow innovation, specifically in the tech sector.**

**Hanasoge 16** [Chaithra; Senior Research Analyst, Market Researcher, Consumer Insights, Strategy Consulting; “The Union Strikes: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly,” Supply Wisdom; April/June 2016 (Doesn’t specifically say but this is the most recent event is cites); https://www.supplywisdom.com/resources/the-union-strikes-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/]//SJWen

The result: Verizon conceded to several of the workers’ demands including hiring union workers, protection against outsourcing of call-center jobs, and employee benefits such as salary hikes and higher pension contributions, among others and thus bringing an end to the strike in June.

The repercussion: The strike witnessed **several instances** of **social disorder**, **violence** and **clashes**, ultimately calling for third party intervention (Secretary of Labor – Thomas Perez) to initiate negotiations between the parties. Also, as a result of the strike, Verizon reported **lower** than **expected revenues** in the **second quarter of 2016**.

Trade unions/ labor unions aren’t just this millennia’s product and has been in vogue since times immemorial. **Unions**, to **ensure fairness** to the working class, have **gone on strike for better working conditions** and employee benefits since the **industrial revolution** and are as strong today as they were last century. With the **advent of technology and advancement in artificial intelligence**, machines are grabbing the jobs which were once the bastion of the humans. So, questions that arise here are, what relevance do unions have in today’s work scenario? And, are the strikes organized by them avoidable?

As long as the concept of labor exists and employees feel that they are not receiving their fair share of dues, unions will exist and thrive. Union protests in most cases cause work stoppages, and in certain cases, disruption of law and order. Like in March 2016, public servants at Federal Government **departments across Australia** went on a series of **strikes** over failed pay negotiations, **disrupting operations** of many **government departments** for a few days.  Besides such direct effects, there are many **indirect effects** as well such as **strained employee relations**, **slower work processes**, **lesser productivity** and **unnecessary legal hassles**.

Also, union strikes can **never be taken too lightly** as they have prompted major overturn of decisions, on a few occasions. Besides the **Verizon incident** that was a **crucial example** of this, nationwide strikes were witnessed in India in March and April this year when the national government introduced reforms related to the withdrawal regulations and interest rate of employee provident fund, terming it as ‘anti-working class’. This compelled the government to withhold the reform for further review. In France, strike against labor law reforms in May turned violent, resulting in riots and significant damage to property. The incident prompted the government to consider modifications to the proposed reforms.

However, aside from employee concerns, such incidents are also determined by a number of other factors such as the country’s political scenario, economy, size of the overall workforce and the unions, history of unionization, labor laws, and culture. For example, it is a popular saying that the French are always on strike as per tradition (although recent statistics indicate a decline in frequency). In a communist government like China, strikes have steadily risen in number. In 2015, China Labor Bulletin (CLB), a Hong Kong-based workers’ rights group recorded 2,700 incidents of strikes and protests, compared to 1,300 incidents in 2014. Most of them have stemmed out of failure by the government to respect the basic rights of employees and address labor concerns.

Interestingly, unions have **not been able to gain a strong foothold** in the **IT-BPO industry**. While many countries do have a separate union to represent workers from the sector, incidents of strikes like Verizon **have been relatively lo**w.  However, workplace regulations, in addition to other factors mentioned could be a trigger for such incidents, even if on a smaller scale. For example, a recent survey that **interviewed several BPO employees** in India revealed that while **forming a union** in the BPO sector was **difficult**, irksome workplace regulations such as constant surveillance, irregular timings and incentives have prompted employees to express their resentment in smaller ways such as corruption of internal servers and so on.  Such risks are further enhanced in a city like Kolkata, which carries a strong trade union culture.

**Victories like the aff mobilizes unions in the IT sector.**

**Vynck et al 21** [Gerrit De; Carleton University, BA in Journalism and Global Politics, tech reporter for The Washington Post. He writes about Google and the algorithms that increasingly shape society. He previously covered tech for seven years at Bloomberg News; Nitashu Tiku; Columbia University, BA in English, New York University, MA in Journalism, Washington Post's tech culture reporter based in San Francisco; Macalester College, BA in English, Columbia University, MS in Journalism, reporter for The Washington Post who is focused on technology coverage in the Pacific Northwest; “Six things to know about the latest efforts to bring unions to Big Tech,” The Washington Post; https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/01/26/tech-unions-explainer/]//SJWen

In response to **tech** company crackdowns and lobbying, gig workers have **shifted their strategy** to emphasize building **worker-led movements** and increasing their ranks, rather than focusing on employment status as the primary goal, says Veena Dubal, a law professor at the University of California Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco. The **hope** is that with **President Biden in the White House and an even split in the Senate**, legislators will **mobilize** at the federal level, through the **NLRA or bills such as the PRO Act**, to **recognize gig worker collectives as real unions**.

**Technological innovation solves every existential threat – which outweighs.**

**Matthews 18** Dylan. Co-founder of Vox, citing Nick Beckstead @ Rutgers University. 10-26-2018. "How to help people millions of years from now." Vox. https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2018/10/26/18023366/far-future-effective-altruism-existential-risk-doing-good

If you care about improving human lives, you should overwhelmingly care about those quadrillions of lives rather than the comparatively small number of people alive today. The 7.6 billion people now living, after all, amount to less than 0.003 percent of the population that will live in the **future**. It’s reasonable to suggest that those **quadrillions** of future people have, accordingly, **hundreds of thousands of times** more moral weight than those of us living here **today** do. That’s the basic argument behind Nick Beckstead’s 2013 Rutgers philosophy dissertation, “On the overwhelming importance of shaping the far future.” It’s a glorious mindfuck of a thesis, not least because Beckstead shows very convincingly that this is a conclusion any plausible moral view would reach. It’s not just something that weird utilitarians have to deal with. And Beckstead, to his considerable credit, walks the walk on this. He works at the Open Philanthropy Project on grants relating to the far future and runs a charitable fund for donors who want to prioritize the far future. And arguments from him and others have turned “long-termism” into a very vibrant, important strand of the effective altruism community. But what does prioritizing the far future even mean? The most **literal** thing it could mean is preventing human **extinction**, to ensure that the species persists as long as possible. For the long-term-focused effective altruists I know, that typically means identifying concrete threats to humanity’s continued existence — like unfriendly artificial intelligence, or a pandemic, or global warming/out of control geoengineering — and engaging in activities to prevent that specific eventuality. But in a set of slides he made in 2013, Beckstead makes a compelling case that while that’s certainly **part** of what caring about the far future entails, approaches that address **specific threats** to humanity (which he calls “**targeted**” approaches to the far future) have to **complement** “**broad**” approaches, where instead of trying to **predict** what’s going to kill us all, you just **generally try to keep civilization running as best it can**, so that it is, as a whole, well-equipped to deal with **potential** extinction events in the **future**, not just in 2030 or 2040 but in 3500 or 95000 or even 37 million. In other words, caring about the far future **doesn’t mean just paying attention to low-probability risks of total annihilation**; it also means **acting on pressing needs now**. For example: We’re going to be **better prepared** to prevent extinction from **AI** or a **supervirus** or **global warming** if society as a whole makes **a lot of scientific progress**. And a significant bottleneck there is that the vast majority of humanity doesn’t get high-enough-quality education to engage in scientific research, if they want to, which reduces the odds that we have enough trained scientists to come up with the breakthroughs we need as a civilization to survive and thrive. So maybe one of the **best thing**s we can do for the **far future** is to improve school systems — here and now — to harness the group economist Raj Chetty calls “lost Einsteins” (**potential innovators** who are thwarted by poverty and inequality in rich countries) and, more importantly, the hundreds of millions of kids in developing countries dealing with even worse education systems than those in depressed communities in the rich world. What if living ethically for the far future means living ethically now? Beckstead mentions some other broad, or very broad, ideas (these are all his descriptions): Help make computers faster so that people everywhere can work more efficiently Change intellectual property law so that technological innovation can happen more quickly Advocate for open borders so that people from poorly governed countries can move to better-governed countries and be more productive Meta-research: improve **incentives** and **norms** in **academic work** to better advance human knowledge Improve education Advocate for political party X to make future people have values more like political party X ”If you look at these areas (economic growth and technological progress, access to information, individual capability, social coordination, motives) a lot of everyday good works contribute,” Beckstead writes. “An implication of this is that a lot of everyday good works are good from a broad perspective, even though hardly anyone thinks explicitly in terms of far future standards.” Look at those examples again: It’s just a list of what normal altruistically motivated people, not effective altruism folks, generally do. Charities in the US love talking about the lost opportunities for innovation that poverty creates. Lots of smart people who want to make a difference become scientists, or try to work as teachers or on improving education policy, and lord knows there are plenty of people who become political party operatives out of a conviction that the moral consequences of the party’s platform are good. All of which is to say: Maybe effective altruists aren’t that special, or at least maybe we don’t have access to that many specific and weird conclusions about how best to help the world. If the far future is what matters, and generally trying to make the world work better is among the best ways to help the far future, then effective altruism just becomes plain ol’ do-goodery.

## 3

#### Reconciliation passes now without further cuts – Holdouts tentatively say yes and our ev assumes every aff non-uq warrant

Reklaitis 12/02 [Victor, MarketWatch's Money & Politics reporter and is based in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining MarketWatch, he served as an assistant editor and reporter at Investor's Business Daily, “Biden’s big social-spending bill probably will pass Senate this month without many cuts to it, analysts say”, 12-02-2021, https://www.marketwatch.com/story/bidens-big-social-spending-bill-probably-will-pass-senate-this-month-without-many-cuts-to-it-analysts-say-11638466738]//pranav

Will President Joe Biden’s $2 trillion social-spending and climate package actually get the Senate’s OK this month, as that chamber’s leader has promised? Two analysts from opposite ends of the political spectrum said that looks likely, as they spoke on Wednesday with MarketWatch for a Barron’s Live episode. “I think the chances are very, very good that this bill will pass, and I wouldn’t bet the mortgage on it, but I would predict that it’s going to happen by this month,” said Seth Hanlon, a senior fellow at the liberal Center for American Progress. Kyle Pomerleau, a senior fellow at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, concurred with Hanlon, as the analysts assessed Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer’s stated goal of passage by Christmas. The legislation already got the House’s approval last month, so Biden can sign it into law if the Senate acts and the two chambers reconcile their versions of the measure. “I think that the Build Back Better Act ultimately passes. I think before Christmas seems like a reasonable timeline,” Pomerleau said. “There are other political challenges involved, if this bleeds over into next year, and I think that the Democrats want to avoid that.” Democrats also could be motivated by not wanting a lapse in monthly child tax credit payments, according to Hanlon. Those payouts, which began over the summer and provide up to $300 per child to families, would get extended for another year in the current version of the Build Back Better Act. “The child tax credit payments — the last one would be done on Dec. 15, and so I think the Democrats are going to want to continue those into January and not have them cut off suddenly,” the Center for American Progress expert said. Hanlon and Pomerleau said they don’t expect huge changes to the Build Back Better Act’s overall price tag, even as moderate Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia has expressed opposition to some items in the House version of the bill, including a plan for paid leave and a $4,500 tax credit for electric vehicles made in unionized U.S. factories. Another issue that’s dividing Democratic lawmakers is a proposed lift to the SALT cap, which refers to a limit on deductions from federal income tax for state and local taxes. “I think that $2 trillion in spending, including the tax credits, is a reasonable place that they will end up,” Pomerleau said, referring to what’s a likely final price tag. Meanwhile, Hanlon noted that a lot of negotiating has happened this year to get to the current state of affairs, after Sen. Bernie Sanders, the Vermont independent who usually votes with Democrats and chairs his chamber’s budget committee, proposed a much larger spending package. “If you back up to where we started with President Biden’s agenda and Sen. Sanders’s budget, we’re down to a relatively narrow, limited set of issues and a pretty narrow band of a total price tag,” he said. “I might expect that to shrink somewhat because of Sen. Manchin, but not that much. I think 90% of the bill will stay the same.” Democrats can’t afford to lose the support of any senator who typically votes with them, as they advance the bill through a process known as budget reconciliation. That’s because the Senate is split 50-50, with the party in control only because Vice President Kamala Harris can break ties.

#### Biden PC is key to getting democratic skeptics on board, but it’s tentative

Cochrane & Weisman 11/05 [Emily Cochrane - correspondent based in Washington. She has covered Congress since late 2018, focusing on the annual debate over government funding and economic legislation, ranging from emergency pandemic relief to infrastructure, Jonathan Weisman - congressional correspondent, veteran Washington journalist and author of the novel “No. 4 Imperial Lane” and the nonfiction book “(((Semitism))): Being Jewish in America in the Age of Trump.” His career in journalism stretches back 30 years, “Live Updates: House Democrats Push Toward Votes on Biden’s Agenda”, 11-05-2021, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/05/us/biden-spending-infrastructure-bill]//pranav

At the White House, Mr. Biden called on lawmakers to pass the legislation. “I’m asking every House member, member of the House of Representatives, to vote yes on both these bills right now,” the president said. Spooked by Tuesday’s electoral drubbing, Democrats labored to overcome concerns among moderates about the cost and details of a rapidly evolving, $1.85 trillion social safety net and climate plan and push it through over unified Republican opposition. They also hoped to clear a Senate-passed $1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill — the largest investment in the nation’s aging public works in a decade — for Mr. Biden’s signature. Top Democratic officials said they were confident they could complete both measures by day’s end, but Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California and her team continued to haggle with holdouts. Several moderates were pushing for more information about the cost of the sprawling plan, including a nonpartisan analysis from the Congressional Budget Office, the official scorekeeper responsible for calculating the fiscal impact of the 2,135-page legislation. “I think everyone’s waiting for the C.B.O. to do their job,” said Representative Jared Golden, Democrat of Maine, speaking to reporters on Friday morning as he left Ms. Pelosi’s office, where White House officials were also meeting on next steps. But Representative Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland, the majority leader, said the cost estimate would not be ready by the end of the day, and a person familiar with the discussions said a score from the budget office was weeks away from completion. “We’re working on it,” Mr. Hoyer said. Ms. Pelosi spent much of the day on Thursday buttonholing lawmakers on the House floor to try to corral support for the social policy bill, which includes monthly payments to families with children, universal prekindergarten, a four-week paid family and medical leave program, health care subsidies and a broad array of climate change initiatives. Mr. Biden and members of his cabinet worked the phones to win over Democratic skeptics. With Republicans united in opposition, Democrats could afford to lose as few as three votes from their side. As Democrats labored to unite their members behind the bill, Republicans sought to wreak procedural havoc on the House floor, forcing a vote to adjourn the chamber that leaders held open for hours to buy time for their negotiations. While the Senate approved the $1 trillion infrastructure bill in August, the measure has stalled as progressives have repeatedly refused to supply their votes for it until there is agreement on the other bill.

#### Business lobbying backlash ensures Sinema flips – empirics prove she doesn’t like similar bills

Duda ’21 [Jeremy, Prior to joining the Arizona Mirror, he worked at the Arizona Capitol Times, where he spent eight years covering the Governor's Office and two years as editor of the Yellow Sheet Report, “Business groups urge Kelly, Sinema to oppose pro-union PRO Act”, 08-30-2021, https://www.azmirror.com/2021/08/30/business-groups-urge-kelly-sinema-to-oppose-pro-union-pro-act/]//pranav

Business groups publicly called on Democratic U.S. Sens. Mark Kelly and Kyrsten Sinema to oppose a sweeping piece of pro-organized labor legislation that would wipe out Arizona’s “right-to-work” law that prohibits mandatory union membership. At a press conference at the office of the Arizona chapter of the Associated General Contractors near the state Capitol on Monday, leaders of several business groups warned that the Protecting the Right to Organize Act — or PRO Act, as it’s more commonly known — would undermine Arizona’s recovery from the economic slump it faced last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, undermine the “gig economy,” jeopardize secret ballots in union organization votes, give unions access to confidential employee information and strip Arizonans of their right not to join a union. The bill would allow unions to override right-to-work laws and collect union dues from non-members who still benefit from collective bargaining. It would also prohibit company-sponsored meetings to urge employees against unionizing, define most independent contractors as employees, protect employees who are attempting to unionize from being fired and allow unions to engage in secondary strikes in support of other striking workers, among other provisions. “We want to thank and tell Senator Sinema and Senator Kelly that we appreciate them for not signing on as co-sponsors to the PRO Act, because if they were to change their opinions, New York Sen. Chuck Schumer will put this up for a vote,” said Danny Seiden, president and CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Kelly and Sinema are two of only three Senate Democrats, along with Virginia’s Mark Warner, who haven’t co-sponsored the bill or thrown their public support behind it. Kelly last month told the Huffington Post that he opposes the independent contractor provision, but that he supports the “overall goals” of the legislation. Sinema is widely known as a holdout on the Democratic side and hasn’t supported the PRO Act, but spokesman Pablo Sierra-Carmona indicated that she hasn’t made up her mind, and that she won’t do so unless and until it comes up for a vote in the Senate.

#### They lash out against Reconciliation – it will includes similar provisions

FURCHTGOTT-ROTH 10/09 [Diana, former acting assistant secretary for economic policy at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, is adjunct professor of economics at George Washington University, “Democrats can't pass the PRO Act, so it's buried in the reconciliation bill”, 10-09-2021, https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/575992-dems-cant-pass-the-pro-act-so-its-buried-in-the-reconciliation-bill]//pranav

Union membership has been declining for decades as workers find better uses than union dues for their hard-earned dollars. But union bosses and their supporters are trying to change the law to force hard-working Americans into unions. How? Through the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), a bill that would expand the power of union leaders at the expense of workers. After sailing through the House, the PRO Act now appears stalled in the Senate and Democrats are trying to slip some PRO Act provisions into a massive reconciliation bill. American workers are wise to turn down union membership. Union pension plans are in trouble. In 2020, the Labor Department listed 121 union plans in critical status, defined as less than 65 percent funded, and 61 in endangered status, with less than 80 percent funded. Unions desperately need new workers to join, because they pay contributions for many years without withdrawing money. Most recently, Amazon workers in Alabama resoundingly rejected efforts by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store International Union to organize their plant, with more than 70 percent of workers voting against the union. The union’s plan was in critical status between 2015 and 2019, and the Labor Department informed the plan’s administrators that it had to be reorganized by reducing benefits and increasing contributions. Union leaders and their allies on Capitol Hill believe the way to increase membership after decades of decline is to pass elements of the PRO Act through reconciliation. Unlike the PRO Act, which needs 60 votes in the Senate to enable it to move to President Biden’s desk for signature, the reconciliation bill, which deals with taxes and spending, needs only a simple majority. So via a massive reconciliation bill, congressional Democrats are trying to move some labor union provisions of the PRO Act by arguing they are actually revenue raisers.

#### Reconciliation is k2 stopping existential climate change – warming is incremental and every change in temperature is vital

Higgins 8/16 [Trevor, Senior Director, Domestic Climate and Energy, “Budget Reconciliation Is the Key to Stopping Climate Change”, 08-16-2021, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/news/2021/08/16/502681/budget-reconciliation-key-stopping-climate-change/]//pranav

The United States is suffering acutely from the chaotic changes in climate that scientists now directly attribute to the burning of fossil fuels and other human activity. The drought, fires, extreme heat, and floods that have already killed hundreds this summer across the continent and around the world are a tragedy—and a warning of worsening instability yet to come. However, this week, the Senate initiated an extraordinary legislative response that would set the world on a different path. Enacting the full scope of President Joe Biden’s Build Back Better agenda would put the American economy to work leading a global transition to clean energy and stabilizing the climate. A look at what’s coming next through the budget reconciliation process reveals a ray of hope that is easy to miss amid the fitful negotiations of recent months: At long last, Congress is on the verge of major legislation that would build a more equitable, just, and inclusive clean energy economy. This is our shot to stop climate change. Building a clean energy future must start now Until the global economy stops polluting the air and instead starts to draw down the emissions of years past, the world will continue to heat up, blundering past perilous tipping points that threaten irreversible and catastrophic consequences. Stemming the extent of warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius rather 2 degrees or worse will reduce the risk of crossing such tipping points or otherwise exceeding the adaptive capacity of human society. Every degree matters. Stabilizing global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius starts with cutting annual greenhouse gas emissions in the United States to half of peak levels by 2030. This isn’t about temporary offsets or incremental gains in efficiency—it’s about the rapid adoption of scalable solutions that will work throughout the world to eliminate global net emissions by 2050 and sustain net-negative emissions thereafter. Building this better future will tackle climate change, deliver on environmental justice, and create good jobs. It will give us a shot to stop the planet from continuously warming. It will alleviate the concentrated burdens of fossil fuel pollution, which are concentrated in systemically disadvantaged, often majority Black and brown communities. It will empower American workers to compete in the global clean energy economy of the 21st century. There is no time to lose in the work of building a clean energy future.

## 4

#### CP Text: States should ban the deployment of Lethal Autonomous Weapons.

HRW ’20 [Human Rights Watch, “Stopping Killer Robots”, 08-10-2020, https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/08/10/stopping-killer-robots/country-positions-banning-fully-autonomous-weapons-and]//pranav

Weapons systems that select and engage targets without meaningful human control are unacceptable and need to be prevented. All countries have a duty to protect humanity from this dangerous development by banning fully autonomous weapons. Retaining meaningful human control over the use of force is an ethical imperative, a legal necessity, and a moral obligation.

## Case

1] Baca and Greene doesn’t have a warrant for policy follow on – at best they drew a false correlation between a climate summit happening and people going on strike beforehand to call for company change

2] proves RTS isn’t key bc perception of a strike in the squo causes companies to change their policies which should be sufficient to solve

3] Plan flaw

Merriam Webster ND, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unconditional> //sid

large in size –

the affs ambiguous use of the word“big” could refer to tech worker that is large in size, it’s unsure. negate a. no solvency because the plan won’t pass – presume neg - textual education is key to effective policy-making – a 2012 weed bill in Arkansas was rejected because it was phrased incorrectly.

4] no internal link to stopping LAW development in the federal sphere – their ev is only about big Tech developing stuff but not about military contractors or people like Lockheed or Boeing who are also developing weapons

5) **Aff isn’t inherent – thousands of workers striking in squo and bringing change, also a reason that illegal strikes solve**

**Ghaffary ’19** [Shirin Ghaffary, 9-20-2019, "Here’s why the Amazon climate walkout is a big deal," Vox, https://www.vox.com/recode/2019/9/20/20874497/amazon-climate-change-walkout-google-microsoft-strike-tech-activism]//pranav

On Friday, over 1,500 Amazon workers plan to walk out of work to protest their company’s environmental impact. It will be the first time in Amazon’s 25-year history that its corporate employees have participated in a walkout demonstration. **Employees are calling on Amazon to reduce its carbon footprint as part of a larger**, youth-led global **climate strike that has planned hundreds of events around the world**. **Even ahead of their walkout, protesters have already seen results.** On Thursday morning, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos announced in Washington, DC, **that the company is making a pact to follow the Paris climate agreement — a cross-country pledge for nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions — and it is also pledging to be carbon neutral by 2040.** But Amazon employees who plan to walk out of work say it’s not enough. Organizers told Recode they want to see Amazon set a more aggressive plan for the company to reduce its carbon emissions to zero; they want it to stop selling its cloud services to the oil and gas industry; and they want it to stop donating to politicians who deny climate change’s existence. (**Bezos said he would “take a hard look” at whether donations are going toward climate-change deniers** but made no promises.) Amazon declined to comment directly on the strike. “I would love to be in a meeting where one of the criteria or goals around the design that I’m proposing is, ‘How much carbon does this remove from our footprint?’” Weston Fribley, a software engineer at Amazon and one of the organizers of Amazon Employees for Climate Justice, the group organizing the walkout, told Recode. “Our work is interesting and challenging, and it’s tough to see the company not prioritizing things that are so important.” **Employees from several other major tech companies have joined Amazon’s lead, calling on their companies to change business practices to reduce climate change**. So far, 700 **Google** employees have pledged to walk out, along with others at several other major tech companies including **Microsoft, Facebook, and Twitter**. **(Google announced a day ahead of the walkout that it’s making a major investment in wind and solar energy.)** These employees’ **coordinated involvement is a sign of how far the growing tech labor movement has come since rank-and-file workers began organizing over the past several years**. In 2019, as public and political scrutiny of their companies increases, **these employees have mobilized to pressure their companies on political issues ranging from selling AI tech military use, providing products to oppressive governments, and discrimination and harassment in the workplace**. Several leaders of the Amazon protest say they were inspired by last year’s Google walkout in which 20,000 employees left work to protest the company’s payout of high-powered executives accused of sexually harassing employees. The walkout was a historic moment for tech activism and the largest-ever company protest by workers in the industry. **It’s remarkable that employees at Amazon, known for a grueling work culture in which employees put on a unified public front and are sworn to secrecy, are now leading a protest in their sector.** “**The tech climate strike is proof that tech workers across the industry are becoming more confident in our power to shape the future,”** the organizing group Tech Workers Coalition (TWC) said in a statement to Recode. TWC helped coordinate employees at major companies who planned to join Amazon workers in participating in the strike. “This is a historic milestone for our industry and shows that we will only continue getting stronger until tech treats everyone equitably.” **The walkout is indeed a sign of a growing, cross-industry movement by employees to move the needle on their employer’s business practices on social and political issues**. A few months ago, employees at e-commerce home decor giant Wayfair walked out of work to demand their employer stop providing beds to children in US immigration detention facilities. Similarly, employees at the advertising firm Ogilvy protested their company’s contract with US Border Patrol, prompting the CEO to hold a lengthy meeting addressing concerns to a room full of angry employees. (Neither Ogilvy nor Wayfair have said they will cancel their contracts.) And at Amazon, workers have also formed a “We Won’t Build It” organizing group to protest the company’s Amazon Web Services contracts with companies like Palantir, which provide a technological infrastructure that helps US immigration agencies enforce deportation policies. **At a time when many of these workers are feeling doubtful about politicians’ ability to pass laws enforcing changes they want to see, they’re increasingly calling on their employers to set the ethical standard**. “**It goes beyond climate change**,” one Amazon employee who plans to walk out and who requested anonymity told Recode. “It demonstrates that, ‘Hey, you guys can organize on something together that you feel strongly about that maybe your managers don’t like but that you think is the right thing to do.’

6) They can’t solve Horowitz – other countries are developing LAWs and no international follow-on ev means it doesn’t apply. AND the US can just buy the weapons from companies in other countries.

#### 7) Here’s what they didn’t include on Terstein: –of alt causes. Tech is being *VASTLY* outlobbied by Big Oil. Independently, Big Tech just *doesn’t care*, so they won’t change their policies.

Teirstein ’21 [Zoya, “Big Tech says it wants to solve climate change. Its lobbying dollars say otherwise.”, 01-28-2021, Grist, https://grist.org/politics/big-tech-says-it-wants-to-solve-climate-change-its-lobbying-dollars-say-otherwise/]//pranav

What’s more, tech companies are being vastly out-lobbied by Big Oil, the InfluenceMap report found. Chevron, Shell, ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, and BP directed, on average, 38 percent of their legislative lobbying to climate-related policies between 2019 and 2020. Much of that lobbying activity was, unsurprisingly, against climate policy. And during Donald Trump’s presidency, when the federal government did virtually nothing to address the climate crisis and some states tried to pick up the slack, the five major tech companies engaged on climate policy at the state level in less than half of the 22 states where they are headquartered, own data centers, or have regional offices. “We worked from a list of almost 50 major climate bills that have been proposed in states over the last few years, and we found that Big Tech engaged on only a couple of them,” Kendra Haven, U.S. engagement manager for InfluenceMap, told Grist. Apple, Google, and Facebook, all headquartered in California, did almost no lobbying in the state, which has an aggressive climate agenda. Chevron, by comparison, also based in California, dedicated 51 percent of its disclosed lobbying activities to climate policy there. “These companies have statements that indicate climate is a shared problem that needs to be addressed by society as a whole,” Dylan Tanner, executive director of InfluenceMap, told Grist. “The question to investors and stakeholders in the tech companies is, given this huge power and then your statements on climate, do you want to leave it up to a few oil and gas companies to decide the broad agenda on climate?”

#### 8] Also proves Big Tech is all talk in response to strikes which takes out Baca and Greene. Don’t let them wiggle out of this their solvency ev is about the Amazon statement – Westwood is blue.

**1AC Terstein 21** [Terstein, Zoya, 1-28-2021, "Big Tech says it wants to solve climate change. Its lobbying dollars say otherwise.," <https://grist.org/politics/big-tech-says-it-wants-to-solve-climate-change-its-lobbying-dollars-say-otherwise/>] //DDPT

It’s hard to quantify political power, but it’s safe to say that big tech companies wield [a lot](https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/what-can-america-learn-from-europe-about-regulating-big-tech) of it. A decade ago, companies like Amazon and Google employed [just a smattering of lobbyists](https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/01/22/amazon-facebook-google-lobbying-2019/) who worked to influence D.C. policymakers on their behalf. Now, the Big Five tech companies — Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, Google, and Amazon — spend tens of millions of dollars each year lobbying Congress. In 2020, they collectively spent [$61 million domestically lobbying](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/22/facebook-spent-more-on-lobbying-than-any-other-big-tech-company-in-2020.html) on issues that included international tax policies, copyright reform, and content policy. Only a tiny fraction of Big Tech’s legislative lobbying might is going toward advocating for climate policy, according to a [new report](https://influencemap.org/report/Big-Tech-and-Climate-Policy-afb476c56f217ea0ab351d79096df04a) from the think tank InfluenceMap. Between 2019 and 2020, just 4 percent of Apple, Alphabet (Google’s parent company), Amazon, Facebook, and Microsoft’s self-reported lobbying activities targeted climate-related policy at the federal level. In Europe, these companies do even less lobbying on climate — InfluenceMap says they have been “largely silent on the EU’s ambitious climate policy agenda.” This halfhearted effort to promote climate-friendly policies stands in sharp contrast to Big Tech’s much-publicized promises to lead the rest of the business sector, and indeed the entire world, toward a greener future. Apple, for instance, revealed a plan last summer to make its supply chain and products carbon neutral by 2030, something CEO Tim Cook said will be good for the planet and its products. “With our commitment to carbon neutrality, we hope to be a ripple in the pond that creates a much larger change,” [Cook said](https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2020/07/apple-commits-to-be-100-percent-carbon-neutral-for-its-supply-chain-and-products-by-2030/). In 2019, Amazon unveiled a climate plan that aims to get the company to meet the decarbonization requirements of the Paris Agreement 10 years early. “If we can do this, anyone can do this,” Amazon founder Jeff Bezos [said](https://www.cnbc.com/2019/09/19/jeff-bezos-speaks-about-amazon-sustainability-in-washington-dc.html) at the time. “Climate change is a crisis we will only be able to address if we all work together on a global scale,” Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg [said](https://sustainability.fb.com/). Facebook aims to make its global operations [net-zero](https://sustainability.fb.com/), starting with making its value chain net-zero by 2030. “We will support new public policy initiatives to accelerate carbon reduction and removal opportunities,” Microsoft president Brad Smith [wrote](https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2020/01/16/microsoft-will-be-carbon-negative-by-2030/) in January last year, outlining seven principles the company will adhere to in its quest to remove more emissions than it produces by 2030 and eliminate all of its emissions since 1975 by mid-century. “We know that no company, no matter how ambitious, can solve a challenge like climate change alone,” Google said in its [sustainability report](https://www.gstatic.com/gumdrop/sustainability/carbon-free-by-2030.pdf) last September. It’s clear that these companies like to talk about climate action being a collective effort. But despite the many detailed climate plans and pledges, Big Tech has done strikingly little government-level work to bring about the global-scale climate action it says it wants to see. The little lobbying the Big Five do has been largely focused on technical rules that are directly tied to these companies’ abilities to stick to their climate commitments, like procuring enough renewable energy. Meanwhile, the world is [nowhere near](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/12/world-is-in-danger-of-missing-paris-climate-target-summit-is-warned) where it needs to be to meet the climate targets outlined in the Paris Agreement. “Relative to their scale, they invest very little in saving the planet,” Nic Bryant, a spokesperson for the climate activist group Extinction Rebellion, told Grist, referring to tech companies. “These companies could and should be leading the way.”

#### 9] No warrant for Big Tech lobbying key because it’s about all businesses, but it does say companies are insufficient alone AND that they would backlash against climate legislation. Independently, their strategy empirically fails, but ONLY the disad solves their impacts– Westwood is blue

**1AC Winston 19** [Winston, Andrew, Harvard Business Review, 10-15-2019, "Corporate Action on Climate Change Has to Include Lobbying," <https://hbr.org/2019/10/corporate-action-on-climate-change-has-to-include-lobbying>] //DDPT

The business world has recently started acting on climate change in earnest. Hundreds of the world’s largest companies have agreed to use [100% renewable energy](http://there100.org/companies) and set [targets](https://sciencebasedtargets.org/companies-taking-action/) that commit them to reduce emissions at the pace that science demands. Companies are [buying many gigawatts of renewable energy](https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikescott/2019/09/09/companies-continue-to-drive-demand-for-clean-energy/amp/?__twitter_impression=true), slashing their own energy use, and innovating to create products that help customers reduce their emissions. But it’s not nearly enough. The climate crisis is upon us, and there’s no time to wait for voluntary corporate action to tackle the challenge. We need the collective will that government provides. Many in business will rebel against this idea, but we are long past the point where free markets alone could solve the challenge in time (if such a possibility ever even existed). Business needs to, [in the words of Environmental Defense Fund president Fred Krupp](https://www.wri.org/news/2019/10/release-major-environmental-groups-call-businesses-lead-climate-policy), “unleash the most powerful tool they have to fight climate change: their political influence.” This is the logic and imperative behind [an announcement today](https://medium.com/@timetolead/its-time-to-lead-on-climate-policy-6f849eb114ba) from 11 environmental and sustainability organizations that have significant influence on the world’s largest companies and on policymakers. Using a full-page ad in The New York Times, the group is calling for business to advocate for policies, at all levels of government, that are consistent with what climate science is telling us we need to do — what they’re calling a “science-based climate policy agenda.” The statement also calls for companies to adjust their trade associations’ advocacy to align with climate science. (The signatories are the heads of BSR, C2ES, CDP, Ceres, Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, The Climate Group, The Nature Conservancy, the Union of Concerned Scientists, World Resources Institute, and WWF U.S.) In support of this public plea, the Sustainable Food Policy Alliance — which includes food and consumer products giants Nestle, Unilever, Mars, and Danone — is running the same letter in Roll Call with the message “we agree.” The new statement is also building on a [similar call to action last month](https://www.ceres.org/sites/default/files/Final%20Generic%20SIGN-ON%20PACKET%20Investor%20Expectations%20on%20Climate%20Lobbying%20sign-on%20packet%20September%202019.pdf) from 200 investors with more than $6 trillion in assets. It’s about time. Companies have long allowed a chasm to open up between their own statements and actions on climate and what their government relations and lobbying teams are doing in the halls of power. Most of these companies have also conveniently ignored that their own industry and trade associations have generally been fighting climate policy every step of the way. It’s an important discussion to have right now and this initiative could have an impact. I want to offer some thoughts on the context and where the policy discussion could, or should, go. This isn’t the first attempt. In 2006, some of these same NGOs formed the [U.S. Climate Action Partnership](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Climate_Action_Partnership) with notable business partners such as Alcoa, BP, Caterpillar, Dupont, and GE. While the call to action was vague, it was an important message from some heavy industry players that they wanted pro-climate policies. But when the Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade climate bill failed in the U.S. Senate in 2009, and climate policy entered the wilderness for years, the partnership petered away. Over the last decade, the nonprofit Ceres, a signer on this latest statement, has convened the Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy, or [BICEP](https://www.ceres.org/networks/ceres-policy-network), to bring company leaders in to talk to legislators. And more recently, a group of scientists and former high-ranking government officials (mostly Republican), launched the [Climate Leadership Council](https://www.clcouncil.org/), which is pushing for [a package of policies](https://www.clcouncil.org/our-plan/) that includes a carbon fee and “dividend” that returns most of the revenue to citizens. But none of these have really gotten the kind of traction we need. This time could be different. A few shifts in the world may make this push more effective. First, climate change is real and affecting businesses today. We’re not just discussing a model of future weather and costs; we’re seeing very real and massively expensive disruptions to operations, supply chains, and communities. Second, with increasing transparency, it’s much harder to hide the disconnect between what companies are saying they’re doing and what they’re actually advocating for behind the scenes. A [just-released analysis of corporate lobbying](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/10/exclusive-carmakers-opponents-climate-action-us-europe-emissions) shows that major auto companies, while talking up their efforts on electric vehicles, have lobbied aggressively to fight any real climate policy. Third, stakeholders — customers, employees, and communities — are demanding more action and are less tolerant of inconsistencies on this issue. Recently [Microsoft employees staged a walkout](https://www.theverge.com/2019/9/19/20874081/microsoft-employees-climate-change-letter-protest) for climate, and almost 8,700 Amazon employees have [signed an open letter](https://medium.com/@amazonemployeesclimatejustice/public-letter-to-jeff-bezos-and-the-amazon-board-of-directors-82a8405f5e38) calling on their CEO to lead on the issue. (Amazon then announced it would go climate-neutral by 2040 and [buy 100,000 electric vans](https://www.freightwaves.com/news/amazon-announces-purchase-of-100000-ev-delivery-vehicles-from-rivian-the-largest-order-ever)). There’s clearly pressure on business to take a broader role in society, which is why about 200 big-company CEOs signed a [statement from the Business Roundtable](https://hbr.org/2019/08/is-the-business-roundtable-statement-just-empty-rhetoric) pledging that they would focus on stakeholder needs, not just shareholder value.

#### 10) Their workers deter ev is about workers signing a letter NOT going on strike… - Westwood is blue

**1AC Skolnik 3/16** [Jon Skolnik, 3-16-2021, "Big Tech is fueling an AI "arms race": It could be terrifying — or just a giant scam," Salon, <https://www.salon.com/2021/03/16/big-tech-is-fueling-an-ai-arms-race-it-could-be-terrifying--or-just-a-giant-scam/>] //PT

Early in the 2020 presidential campaign, Democratic candidates Pete Buttigieg and Andrew Yang [tried to build political momentum](https://venturebeat.com/2019/11/21/buttigieg-and-yang-say-ai-is-essential-to-u-s-national-security/) around the claim that the United States is losing ground in a new arms race with China — not over nuclear missiles or conventional arms but artificial intelligence, or AI. Around the same time, former President Trump [launched](https://thebulletin.org/2019/02/trump-orders-some-sort-of-vague-action-in-the-ai-arms-race/) the American AI Initiative, which sought to marshal AI technologies against "adversarial nations for the security of our economy and our nation," as Trump's top technology adviser [put it](https://www.wired.com/story/a-national-strategy-for-ai/). Buttigieg, Yang and Trump may have agreed about little else, but they appeared to go along with the nonpartisan think tanks and public policy organizations –– many of them funded by weapons contractors –– that have worked to promote the supposedly alarming possibility that China and Russia may be "beating" the U.S. in defense applications for AI. Hawkish or "centrist" research organizations like the [Center for New American Security](https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/understanding-chinas-ai-strategy) (CNAS), the [Brookings Institution](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/11/06/artificial-intelligence-and-the-security-dilemma/) and the [Heritage Foundation](https://www.heritage.org/technology/commentary/america-must-counter-chinas-military-civil-union), despite their policy and ideological differences in many areas, have argued that America must ratchet up spending on AI research and development, lest it lose its place as No. 1. Just last week, the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI) published a sweeping 756-page [report](https://www.nscai.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Full-Report-Digital-1.pdf), culminating two years of work following the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, asking Congress to authorize a $40 billion federal investment in AI research and development, which the NSCAI calls "a modest down payment." The commission also urged President Biden to reject the push for a global ban on AI-enabled autonomous weapons — a ban proposed by thousands of scientists and thought leaders in an [open letter](https://www.vice.com/en/article/nzep5k/thousands-of-scientists-say-we-need-a-global-ban-on-autonomous-weapons) written in 2015. Concerned about the threat of increasing AI sophistication in Russia and China, the commission warned lawmakers that America "will not be able to defend against AI-enabled threats without ubiquitous AI capabilities and new warfighting paradigms." It offered a laundry list of recommendations to put these paradigms into action, including a "Steering Committee on Emerging Technology" within the Defense Department, an accredited university designed to produce and recruit tech talent for the defense sector, and a ramped-up investment in semiconductor manufacturing designed to keep the U.S. "two generations" ahead of China. One question, however, was not directly answered in the NSCAI's gigantic report or in all the think-tank policy papers that preceded it: Is this science fiction-flavored arms race against largely imaginary Chinese and Russian techno-weapons of the future really necessary? Is it remotely a good idea, or likely to improve the lives of any human beings on the planet? (Excepting, that is, those who stand to profit from it.) Jim Naureckas, the editor of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) and a frequent critic of military spending, told Salon in an interview that framing of AI development as an "arms race" is irresponsible, but in the larger sweep of history is also nothing new. "The whole military industry is driven by fear as a motivator," he said. "There's a logic to an arms race that's different from the logic of arms control." After its release, the NSCAI report was greeted with a deluge of largely uncritical media coverage, most of it echoing concerns about the U.S. losing the "AI arms race" — a term not mentioned in the report itself, but certainly evoked by its framing. "Unless America acts now," a Washington Post [headline](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/unless-america-acts-now-china-could-trounce-it-in-artificial-intelligence/2021/03/09/81f99508-805b-11eb-9ca6-54e187ee4939_story.html) read, "China could trounce it in artificial intelligence." "Which country is emerging as the global leader in AI?" [echoed](https://techhq.com/2021/03/which-country-is-emerging-as-the-global-leader-in-ai/) TechHQ. "America wakes up to the China threat," [chimed](https://www.wsj.com/articles/america-wakes-up-to-the-china-threat-11615311587) the Wall Street Journal. As Naureckas pointed out, the notion that that the U.S. will soon fall behind its global competitors in military technology is a tried-and-true scare tactic, employed at various times in slightly different registers by both Democrats and Republicans. In reality, U.S. military spending remains mind-bogglingly high. For the 2020 fiscal year, the Trump administration [approved](https://www.cnbc.com/2019/12/21/trump-signs-738-billion-defense-bill.html) a military budget of $738 billion, a $21 billion increase from the previous year and it passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, facing only 48 "no" votes in the House and eight in the Senate. In 2019, the militarized budget accounted for [64.5 percent](https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2020/militarized-budget-2020/) of all federal discretionary spending. The U.S. has 800 military bases on foreign soil, far more than any other country in the world. According to [Military.com](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/02/24/5-most-powerful-armies-world.html#:~:text=In%20what%20shouldn't%20be,and%20742%20special%20mission%20aircraft.), America is the world leader in every significant category of military hardware, and has roughly 1.4 million active-duty military personnel. In 2020, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) [found](https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2020/05/the-united-states-spends-more-on-defense-than-the-next-10-countries-combined) that the U.S. allocated more to its military budget than the next 10 nations combined. American military spending is about 2.7 times greater than that of China — which has a much larger population — and more than 10 times higher than Russia's, or that of any other single country. Meanwhile, bureaucratic and operational waste within the defense budget abound. In 2016, for example, it was discovered that the Pentagon had [buried an internal study](https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/pentagon-buries-evidence-of-125-billion-in-bureaucratic-waste/2016/12/05/e0668c76-9af6-11e6-a0ed-ab0774c1eaa5_story.html) finding that it had spent some $125 billion in wasteful business operations. More recently, it was [discovered](https://www.vice.com/en/article/939kxa/some-things-we-could-have-done-with-the-billions-wasted-on-a-broken-f-35) that the Pentagon's F-35 fighter jet program — which costed taxpayers somewhere in the neighborhood of $1.5 trillion — has been riddled with software glitches and operational failures since 2006, rendering an untold number of fighter jets (each one costing $100 million) not flight-ready. In spite of all its administrative bloat and operational dysfunction, the military remains exceptionally well-funded. Why, then, would the NSCAI insist it needs billions more for a hypothetical arms race against badly underfunded opponents? The report's authors may tell a better story than the report itself. Jack Poulson, a former Google employee who [resigned](https://theintercept.com/2018/09/13/google-china-search-engine-employee-resigns/) over the company's plan to launch a censored version of its search engine in China, told Salon that profit motives is deeply entrenched in the NSCAI report. "It should not come as a surprise that a commission packed with tech billionaires would call for increased intellectual property protections, oppose regulation (including on Lethal Autonomous Weapons), propose toothless ethics principles, and call for more federal funding of their industry," Poulson said in a statement. Indeed, many commission members are past and present tech executives of companies on the fore of AI — companies that have much to gain from future contracting deals with the Pentagon. The commission's chair, for example, is Eric Schmidt, the former CEO of Google, who remains — as Poulson pointed out — a major shareholder in Alphabet, Google's parent company. Google's head of AI, Andrew Moore, is also a member of the NSCAI. Google already has an extensive history of working with the Pentagon. According to The Intercept, in a federally-funded $70 million program called Project Maven, Google [developed](https://theintercept.com/2018/03/06/google-is-quietly-providing-ai-technology-for-drone-strike-targeting-project/) "algorithmic warfare initiative to apply artificial intelligence solutions to drone targeting." The company [expecting](https://www.theverge.com/2018/6/1/17418406/google-maven-drone-imagery-ai-contract-expire) that revenue would steadily rise from $15 million to $250 million a year for such defense projects. In April of 2018, however, 3,000 Google employees signed an open letter decrying the company's involvement in defense technology, a move that eventually led to Google's ultimate decision to back out of the deal. Schmidt strongly objected to Google's decision, calling it an "[aberration](https://nypost.com/2021/03/02/ai-panel-urges-us-to-boost-tech-skills-amid-chinas-rise/)" within the tech industry, which he felt was otherwise inclined to collaborate with the Defense Department. Former Undersecretary of the Navy Robert Work, the vice chairman of NSCAI, called Google's decision "hypocritical," [using language](https://www.voanews.com/silicon-valley-technology/former-us-defense-official-says-google-has-stepped-moral-hazard) that suggested a new cold war is already underway: "Anything that's going on in the AI center in China is going to the Chinese government and then will ultimately end up in the hands of the Chinese military." Other members of the commission include Oracle CEO Safra Catz, Microsoft chief scientific officer Eric Horvitz, and Andrew Jassy, the future CEO of Amazon Web Services, all of whom received cloud awards as part of the CIA's Commercial Cloud Enterprise (C2E), as Poulson noted. Oracle, Amazon and Microsoft, in fact, are currently involved in an acrimonious legal battle over a $10 billion cloud-computing contract called the Joint Enterprise Defense Initiative (JEDI). The deal was initially considered to be "gift-wrapped" for Amazon until Oracle butted in, [alleging improprieties](https://www.extremetech.com/computing/320577-pentagon-may-dump-10-billion-jedi-program-over-microsoft-amazon-fight). In an odd turn of events, the Pentagon awarded the contract to Microsoft, prompting Amazon to sue the federal government for anti-Amazon bias, based on ex-President Trump's overheated rhetoric. When it comes to securing Big Tech's enormous future contracts with the Pentagon, it appears that Jassy, Catz and Horvitz have set aside their mutual grievances for the time being Other board members of NSCAI include Gilman Louie and Christopher Darby, who are the founder and vice president (respectively) of a CIA-funded nonprofit called In-Q-Tel, which invests money in private companies who are developing technologies that might be useful to the intelligence community. According to a Wall Street Journal [investigation](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-cias-venture-capital-firm-like-its-sponsor-operates-in-the-shadows-1472587352) from 2015, half of In-Q-Tel's trustees were financially connected to private companies in which In-Q-Tel had invested. Another board member, William Mark, a vice president of SRI International, has served on the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), a government-run program that [partners with a variety of private companies and research institutions](http://www.darpa.mil/about-us/about-darpa) to "make pivotal investments in breakthrough technologies for national security." DARPA has awarded SRI numerous contracts for the development of speech recognition, translation and, most recently, [deep-fake recognition systems](https://techcrunch.com/2018/04/30/deepfakes-fake-videos-darpa-sri-international-media-forensics/). In other words, nearly everyone involved in preparing or supporting the NSCAI report would seem likely to benefit from the perception that the U.S. is falling behind other nations in vital defense technology. The Defense Department, Poulson told Salon, "prefers to run the race as if it is losing — which happens to increase military budgets, justify post-government consulting careers and help tech CEOs oppose regulation." It's only natural that government authorities would seek out industry experts to consult on AI projects — it's a fast-developing field that almost no one outside the tech world understands. Poulson wonders, however, "whether the U.S. will give human rights organizations — such as Human Rights Watch and the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots — as much of a seat at the table as it does tech billionaires." The very fact that the NSCAI is stacked with panel members with an obvious incentive to weaponize new technologies raises the question whether there needs to be an AI "arms race" at all. That term, of course, harkens back to Cold War hysteria surrounding the threat of nuclear annihilation, which led U.S. lawmakers to grow unduly concerned with the "missile gap," a widely held misconception that the Soviet Union was outpacing the U.S. with superior ballistic missile capabilities. (As intelligence sources knew even at the time, the Soviet nuclear arsenal was in bad shape and much smaller than advertised.) Arms control strategies, in fact, may be a more effective strategy in the AI realm, just as it was with nuclear missiles, especially given that America already collaborates heavily with China in AI research. As Graham Webster [wrote recently](https://www.technologyreview.com/2018/12/19/138211/the-us-and-china-arent-in-a-cold-war-so-stop-calling-it-that/) in MIT Tech Review: Unlike the US and USSR, in which science and technology developed on largely independent tracks, the US and China are part of a globally intertwined ecosystem. Even if the US and China cut off trade with each other, both countries would still have to worry about security risks from components, since risks along the supply chain exist everywhere. [For example](https://www.newamerica.org/cybersecurity-initiative/reports/essay-reframing-the-us-china-ai-arms-race/problem-1-arms-race-framing-is-winner-takes-all), Alibaba, a tech giant on the forefront of AI, has multiple offices in the U.S., and Google AI chief Jeff Dean is an adviser at China's Tsinghua University, which opened an Institute for Artificial Intelligence in June 2018. Stanford University's Artificial Intelligence lab has a partnership with one of China's biggest retailers. In other words, an arms race in which the two nations are locked in silos of information, research and development is not just ethically dubious but logistically impossible. Will China and Russia explore uses of AI in weapons of the future? Almost certainly — both countries have already [signaled](https://www.theverge.com/2017/9/4/16251226/russia-ai-putin-rule-the-world) movement in that direction. But if American politicians and scientists want to maximize the potential of AI, framing its development in terms of an international "arms race" seems like a strategic and philosophical mistake on a huge scale. AI has the potential to revolutionize [health care](https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/uk-hospital-first-use-ai-cancer-treatment-tool#:~:text=The%20technology%20computes%20hospital%20data,on%20the%20quality%20of%20care.), [education](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/technology/ai-innovation-privacy-seniors-education.html), [climate science](https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2021/01/04/how-artificial-intelligence-can-power-climate-change-strategy/?sh=69174b6a3482) and many other fields — and those things all play a fundamental role in national security. But these new technologies will not make America more secure if they are understood as weapons of international combat.

#### The plan destroys all AI R&D in the name of potential military application

New ’18 [Joshua, was a senior policy analyst at the Center for Data Innovation, “Fighting Military AI Research Undermines Social and Economic Progress”, 10-19-2018, https://datainnovation.org/2018/10/fighting-military-ai-research-undermines-social-and-economic-progress/]PM

These and other projects are part of DARPA’s “AI Next” campaign, a $2 billion initiative to “advance the state-of-the-art” in AI. These R&D efforts will benefit the military’s use of AI, to be sure, but will also benefit applications that generate social and economic value in countless ways. Resisting such efforts due to their potential military application is fundamentally a disagreement about the ethics of defense activities and warfare. Debating how nations should govern and use autonomous weapons has its place in policymaking, but sabotaging important AI research that can serve the public good as a means of avoiding confronting these issues head on is counterproductive and will harm innovation. There are compelling reasons to pursue the development of AI explicitly for defense purposes, as countries such as China and Russia develop autonomous systems of their own. However, as policymakers responsible for funding the federal government’s R&D activities evaluate agency budgets, they should be careful to recognize that this technology is not just about killer robots: AI research in defense can create immeasurable benefits that can be broadly enjoyed by the public and shying away from these efforts will leave Americans worse off.

#### AI is the ONLY way to preserve biodiversity – traditional methods fail

Joshi 10/08 [Naveen, Founder and CEO of Allerin, a software solutions provider that delivers innovative and agile solutions that enable to automate, inspire and impress, “CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY WITH AI”, 10-08-2020, https://www.bbntimes.com/technology/conserving-biodiversity-with-ai]PM

The use of AI for biodiversity conservation can help prevent the extinction of plants and animals and thus maintain a stable ecosystem. The extinction of plants and animals such as Rhynia, Pluchea Glutinosa, Dodo, Great Auk, Tasmanian Tiger, and Western Black Rhinoceros in recent years is a matter of great concern since it adversely affects our ecosystem. Every species of plants and animals is important. Why? The existence of both plants and animals has always been vital to humans. Extinction of organisms disrupts the food chain and hence affects the ecosystem. Therefore, humans are very much dependent on plants and animals for survival. Hence precautionary measures should be taken to maintain the stability of the ecosystem. The traditional biodiversity conservation methods have not shown much impact lately. Thus, the use of technology such as ML or AI for biodiversity conservation can help prevent further extinction of plants and animals. The use of AI can help prevent the extinction of endangered plants and animals. Let's see how AI can be used for biodiversity conservation: With the recent development of AI-powered devices for the conservation of animals, we can now prevent wildlife extinction. After the extinction of western African rhinoceros, African elephants are next on the verge of going extinct due to the involvement of extensive poaching. According to a report by HuffPost, African elephants may be extinct by the year 2020. Due to this reason, an American multinational corporation and technology company has taken a step forward to stop poachers attack African elephants. The company has come with an AI-based technology security system that promotes anti-poaching. The AI-based technology system uses a camera that detects poachers planning to attack an animal and subsequently generates an alert to the park rangers in real time. According to the Wild Heart Wildlife Foundation, one elephant is killed every 15 minutes due to illegal hunting. Hence, this AI-based system can prevent illegal hunting of animals to a great extent. The AI-based system uses a vision processor with neural network algorithms to detects an object and classify images inside the camera. According to the company that has invested in this technology the AI-based system has helped cut down poaching at Serengeti National Park in Africa. The AI-based system has detected members from over 20 different poaching gangs within the first 15 months of its installation. Similarly, a number of such AI-based devices are manufactured by technology companies that can greatly help in animal conservation. Plants are very beneficial for human lives and greatly help in fulfilling our necessities. They help fulfill our basic necessities as they can provide us with food, shelter, and medicine. The more the number of trees present in an environment, the greater is the amount of oxygen produced. Hence, plants greatly help in maintaining the stability of the ecosystem. Based on a report by Mongabay, according to scientists, one in every five plant species are on the verge of being extinct. This clearly implies how important it is to conserve plants. The California Academy of Sciences and National Geographic Society have jointly developed an AI-based networking platform that can help in the conservation of plants globally. The AI-based platform allows its users to click and share photos of various species of plants in real time. It also allows the other community members to identify the photos of the specific plant and confirm the plant's presence, whether if such a plant already exists. In this way, the AI-based networking platform can help discover new species of plants worldwide. This technology has proved to be a sigh of relief for scientists. It used to take hundreds of years by scientists for the collection of data about various types of plants and their existence. Now, with the help of this AI-based platform, scientists can collect data much effectively and on a large scale, and thus they can suggest measures to prevent the extinction of plants.