



Human Dignity and Emerging Technologies Act

Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-Georgia)

THE PROBLEM

Artificial intelligence is advancing rapidly, with the potential to transform daily life and our understanding of what it means to be human. Yet the government lacks an institution dedicated to examining the deeper ethical questions raised by such technologies and to identifying threats to the dignity of the human person. Individual agencies may address these ethical issues within their respective jurisdictions, but Congress and the public could benefit from a body that advises Americans on how to respond to such concerns within federal science and technology policy.

THE SOLUTION

The Human Dignity and Emerging Technologies Act establishes the United States Commission on Human Dignity within the legislative branch to advise on the ethical and policy dimensions of emerging technologies like AI. This non-regulatory commission, consisting of members across the political spectrum, would stay abreast of technological developments, particularly in bioethics. Through public hearings, periodic reports, and targeted advisory opinions, the Commission would defend the dignity of the human person and encourage humility in federal policymaking while recognizing the importance of technological innovation amid geopolitical competition.

1. Creates a Bipartisan, Bicameral Commission. Establishes a 17-member bipartisan advisory commission composed of experts in fields like philosophy, ethics, civil rights, religion, social sciences, science, technology, medicine, and law appointed by the President, congressional leaders, and relevant congressional committees.

2. Brings Ethical Analysis to Emerging Technologies. Directs the Commission to advise on AI, robotics, biotechnology, neurotechnology, emerging clinical technologies, and other science or tech developments. The Commission would hold public hearings and issue reports and recommendations, with the opportunity for individual members to offer dissenting views.

3. Strengthens Congressional Oversight of Federal Science and Tech Policy. Ensures Congress is informed about potential threats to human dignity within federal science and technology policy, while providing a forum for conversation. Relevant congressional committees would be able to request evaluations of science and technology programs or policies or to call on the Commission to produce information and testimony.

4. Promotes a Timely Public Conversation. Authorizes annual appropriations for the staff and facilities needed to sustain a national conversation about artificial intelligence and human dignity, much like previous bioethics commissions. The Commission would sunset in 2032, allowing Congress to reconsider its utility and effectiveness as the technology develops.