State of Vermont Artificial Intelligence Task Force
Meeting Minutes
February 22 , 2018
The Montpelier Room
1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Members present: James Lyall; Honorable John A. Dooley; Milo Cress; Mark Combs; Joe Segale; Nick Grimley; Jill Charbonneau; Trey Dobson, MD; John Cohn; Brian Cina; Donna Rizzo

Members missing: Christopher Herrick; Michael Schirling

Witnesses: Kade Crockford; Jonathan Rejewski; Brandon Del Poso; Stephanie Seguino

Staff present: Kayla Dewey

Others present: Edward Wetherby

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12:10 Task Force convenes

(NOTE: There were technical challenges at the start of this meeting that took the attention of the minute taker. Minutes for the beginning of the meeting are not as thorough as other minutes taken for this task force.)

Presentation from witness Jonathan Rejewski

Presentation from witness Brandon Del Poso

12:46
Some risks with automated policing-

The NYPD created real time crime center. It did not collect big data and did not use predictive policing. It made recommendations for hot-spot policing, or where resources should be placed based on where problems are likely to be.

Surveillance is another potential issue with AI. Hours of police officer time is taken up with looking through hours of surveillance footage. AI can help quickly identify the images that the law enforcers are looking for.

License plate readers are another example of video surveillance

The internet of things has some law enforcement potential. Example: people's testimonies have been impeached by data found on personal devices.
Example: Police vehicles are tracked for various reasons.

Autonomous vehicles, drones, and bots may be used by the PD, but will be cost driven.

Q - Where should this go? Should this be legislated? Should we encourage this or stop this? Should we have a commission?

A - We are concerned about how AI will be used. The PD wants to ensure transparency. Law enforcement doesn't want to be perceived as having access to all of everyone's emails, etc. Accountability and public trust is important for the PD. A priority should be transparency with constituents.

A - We need AI to handle data. More data has been created in the past 6 months than ever has in history. AI should be adopted in ways that are compatible with goals of a progressive community like public safety, innovation, etc.

Q - How secure is information for counter attacks? The vulnerabilities for this technology is not well understood. How do you think about that?

A - Security is already a challenge. There are databases that you can follow that publishes locations of cell phones. AI can be used for good or evil.

Q - Could someone take data collected by the PD and use it?

A - It is an absolute concern. It is hard to manage the threat of attack.

Q - When you look at companies, we have settled on the idea that the good ones de-identify us and the bad ones keep our identities connected to the data. In PD, is there a capacity to de-identify us? How can we be sure people who aren't of interest are not tracked?

Q- Target marketing uses data from credit card swipes and data collected from TVs. Should the PD be able to use this data?

Q - What about using data that you already have access to? Would the PD track airline tickets and uber, etc. to find bad guys?

A - There was a Supreme court discussion after law enforcement put a tracker in a car. The court made the decision that it was unlawful for detectives to put a device on a car without a warrant. The argument against this decision was that it is lawful for a detective to follow a car, so using technology to save time should also be allowed. The difference has to do with the opportunity cost. It is easy to put a tracker on every car. It is much harder to justify using the detective's time to follow more vehicles.

The DMV can cooperate with phone providers to learn traffic patterns, but personal data is to be kept anonymous.

Q - How will AI impact employment in the PD?

A - I can't predict that. I work to save money and also technology creates jobs in the department. It's not possible to predict.

Q - AI will be performing more functions that take over jobs of a human.

A - Yes, AI will take over some tasks, but might also be creating more efficiently. It will also carry deficits with it.

Presentation from witness: Kade Crockford
- These tools replicate existing racial bias, in some cases amplifying them.
- We have a threshold concern that "farming out" decision making about incarceration.
- Does this tool embody or replicate bias?
- One intervention that the legislature make is to prioritize engaging the public. The public should be aware of what the government is doing and influence decision making.
- The Public ought to be involved with the procurement of local ordinances and create a community controlled police surveillance. The Public should be in the room when the decision about adopting surveillance technology is adopted.
- Police departments should not be making these decisions independently from the legislative branch.
- They require public approval.

Q - When a group wants to deploy tech. How standardized is communication of the types and uses of data? How easy is it to determine how much private information is derived?

A - I do not know. Seattle has a similar model to the one I am proposing here, which I could communicate at a later time. Language could have statements like - "license plate readers can only be at license plate level - cannot get data on people's faces."

A legislature could utilize algorithmic impact assessments. Using algorithms to discover the impact of technologies.

Q - That is being used by the government. Could it also be used by citizens? Could you point us at that? That could be pointing at a labeling law.

A - Those are two thoughts on how VT might create some new systems in the law to help facilitate the adoptions of this in a democratic manner. I have other examples on how AI will be used in criminal justice. For predictive tools, there need to be a process in place to determine if a community wants the tech to be used. There has been come academic work - paper "Dirty Data, Bad Predictions, etc…." which explains how bad inputs will produce bad outputs.

Machine learning works when you want to make the future look like the past. Counter to our current goals - racial justice, racial disparities - we want to be careful about exacerbating this.

One way that predictive policing tools could be interesting would be to examine police bias.

Risk assessment tools help to determine what someone needs to return to court. Example: This person might not return to court because they are homeless, carless, they have to be at work, etc. Tools can assist with justice and serve individuals. Prioritize use of machine learning to offer services instead of incarcerating people.

Facial recognition has done a bad job at recognizing dark skinned women. It is a problem.

1:34 BREAK

2:05 Task Force reconvenes
Task Force Discussion
- review of the meeting with the Senate Committee on Government Operations
- future directions for task force meetings

2:15
Presentation by witness Stephanie Seguino
Professor of Economics at UVM - Labor. Issues of wages, unemployment, and inequality.
(See power point presentation)

Q - Massive companies like Apple have billions of dollars that they are saving and not spending back into the economy.

A - The banking industry has massive reserves that they are not lending. Why? Growth inequality. If there are no buyers, there are no sellers.
You have shifted resources from those who spend a lot of money to those who save a lot of money. Why would they expand if there isn't a demand? They invest their money. This is financialization of the economy.
US economy is large enough to influence EU, Japan, and others and is able to address the issue of inequality.

Q - Question about where the jobs are. Will AI decrease low income jobs? How can we increase middle income jobs?

A - Low wage jobs aren't paid low because they're low skilled. Social workers, etc. dont have the bargaining power and that is the problem with these jobs. I'd like to puzzle on this question

Q - Retailers could be impacted by AI. They don't hire people full time because they save on paying benefits with part-time workers. These people do not make enough money to live. How are we going to change that?
And then there are people who need skilled people for the workforce. How do we transition?

A - you have enlarged the scope of the topic. This is an important Q, there isn't a middle wage job. It's about the bargaining power of middle wage jobs. There are things that people can do to increase their bargaining power. It's not a matter of targeting certain occupations. Jobs that are low wage tend to be jobs of women and people of color because the people that do them are less valued and not less skilled.

Q - We're not talking about the thing that happens. Wages go to the top.

A - The issue of job polarization is a real issue.

Q - When I think about minimum wage, I think about how it affects small businesses. Do you think raising the minimum wage is a a fair strategy in Vermont?

A - When you raise minimum wage, workers stay in their job longer, and their productivity increases. This is a savings for businesses.
I think like a macro economist. The problem that I see with the low incomes of many in Vermont is the enormous deficits, mental health, substance abuse, and impacts on children. The benefits of minimum wage in these social areas are why I am for raising the minimum wage.

I empathize from a small business perspective, but it would be a net gain. Workers at bottom of distribution spend 100% of their income. There are studies by Aaron Dubey who studies counties in the US and compares what happens when the minimum wage is changes. He finds that there are employment increases with increased wages.

Q - How do you increase the middle income or move it higher? I'm thinking of a stem career and if there is still growth there. Is a stem career still a sound place to put investment?

A - Yes, there will be job growth there. You've made me think with your question. And the country's economic history. My family is a family of immigrants and most have just a high school education. All are well off today from careers in factories and as accountants. They were the middle class until deindustrialization in the 70s. Jobs should pay a living wage and benefits.
It is more that a technology change that is causing the loss of jobs

Q - Do you think a tax contribution could be the correlated with the GDP?

A - That is what we do now. Corporations are taxed after their net sales and that is their contribution to the state. The question is what's the appropriate rate to charge.

3:05

Presentation by witness Christopher Curtis
The future of consumer protection is online. Vermont has a tradition for consumer protection, but covers an older way of doing business.In the new economy, data and consumer data is the new oil in the economy.
Services are now free because consumers use user data.
One of the challenges is that consumers have an idea that they're dealing with one entity, but they are actually sharing the information with other unknown entities.
Americans put out their data and it has been aggregated with lots of other data and consumers are unaware. There are privacy policies and no one reads them. The AGs office have spent two years on an audit and are barely scratching the surface.

Q - Do you think people really don't know?

A - Yes, and I will tell you why. There was a massive data breach with Equifax a few years ago and the AGs office received over 700 calls with questions about who are these people are and how did they had their info.
The AG did a study for the legislature, the consequence of which was Act 171 which regulated the industry. Data brokers now must register and users can see if there is an opt out policy and what the different levels of opt-out-ability are.

There is a hunger for people to know and understand this information. There are huge calls for transparency in government and here is this whole private industry that is not transparent.

There are now data breach rules about notification and PII, personally identifiable information, has been defined.

Q - How effective are you? How does this work with companies outside of Vermont? Do they have to comply?

A - This is jurisdiction question. If a company does business in Vermont they fall within Vermont's jurisdiction. If there was a company operating exclusively in Vermont through multiple transactions may end up with a Vermonters data. They may voluntarily comply with the law or we may not be able to enforce the law. In study committee, we heard a lot about privacy and other states also have aggressive policies. The recommendation was to watch what happens in other states before Vermont takes action.

Q - Is there any collaboration on that between states? Would Washington, CA, and VT get together to push it in the same direction.

A - No, not yet. The AG is starting with an audit to see what is being done with the data- what is the State doing with data and what is the security like?
Should a job be created to audit, educate public, and make recommendations to the legislature?

Q - We have people willfully giving data to whoever. Could the Chief Privacy Officer become a service point to help Vermonters interpret the privacy statement? Could a Vermonter get copies of their profile?

A - A person could say, I want to use your service but I don't want you to share my data. It's not reasonable to say that people can be excluded from Facebook because they don't want to be monetized. Should there be a property interest in your data for the consumer? Are some people's data worth more than others'? Could affluent people opt out because they can afford to. There are tensions around this. This is an exciting new frontier and Vermont is at the forefront. The data broker bill is getting national attention to effectively identify a definition of what a data broker is.

Q - With regard to GMO labeling and nutrition labels, could we ever come up with a similar idea for data? Industry would hate it, but it'd be interesting.

A - I think we are powerful, but it is up to policy makers. This year we are going to have a student privacy policy. There will be multiple iterations as these laws roll out.

3:33
Motion to approve minutes passes

3:35
Public Comment Period
Marsha Cassel - Rutland high school's AI conference

3:41 March Agenda
What should be the plan?

Suggestion to spend the next meeting on synthesis.
Brian Cina will be the meeting leader for the next meeting

What about public outreach? At the next meeting we should talk about engagement. Jill will set the subcommittee meeting and create a proposal at the next meeting.

4:00
Task Force adjourns