State of Vermont Artificial Intelligence Task Force

Meeting Minutes

September 4, 2018

Calvin Coolidge Conference Room, 6th Floor

2:00 p.m.

Members present: Michael Schirling; Milo Cress; Joe Segale; Trey Dobson, MD; Mark Combs, Jill Charbonneau, Christopher Herrick, Brian Cina, Donna Rizzo, Brian Breslend, Eugene Santos, John Cohn, Honorable John A. Dooley, James Lyall.

Staff present: Kayla Dewey

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2:05 – Introductions

Opening question: What should the Task Force (note: abbreviated to TF throughout) address in the first 90 minutes of the meeting?

- Q: Will the TF focus mostly on potential threats and concerns of AI or will it also pursue opportunities.

     A: The intention is for the task force to focus on the benefits and risks (fear and hope) of AI and approach the topics from a neutral perspective.

- Work product goals: Who should the TF hear from and seek to involve?
     o K-12 Educator
- How should the public be contacted to participate or comment?
     o A note to the committee: all related discussions and meetings are subject to the Public Meeting Law and Freedom of Information Act. Members of the TF must make all documents and conversations available to the be observed by the public including sub committee meetings.
- Engage public for a broader conversation, not an isolated discussion.
     o Create sub groups

- Defining terms
- Will the TF set up a remote meeting tool such as Slack?

- *(1) a summary of the development and current use of artificial intelligence in Vermont;*
- Who else has done similar work already?
- Could this be a project for UVM students to investigate?
- Should the TF consider what other States have done?

- Request for a reading list to get TF on the same page with definition of AI.
- Reading materials are available, but they span such a large scope. Definition of AI needed first to narrow search.
- UVM students have produced a report on what other states have done, which was emailed to the TF members.
- Challenge: there is no one definition for AI.
- There is flexibility in the task to outline for the Legislature what definition and scope of AI the TF chose to focus on and give the report from there.

- Idea: each member could poll within her or his own field to get an idea of what opportunities and challenges are predicated by introduction of AI in their particular areas.
- What concerns the public?:
    o when AI is used without accompaniment of intelligent human decisions.
    o potential jobs loss
    o that AI might otherwise be subversive
    o developers do not want important progress being slowed or diminished
    o privacy issues
- TF must decide on a definition to narrow issue and provide context for what the report will address.
- AI will not be segmented into it's own category (like "clean energy"), it will be pervasive across many fields.
- There is a massive amount of development in a wide range of fields that the public is unaware of.
    o Goal: creating better public awareness
    o Goal: advise Legislature on how to monitor AI after the TF's 10 meetings are finished
- The positive/negative duality of the matter: the public could be exploited in an unpredicted way and, also, AI has massive potential to aid in human flourishing.
- Issue: policy is slow. Technology evolves fast. How can policy creation keep up?
- Example: GDPR, a framework for legislating information privacy in the European Union. The TF could review this framework for ideas to create legislation in Vermont.
    o Can Vermont consider legislation like GDPR as one state within a country?
    o Vermont has a history of being a leader for the country (example: GMO labeling)
    o The TF has the space to make the most appropriate recommendations witout concern for the larger context
- Working definition of AI is needed to take conversations from theoretical to concrete.
    o Is Alexa AI?
        ▪ Yes, because it is more than I simple sensor (example: fire sprinklers systems, automatic brakes.)
- Algorithms always have multiple applications
- What are the policy issues VT will be grappling with? What is happening that will raise policy questions?
    o Categorize issues opposed to determining a definition.
- How to assign responsibility when AI causes harm. What should the legal framework be?

- o   Different levels of AI and human engagement may effect human responsibility
- Instead of addressing the largest questions, the TF might focus on just what is in Vermont's jurisdiction and allow larger organizations to address the big questions.
- Who should the TF hear from outside of the TF?
- What should the public engagement process look like?
- Q: Item (3) on printed agenda: Why is the language "if needed?" included
    - o   Answer: It asks the question: is any of this effort needed? Does the state need to consider regulating or monitoring AI at this time?
- AI may be considered as a tool and humans the operator of that tool.
    - o   Tools can be banned or regulated
    - o   Some tools are legal in certain contexts (example: software that is illegal for hacker use but legal from security of a company.)

- Idea: Structure meetings so that 2/3 of meeting time dedicated to reviewing a specific application (previously researched by a sub committee) and spend 1/3 of meeting time generalizing findings/insights to the overall discussion.
- Application is necessary to determine if regulation is necessary (to address bullet 3 on the agenda)

- When does something become AI?
    - o   How does the TF avoid legislating non-AI issues.
    - o   Answer: There is no one point where something is AI, AI-ness is on a continuum.
    - o   Answer: Something becomes AI when recommendations are followed from technology without human reasoning or cognitive effort also.

- Next meeting to be determined with results from Doodle Poll.
    - o   Idea: choosing diverse locations across the state to encourage public involvement and increase accessibility.
    - o   TF members may participate using teleconference tools
    - o   Incorporating AI into the TF's work may be interesting
    - o   Meetings will be at least 3 hours long
- Co-Chairs Christopher Herrick and Brian Bresland favorably voted and assigned.
- Sub Committee formed titled "Case Study Committee" chaired by John Dooley with members John Cohn, Joe Segale, Milo Cress, and Eugene Santos Jr.

- Committee Adjourns