

Artificial Intelligence Appropriations:

Recommendations from the Vermont Artificial Intelligence Task Force Report

Representative Brian Cina
February 20, 2020

Vermont Artificial Intelligence Task Force Report (2020)

“The Task Force found that this technology presents tremendous opportunities for economic growth and improved quality of life, but also presents substantial risks of loss of some jobs and invasions of privacy and other impacts to civil liberties. The Task Force further found that there are steps that the State can take to maximize the opportunities and reduce the risk, but action must be taken now.”

“The ethical use and development of artificial intelligence can help to solve our greatest problems and improve quality of life while respecting the liberties and values Vermonters hold dear.”

Artificial Intelligence Commission

“The Task Force recommends that the Legislature establish a permanent Artificial Intelligence Commission (“the Commission”, “Commission”) to study and monitor artificial intelligence development and use, and report to the Legislature and the Executive branches.”

”approximately the size of the A.I. Task Force and contain a diverse membership of experts on A.I., stakeholders and citizens.”

”be independent with an appropriation, and have a small staff; although it could be attached to an existing State Agency for administrative support and be funded, at least in part, by a direct appropriation; and it should be authorized to accept private or federal funding in support of its work if supported by an appropriation or approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC).”

Business and Economic Growth Incentives

“The Task Force recommends that the State provide **access to accelerated computing**. The current ‘training’ phase of artificial intelligence can require access to accelerated computing. That type of computing can be cost prohibitive (e.g., \$10K/month⁵⁰) for small businesses. Access to local low-cost alternatives would be a powerful incentive to attract small A.I.-related business. The State already has resources that might be leveraged. For example, the State could work with institutions such as UVM which recently upgraded its *Deep Green* supercomputer and already has a very affordable access program that is subsidized by the UVM for the entire state.”

Business and Economic Growth Incentives

“The Task Force recommends that the State **create co-working space(s) and provide mentoring support** for the community to develop and build artificial intelligence technology and associated businesses. For example, the State could work with Vermont colleges and Universities to explore the creation of an A.I. co-working and mentoring program for startups doing business in Vermont.”

“The Task Force recommends that **the Agency of Digital Services work with every State Agency and Department to consider ways to promote, measure, and assess the ongoing use of artificial intelligence** to improve efficiency and functioning of State Government. We propose that the Commission created above be tasked to initiate this effort and track its progress.”

Business and Economic Growth Incentives

“The Task Force recommends that the State **experiment with a variety of small grants and competitions, administered by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, to promote the development and use of artificial intelligence** to improve quality of life in Vermont.”

1. **Create a small grants program for towns and municipalities to promote the use of A.I. for the public good** in local government and town operations. For example, these grants can fund systems like that developed by the Town of Manchester which invested in a video system allowing actions in high school sports games to be streamed to the public. Similar investments through small grants could make government and other public meetings more accessible through artificial intelligence throughout the state.
2. The State should **create a grants program for small business innovation that promotes ethical use of A.I.** and identifies pressing issues for Vermont and it's A.I. solutions.
3. The state should **create a regular cadence of A.I. competitions/“hackathons”, which incent the public to create innovative uses of artificial intelligence to solve state problems** and improve the lives of Vermonters.

Increased Education and Outreach Programs

“The Task Force believes that an educated populous is the best way to prepare the State for the growth of artificial intelligence. The Task Force therefore proposes that the State engage higher education institutions to develop pilot programs to increase STEM and A.I. outreach programs for each of the following populations.”

-K-12 Teachers- “organize outreach efforts to better serve Vermont’s K-12 teachers involved in STEM education and provide additional training opportunities to help keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies such as artificial intelligence.”

-K-12 Students- “increase the exposure of students to A.I. technologies, including the benefits and potential risks of A.I. technologies from a personal and societal perspective and the ethical standards for their development and use.”

-The General Public- public events to educate the Vermont public on A.I. and emerging technologies, including public talks, seminars, peoples’ assemblies, demonstrations, debates, hackathons, websites, etc.

Questions?

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