

Alaska State Legislature

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SB 177 Artificial Intelligence Act

SB 177 “The Artificial Intelligence Act” establishes policy for AI use by state agencies to ensure transparent and fair practices to protect Alaskans as well as requires disclosure on political deepfakes to inform Alaskans when campaign information is altered with the intention to mislead.

AI is evolving ever-quickly; it is the new frontier. We cannot stop it. It is already part of our daily lives (for example, every time you use your map program on your smartphone). As policymakers, we must work to harness this tool for good and safeguard against bad actors. It is also vital we take the individual Alaskan into account; with the vast amount of data state agencies have and may input into algorithms that generate AI decision outputs, SB 177 will help ensure data privacy and cybersecurity are as airtight as possible.

With the increasing availability of AI to streamline work processes, transparency and guidelines for the use of AI by state agencies is paramount to ensure appropriate deployment and to protect Alaskans from potential harm. By requiring human oversight/responsibility for AI, a publicly posted inventory of AI in use by state agencies, and regular impact assessments – that include a review and public report of benefits, liabilities, risks, accountability mechanisms in place, decision appeal processes, and effects on the liberty, finances, livelihood and privacy interest of individuals among other items – SB 177 will ensure AI is working for the people of Alaska appropriately.

SB 177 ensures the public will know when AI is employed by state agencies in regard to the collection and processing of personal data and the generation of decisions. The bill provides important and necessary safeguards but also methods of recourse in the event that the use of AI causes harm to an individual. Decisions pertaining to hiring practices, eligibility for services, license qualification, and more, are no small matters; they impact lives.

AI use will also be regulated in relation to “synthetic media” or “political deepfakes” disseminated to the public, including for election and campaign use. The generation of audio, still imagery, or video that is designed to create a fabricated or intentionally manipulated account of an individual's appearance, speech, or conduct is a fairly new phenomenon. When these digital alterations of a person, however, are employed to spread false information with malevolent intentions to deceive the public, it is time for lawmakers to take up the matter. With easily accessible AI available to develop deepfakes, the likelihood of their creation during the 2024 election cycle is inevitable. SB 177 requires a clear disclosure on a political deepfake that the communication has been manipulated by AI.

AI is the new digital frontier, and as the rapidly emerging technology can offer efficiencies and solutions for the workplace and ease of use even for non-tech savvy individuals, we will see it play an increasing role in work activities and in political communications. The goal of SB 177 is to set appropriate parameters for state agency use of AI and to protect Alaskans.