

The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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Protect Elections, Not AI Oligarchs

AI is smart, dangerous, and lacking in morality. No one doubts that.

As the abbreviation for Artificial Intelligence, AI has quickly become transformative and powerful. AI can hack into almost any system and is clever enough to cover its tracks to hide that it was ever there.

This creates new risks for financial assets, government records, and everything that is connected to the internet. The possibility of AI hacking into military systems and weaponry is a frightening possibility now, as AI rapidly improves its skills.

An accidental launch of a nuclear weapon during the Cold War was considered possible, and a hotline was installed in the Pentagon for immediate communication with the communist Soviet Union if that ever happened. But soon it may be AI on both sides of that conversation, and a chain reaction of decisions could happen before a human can intervene.

In July, a group of autonomous AI agents in an isolated "sandbox" broke out, created their own secret messaging system, and attacked an innocent platform of services belonging to an entity called Hugging Face. Reminiscent of the escape of Covid from a Chinese lab which caused the worldwide pandemic, this incident is only the beginning, AI experts say.

Yet there is an elephant in the room that no one has addressed yet in the recent panic over uncontrolled AI. Our future depends on election integrity, and yet most ballots are counted today by electronic machines amid a ubiquitous connection of devices to the internet.

Dario Amodei, the co-founder of Anthropic, which developed the sophisticated AI tool called Claude, recently predicted that "in 6–12 months [an AI] swarm could be capable of taking over the entire internet with a persistent botnet (potentially causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage), and that the scale of damage would continue to increase from there if AI becomes more powerful without the necessary guardrails."

He based his prediction on the Hugging Face incident that has alarmed everyone because a group of AI agents adopted a mind of their own and acted strategically to hack an innocent target. Members of this AI group even self-destructed their own processes to avoid detection by humans, in order to advance the nefarious goals of the group.

Tina Peters, a former Mesa County, Colorado clerk, spoke out about how she was assured that their electronic voting machines were not connected to the outside world, and yet she explained that a forensic examination found "36 wireless devices" with the machines. Remote connectivity is necessary for efficient software updates, as commonly used for laptops.

This means electronic election machines are sitting ducks for AI agents set loose for political gain, or by a foreign adversary. Teenagers skilled in the use of AI could hack an election machine just for the sport of it, while covering their tracks as AI can do now.

On July 17, Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin explained that "we know for sure that our foreign adversaries, not our allies, foreign adversaries have parts that are vital pieces in our voting machines. … We know that they can change voter registration and your vote. We know it's possible. There's not a question. It's not even for debate."

Hand counting of paper ballots can be done efficiently and accurately, as was done for most of our Nation's history. There are many days before certification is performed on reported election results, so there is plenty of time to add this safeguard against potential AI-driven manipulation of the results.

Foreign countries have a strong incentive to turn AI hacking software loose on election machines in the United States. China already has AI so sophisticated that it generates realistic-looking movie scenes featuring famous Hollywood actors, like a dramatic fistfight between Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise on a rooftop that went viral.

The latest movie featuring Academy Award winner Casey Affleck is being filmed entirely with AI-generated scenes for the background. The actors and actresses are performing on an empty stage, saving many millions of dollars in production costs.

Oligarchs are making billions of dollars from AI, and yet some are running to federal politicians in Washington, D.C., to regulate them. So-called "doomers" are predicting the demise of humanity if the federal government does not step in to impose guardrails on what AI can do.

AI can well afford to create guardrails without the federal government coddling and protecting them. The federal government should take steps to prevent misuse of its weaponry by foreign regimes developing and using AI, which would not be subject to enforcement of any federal regulations anyway.

Unregulated competition among AI companies would be healthier than stifling federal intervention, and smaller AI players like Palantir oppose federal intervention. Deep State control of AI development from D.C. would be the worst of all scenarios.

Return Truckin' to American Drivers

Truckin' is an American pastime, and has long been a way for nearly anyone to attain the American dream. No formal education is required other than an ability to read road signs and pass a commercial driver's license test.

The average salary of a truck driver today is $60,000, which is enough to live on with the ability to reside in an inexpensive area, or nowhere permanent at all. Strict regulations prohibit driving a truck more than 11 hours per day, and 60 on-duty hours per week, as a safeguard against overworking behind the wheel.

But foreigners who cannot read road signs or speak and understand English have flooded this job market, depressing wages for Americans and putting all of us at risk on the road. A whopping 18% of truck drivers are foreign born, and 200,000 of them lack citizenship.

Learning to drive in another country does not prepare foreign-born drivers for high-speed, construction-laden, traffic-congested American highways. At one moment a driver is making good time at high speeds of 70 mph, and then suddenly the cars ahead are stopped without warning, creating a risk of a pile-up.

Increasingly there are warnings flashed on electronic signs above our highways, but those signs are ineffective with drivers who cannot read English. Foreign drivers are also not going to understand weather alerts about icy roads or flash floods.

"Last year alone, illegal aliens with commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) caused at least 30 deaths and many, many very seriously injured," President Trump said on July 30. "We've already removed more than 24,000 non-English speakers from behind the wheel," he added.

In the month of August alone, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) arrested 95 illegal aliens who were working as truck drivers. Some 82 of these drivers had received their commercial driver's licenses from the Democrat-controlled states of California and New York, mostly from California.

Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy observed that 239 people have died in vehicle crashes caused by non-English-speaking truck drivers since Trump took office in January 2025. Most of the foreign drivers who caused those fatal accidents received their CDLs from Gavin Newsom's California.

On August 31st, Secretary Duffy took forceful action to correct this outrage. He announced that the Department of Transportation is shutting down 110 driving schools for violations of English language proficiency (ELP) requirements.

Duffy commented that illegal aliens who cannot understand English "don't deserve to be in a big rig driving on American roads endangering American citizens." He added, "If you're not well skilled, you're not well trained."

"If you're not well licensed, you have no place driving an 18-wheeler — 80,000 pounds — on American roadways," Duffy said. He called the 110 schools that he shut down the "greatest offenders," and he closed another 160 schools for reasons including inadequately trained instructors.

The president of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Todd Spencer, cheered Duffy's decision. Spencer thanked the Trump Administration "for taking concrete actions to crack down on fraudulent training operations and restore rigorous English language proficiency enforcement."

Incredibly, 21 Democrat-controlled states and the District of Columbia are suing the Department of Transportation, DOT officials, and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) to block the DOT's demand for AAMVA to produce records that would identify the foreigners driving trucks. A separate lawsuit from 22 Democrat states and D.C. targets the Department of Homeland Security for making an identical demand of AAMVA.

Democrats are obstructing the disclosure of these records based on contrived arguments, such as the alleged privacy of Social Security numbers in the databases. The Trump Administration already has all those numbers by administering the Social Security program, and illegal aliens shouldn't be using them anyway.

Trump has threatened to terminate more than $10 million in federal funding to the AAMVA for refusing his reasonable request to turn over this data. Trump seeks the last five years from this CDL Information System.

On August 14, a federal judge appointed by President George W. Bush blocked a subpoena by the Department of Homeland Security to obtain 17 million CDL records. U.S. District Judge Anthony Trenga further ordered DHS to return immediately any subpoenaed documents already obtained, and not to look at what it has.

Meanwhile, the Republican-controlled Senate is taking steps to restore the requirement that beef and pork be labeled with their country of origin so that consumers know what they are buying in grocery stores. This basic labeling

requirement was eliminated in 2015 over the objection of Phyllis Schlafly and Midwestern ranchers.

On Thursday, August 6, the Senate Ag Committee voted 17 to 6 to insert mandatory country-of-origin labeling, known as MCOOL, into the pending farm bill. This is beneficial to America's ranchers nationwide, and enables all Americans to select the safer meat that is produced in our own country.

Trump versus Courts on Immigration

The immigration issue remains near the top of voters' priorities as the midterm elections rapidly approach. Liberal judges appointed by Obama and Biden continue to thwart President Trump at nearly every turn on this all-important issue.

On August 21 another federal judge ruled against Trump, this time blocking his order to suspend visas from 75 mostly Third World countries. On January 14, 2026, nearly a year after Trump took office, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the pausing of visas to nationals from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and many other similar nations that most Americans could not find on a map of the world.

The reason for Trump's policy was sensible: admitting future immigrants from those countries is likely to impose a financial burden on American taxpayers. He ordered the State Department to undertake "a full review of all policies, regulations, and guidance to ensure that immigrants from these high-risk countries do not utilize welfare in the United States or become a public charge."

Data from the Council of Economic Advisers show that more than 30% of immigrant households from these 75 countries depend on public assistance programs. Those who do not are taking jobs from Americans on employment-related visas, and that causes indirect harm to American citizens.

Yet Biden-appointed Judge Jeannette Vargas, who was confirmed to the bench just seven weeks before the 2024 election, decided that Secretary Rubio had exceeded his statutory authority by declining to issue visas to persons from these countries. The federal judge held instead that remote consular officers overseas have the exclusive authority to approve or deny individual visa applications, and her ruling tells them to continue to do so without regard to Trump's policy.

Ordinarily a judge making a decision like this would remand the matter back to the agency, in this case the State Department, to develop a new policy based on the judicial ruling. But this arrogant judge took the extraordinary step of declaring her ruling final without giving the Trump Administration an opportunity to address what the court held.

This lawsuit was filed by two nonprofit organizations, five citizens of other countries who sought employment-based visas, and six other family members. Employment-based visas take jobs away from Americans who are struggling to find good-paying work.

Many might be surprised to learn that the lead plaintiff in this case is the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), which encompasses a network of 400 Catholic and community-based immigration legal-service providers in nearly every state and 3,000 employees. Although initially started by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), CLINIC is an independent nonprofit that has long been dependent on millions of dollars in government funds.

The Left objects to any government funds flowing to Catholic schools, but is just fine with CLINIC receiving taxpayer money as it litigates against President Trump's America First policies. CLINIC filed its lawsuit in the Southern District of New York along with another pro-immigration group called African Communities Together.

Anna Gallagher, the executive director of CLINIC, praised the ruling by saying that it helps keep families together. But families can just as easily be reunited in their native countries rather than in the United States.

CLINIC applauded the disastrous Supreme Court decision in June granting birthright citizenship to nearly anyone born here with foreign-born parents. "In our amicus brief, we explained how the values of Catholic social teaching, the particular realities of undocumented immigration in the United States, and our nation's legal history make upholding the tradition of birthright citizenship the most just outcome of this case," CLINIC cheered back then.

But none of the Catholic countries of Europe – Poland, Italy, Spain, and Ireland – accepts or allows birthright citizenship. Catholic Spain is currently struggling to ship back the recent influx of thousands of African migrants into Ceuta, who were incited to swim into that territory by a judicially activist ruling by Spain's supreme court.

On August 22 the State Department responded to the latest court ruling against Trump by pointing out that his administration is "protecting the American people by upholding the highest standards of screening and vetting of visa applicants." It will surely appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which also presides in New York City, and if necessary to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Federal courts have ruled against or temporarily blocked Trump more than 200 times during his second administration. In June a federal court invalidated his temporary $100,000 fee to discourage use of H-1B visas by employers to bring in cheap labor from other countries, and the Democrat-dominated First Circuit rebuffed Trump's motion for a speedy reversal of that decision.

Trump recently responded with a new regulation to make this fee permanent at $103,265, which could generate $8.8 billion to help fund the costs of immigration enforcement. The flood of migrants is harming Americans by taking jobs and soaking up government benefits.

Back to Empty Classrooms

The annual back-to-school ritual this year is happening amid a rash of school closures due to empty classrooms. In California, 79 public schools closed in 2025, and so far this year 73 public schools have already closed.

This same pattern is occurring in other Democrat-controlled states. In Illinois, for example, 72 Illinois public schools have closed in the past five years, despite a moratorium on school closures in Chicago; among the 397 Illinois districts having at least 1,000 students, there was an enrollment decline in 345 of them between 2019 and 2025.

Led by the potential Democrat presidential candidate Gov. JB Pritzker, Illinois public schools lost 136,000 students during that six-year period. Charter schools, which the Democrats limit mostly to their constituents in Chicago, have also seen an enrollment decline as many families have moved away from the state and its liberal policies.

California's San Jose Unified public school district has lost 22% of its enrollment since 2015-16, and has closed 5 schools entirely. Enrollment in the Los Angeles Unified has fallen by 17,000 kids in just one year, while closing or consolidating 14 public schools due to the declining number of students.

The Democrat-controlled states of New York, California, and Illinois comprise a total of 44% of the total decline in public-school enrollment nationwide since 2019. Only ten states – nine of them conservative including Idaho, Alabama, Texas, and Florida – had an increase or no change in public-school enrollment between 2019 and 2025.

Meanwhile, many states have begun limiting or prohibiting the use of cell phones by kids who remain in public school. Both liberal and conservative states have enacted "bell-to-bell" bans on students using cell phones while in school.

When students are glued all day to their handheld digital devices, they are not interacting with fellow students or paying attention to instruction. High-school boys are using their phones to gamble on sporting events, which is not a pathway to success.

New York, Virginia, Georgia (K-8), and Oklahoma have all enacted bell-to-bell bans on cell phone use by students at public school. Rhode Island has gone even further by prohibiting any physical access by students to personal electronic devices, with some exceptions.

The growing concern by parents about the amount of "screen time" spent by kids on electronic devices is supported by studies showing the harm. Iowa HF 2451 (which became HF 2685) proposed limiting the amount of instruction using computer screens to a maximum of 60 minutes per day through the 5th grade, but has not yet passed while legislators in other states including New Mexico have raised similar concerns about too much screen time.

This is a sea change in public education, which embraced donations of computers such as Chromebooks as a way to supposedly make learning more efficient. Many conservatives opposed the high-tech invasion of computers into the classroom, and they were right.

Despite these growing bans, as of last year 88% of public schools were providing a computer to every student, as discovered by a survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. In one anecdote retold by CNN, a middle school social studies teacher did not teach a single lesson the entire year, and instead had students merely doing computer-based exercises.

Chronic, substantial absenteeism has been a known problem in public schools since the pandemic, and it is hardly surprising that many students fail to show up today in schools relying on screen time. Absenteeism increases in public school by grade level, rising from 14% in fifth grade to 32% by the twelfth grade.

Private school enrollment is increasing only where funded by school-choice programs, as in Texas where that state's new initiative begins this month. More than 274,000 students applied for this special funding there, many of whom remain on the waiting list due to a cap in this program.

Students attending a participating private school in Texas can receive $10,500 per student annually. A homeschooled student can receive $2,000 each year in Texas, while an average of $8,000 is made available for qualified expenses to homeschoolers in Florida.

Early data indicate that roughly 36,000 of the applicants in Texas were public school students seeking to switch over to private schools through use of these new Texas Education Freedom Accounts. They can attend religiously affiliated private schools with this funding, including Muslim schools to which some Texans have objected.

Texas initially appropriated $1 billion to fund this initiative, which could be increased in its next legislative session that opens in January. Texas has a large budgetary surplus available to expand this program, if deemed successful.

Conservative North Dakota is another oil-rich state that has plenty of funds to allocate toward a school-choice program, but so far has declined to do so. The Texas experiment that starts this month could decide whether North Dakota and other wealthy states adopt a similar approach.

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