



**American Federation  
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Congress of Industrial  
Organizations**

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# AFL-CIO

AMERICA'S UNIONS

November 20, 2025

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 64 affiliated unions of the AFL-CIO, representing nearly 15 million working people across our economy and in public services, I urge you to oppose any policy to add a provision to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would federally ban or curtail states from enacting guardrails against the harmful and dangerous uses of artificial intelligence (AI). A federal preemption provision would override state and local authority, stripping our communities of the ability to safeguard workers and the general public. It is outrageous that only months after the Senate—in a rare moment of near unanimity—[rejected](#) a state moratorium amendment in the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” 99–1, Big Tech is now urging Congress to relitigate this issue.

Public polls and recent state and local elections have made it clear: People want leaders who will fight to protect them. A recent [Gallup poll](#) found that “80% of U.S. adults believe the government should maintain rules for AI safety and data security, even if it means developing AI capabilities more slowly.” Efforts to shield tech companies from existing or future federal regulations, or to enact federal preemption provisions, are out of step with the [demands](#) of workers and the general public.

In the states, lawmakers have heeded the public’s demands for AI guardrails and have come together to enact commonsense policies that protect civil liberties, advance worker protections, and prevent discrimination from harmful AI. All 50 states have introduced legislation or regulations related to AI, algorithms, and machine learning, and about 40 have passed legislation—many with bipartisan support.

Federal preemption would allow tech companies and AI developers to operate without meaningful oversight or enforceable safeguards. Without robust guardrails, data-driven technologies, including AI and automated decision systems, are dramatically reshaping work in ways that harm working people. Employers increasingly use workplace AI systems for key functions, powering dangerous experimentation, slashing jobs and undermining workers’ rights.

Despite widespread acknowledgement of the threat of Big Tech’s “move fast and break things” approach to unleashing new technologies, it is alarming that some in Congress continue to accede to lobbying efforts that strip Americans of protections from the harms of AI.

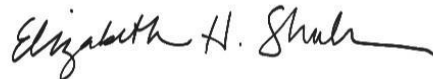
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November 20, 2025  
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Big Tech's overreach into federal policymaking has left many members of Congress afraid to speak out publicly about the dangers these companies and their lobbyists pose to the direction of AI safety measures, or thwarting them altogether.

As we have stated before in letters earlier this year to the [House](#) and [Senate](#), the federal government is failing to advance meaningful AI policy guardrails, and so states must retain their authority to create and enforce regulations that protect workers and guard against AI-related risks and harms. Policymakers should prioritize the [AFL-CIO's AI Principles to Protect Workers](#), which include privacy, transparency, safety, accountability, skilling and training, and protection of workers' and civil rights, when regulating AI.

If a state and local preemption is enacted, the important work in the vast majority of states would come to a screeching halt, and critical protections already enacted would be rolled back. This would harm working people and the public interest. I urge you to oppose any federal preemption provisions and allow states to do their jobs.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth H. Shuler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Elizabeth H. Shuler  
President