

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D017
Title: Support Regulations on Generative Artificial Intelligence
Proposer: Curlin, Ms. Laura
Topic: Technology

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-D020 Address the Ethical Implications of the Digital Age

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

D017 - Support Regulations on Generative Artificial Intelligence

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Curlin, Ms. Laura

Endorsed by: Miller, Mr. Kevin, Coulston, Mr Rob

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: Yes

HiA: HD

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 07 - Social Justice & United States Policy

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention reaffirm the principles of 2022-D020 (Addressing Implications of the Digital Age) and further acknowledge that generative artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly changing how we relate to information and each other, and raises important ethical considerations regarding its impact on our understanding of truth, trust in institutions, authenticity, and human dignity, and that as a society and as a church we have not fully grappled with the important practical and ethical implications of advances in generative AI; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church, with the help of the Office of Government Relations and the Episcopal Public Policy Network, monitor advances in AI and speak on behalf of the most vulnerable according to the values of The Episcopal Church by supporting policies at the local, state, and national levels of governance, and efforts towards international frameworks to:

- Regulate the use of data to train algorithms, in order to recognize the rights of human creators, increase transparency about the data and methodologies used, diversify sources used for training data, and protect individuals' privacy rights;

- Restrict or regulate, requiring additional transparency, the use of generative AI to influence or interfere with elections and public information campaigns;
- Urge all political entities, and government officials, in the absence of legislation, to voluntarily commit to refrain from any deceptive use of AI in political campaigns;
- Restrict the use of AI to infringe on civil rights or applications of AI that perpetuate historic and ongoing discrimination and racism;
- Restrict or ban the use of deepfakes (images, videos, or audio altered to replace one person's likeness with another's) for purposes of fraud, defamation, and sexual exploitation;
- Support workers that have been negatively impacted by the use of generative AI in their industries, through support for policies such as retraining programs and regulations on monitoring in the workplace; and
- Regulate the use of generative AI by militaries, police, and in any other contexts related to the use of force.

And be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church call upon companies, organizations, and individuals working with and developing generative AI to include guardrails and safety measures in their products, set transparent ethical guidelines and policies for their work, and carry out independent and ongoing ethical reviews of their products and their impacts on people, workplaces, our democratic systems, and society as a whole; and that the Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church be tasked with engaging relevant companies in the Church's investment portfolio on these ethical questions.

Explanation

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is technology that enables computers to create original content, such as images or text, resembling human-produced output. AI uses models or algorithms trained on large sets of existing data, text, and images to understand and mimic patterns in that data. While there are many algorithms that are already integrated into our daily lives (such as autocorrect, email spam filters, and recommendation engines), generative AI is a significant step forward in the capability and reach of technology. Generative AI has particularly become more widespread over the past few years with the release of new tools like ChatGPT, Midjourney, DALL-E, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot. This is a rapidly changing part of the technology landscape, the impacts of which we are just beginning to see.

Generative AI has the potential to disrupt many aspects of our lives, but also has great potential to extend human creativity and efficiency. These tools create content based on the data they are trained on and the prompts they are given - they can reflect and extend either the best or the worst of humanity. Regulations can curb the worst effects of generative AI and mitigate harm to the most vulnerable and to society as a whole, while allowing opportunities for positive, life-affirming use of this new technology to continue.

The Episcopal Church needs to speak about generative AI because our baptismal covenant calls us to respect the dignity of every human being. By changing how creative work is

done, and how we identify something is real, generative AI is damaging our human-to-human relationships. Generative AI sows a seed of doubt in everything we see online, fostering disengagement from civil society and institutions such as the church. The landscape of AI has radically changed in the past two years, and will likely be radically different by the 82nd General Convention. We have a duty to be engaged now, as these ethical and moral questions are debated.



Resolution Number: 2022-D020
Title: Address the Ethical Implications of the Digital Age
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention acknowledge that we are living in a time when technology is both opening new doors for connection and possibility, and also mechanisms for surveillance and intrusion, and that as a society and as a church we have not fully grappled with the practical and ethical implications of the transition to the Digital Age; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention encourage the Theology Committee of the House of Bishops to consider studying and reporting on the uses and abuses, possibilities and detriments of technology in our daily and institutional lives, including for prayer and worship, work, and family life, and on the ethical and theological implications of the new Digital Age for our interior lives, our prayer practices, our connections to each other and to all creation—and ultimately, our connection to God; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church, with the help of the Office of Government Relations and the Episcopal Public Policy Network, support policies at the local, state, national, and international levels of governance and agreement to:

- **Regulate technology companies to protect consumers, especially children and youth, from unreasonable surveillance, personal data collection, addictive features, and harmful content;**
- **Regulate the use of digital technology and artificial intelligence in the workplace to surveil, monitor, and manage workers, in order to uphold workers' rights to organize, to privacy, to safe working conditions, and to equal opportunity;**
- **Regulate the use of data collection and storage by public authorities, including local, national and international law enforcement agencies, to safeguard society while shielding people from unreasonable intrusions of privacy;**
- **Regulate the use of Cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens to reduce their effect on our planet, climate, and environment.**
- **Support public investment to close the digital wealth and racial divide in access to technology and technology education.**

And be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church call upon large data and technology companies to carry out independent and ongoing ethical reviews of their products and their impacts on people, especially vulnerable populations such as children and youth, and society as a whole including our democratic systems and workplaces, and to have processes in place to mitigate harm; and that the Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church be tasked with engaging relevant companies in the Church's investment portfolio on these ethical questions.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 866-867.