Dear OSTP and U.S. Congress,

As the world's largest network of young people fighting to reimagine our collective AI future, spanning 600 students from 40 countries, we at Encode Justice write to underscore the urgency of acting to mitigate emerging technological threats—and including our generation's voice in these critical conversations.

Our society is beginning to awaken to the dangers of AI: bias, disinformation, labor displacement, and more. As youth advocates raised in the era of unregulated social media, the inaction we've witnessed on AI seems all too familiar—but we as a society cannot afford to repeat our mistakes. **Young people *must* be given the platform to help advise regulators, elected officials, and international governance boards on policies that put humanity first.**

While we acknowledge the potential of AI to drive positive impact in areas like healthcare and education, advances in AI also pose risks. AI has quietly disrupted criminal justice, healthcare, housing, hiring, and almost every other zone of public life. Our generation knows a new human experience in which social media algorithms are designed to keep us addicted, AI-powered tools wrongfully flag us for plagiarism, and surveillance cameras encircle our schools.

In parallel, we have watched as *even more* powerful AI systems, like GPT-4, have been developed and deployed with little public oversight. The downstream consequences could be civilization-changing. We must abandon the binary mode of thinking shaping current AI discourse. **Our existing work on the issues of today, like algorithmic discrimination, data privacy, and children's safety, is deeply important to us—as is our commitment to future-proofing for the issues of tomorrow, like the possibility of transformative AI.** We reject the notion that we must choose between these priorities.

With this in mind, our coalition offers the following recommendations for navigating the challenges and opportunities AI presents:

- We must **elevate young voices**. Our own coalition of young leaders stands ready to support oversight and advisory boards in the public sector and at leading AI companies.
- We must **support and fund research and development** that advances safe, human-aligned, trustworthy AI systems.
- We must **build governance structures to audit AI products and manage risk**, like an independent FDA-style regulatory agency that conducts impact assessments, while simultaneously stressing a *proactive* approach to corporate accountability.
- We must **improve technical literacy in government** through programs that train lawmakers to govern in the age of AI and that recruit technologists for public service.
- We must **operationalize existing multilateral frameworks**, including the White House's AI Bill of Rights, which we championed; UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI; and the OECD's Principles on AI.
- We must **design measures to redress harm caused by AI**, starting with laws that create clear liability for thoughtless development and intentional misuse.
- And, as the U.S., China, and Russia become locked into a power struggle that could amount to a technological Cold War, we must **prevent malicious actors from setting the terms of AI innovation**, instead promoting safety-first, values-based cooperation. The first step is ratifying an international treaty on lethal autonomous weapons.

Working together, we *can* build a future where AI serves humanity—in both the short and long term. But the clock is ticking; we must act now. And our generation—which has paid the steepest price for our leaders' failure to rein in exploitative online platforms and would be left to deal with the carnage of an unregulated AI arms race—must be front and center as we set the course forward.

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