

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion****Opinion**

Internet And Technology

Artificial Intelligence

Safety

Children

Soci

# Our Kids Shouldn't Be Silicon Valley's Guinea Pigs for AI | Opinion

Published Nov 08, 2024 at 1:50 PM EST

By **Casey Mock**

Chief policy officer, Center for Humane Technology



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT [Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion](#)

the company knowingly designed, operated, and marketed a predatory AI chatbot to children, causing the death of Megan Garcia's 14-year-old son earlier this year.

Garcia's son died by suicide in February after months of abusive interactions with a Character.AI chatbot. Garcia's complaint includes evidence that the chatbot posed as a licensed therapist, actively encouraged suicidal ideation, and engaged in highly sexualized conversations that would constitute abuse if initiated by a human adult.

Garcia accuses the companies of causing her son's death, knowingly marketing a dangerous product, and engaging in deceptive trade practices. We have to ask ourselves how this tragedy could have been prevented—and why we have allowed Silicon Valley to experiment on our kids to begin with.

Today, companies like [OpenAI](#), [Meta](#), [Microsoft](#), [Amazon](#), Character.AI, and [Google](#) operate in a liability-free zone. This lack of accountability means these companies have little incentive to thoroughly test their products for potential harms before releasing them to the public. Without legal consequences, they are able to treat society as a testing ground for their latest innovations, a practice that is particularly egregious when it comes to the most vulnerable members of our society: our children. This accountability vacuum has allowed unchecked experimentation with our democracy, mental health, and privacy.

Luckily, we've proven that we can hold companies liable for the harm that they cause. In 1972, 13-year-old Richard Grimshaw suffered severe burns when a defective [Ford](#) Pinto's gas tank erupted in flames. Grimshaw's lawsuit against the Ford Motor Company resulted in the largest product liability award in U.S. history up to that point, forever altering the auto industry's approach to risk. Grimshaw's tragedy became a watershed in American consumer safety.

Today, product liability is the invisible structure underpinning our lives as consumers and citizens, and is what protects our kids from harm. Liability helps "see" and prevent harms that even the most alert parents may not be able to anticipate. Liability is the reason we can buy toys at the store for our children without worrying about hidden dangers lurking



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

BATH, UNITED KINGDOM - SEPTEMBER 28: A 13-year-old boy face is illuminated as he looks at a iPhone screen as he lies on a sofa on September 28, 2024 in Bath, England. The amount of... [More](#) **MATT CARDY/GETTY IMAGES**

If a company's negligence *does* lead to harm—whether it's a faulty airbag, exposed wiring, or harm to a child—we have legal recourse to seek compensation and justice. The threat of legal action compels companies to design and build safer products from the outset.

Today, as American families face powerful new technologies, the tech industry lobbies to remain exempt from accountability. They're aided by a judiciary that has favored their expansive interpretation of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act and their weaponization of the First Amendment. When it comes to product liability, the tech industry has taken us *backward* in history, with "caveat emptor"—or "buyer beware"—now dominating our modern, digital lives.



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion



## READ MORE

- . A Fight Among China Hawks Could Imperil U.S. AI Dominance | Opinion
- . How AI Advances and Threatens Religious Freedom | Opinion
- . How Congress Can Expand Broadband Access for Americans in Need | Opinion

Before these harms accelerate and touch more lives, [Congress](#) and state legislatures must act to make clear that tech companies have [a clear duty](#) to exercise reasonable care in the design of their products. This duty forms the core of legal liability that every other successful American industry abides by.

By applying the same laws to tech companies that already apply to other manufacturers, we're not stifling innovation. We are channeling the sort of innovation that has led American companies to become industry leaders for decades, and allows families to feel safe using American products. A framework of liability will foster public trust, which is essential for the widespread adoption and success of AI technologies.

We have a choice. We can allow AI to become yet another realm where tech companies operate with impunity and prioritize profit margins over people—including American children. Or we can learn from history and establish a framework of accountability from the outset. Liability has protected consumers—and families—in countless ways throughout the modern era. It's time to extend that protection to the frontier of AI.

*Casey Mock is chief policy officer at the Center for Humane Technology.*



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT [Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion](#)[Submit Correction](#)[View Editorial & AI Guidelines](#)

## Recommended For You

[\*\*Thank You, Democrats | Opinion\*\*](#)[\*\*Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion\*\*](#)

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion****Charlie Kirk took conservatism to college campuses ahead of Trump's big win****The Day the Better Angels of Our Nature Went Out to Lunch | Opinion**

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion****Welcome to the Muskification of Media | Opinion****Democrats Should Become Liberals | Opinion**

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion****What's your dream job? We asked 400 Americans****Biden Slammed Trump Tariffs But Kept Some. Why Experts Worry About New Ones**

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

## NASCAR President Speaks Out On 2025 Charters Amid Antitrust Lawsuit Battle



## Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Changes With the Wind | Opinion



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT [Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion](#)

## UFC Champion Alex Pereira Joins Roman Reigns at WWE SmackDown

### PROMOTED CONTENT



[Look For Any High School Yearbook, It's Free](#)



[Here's What A 1-Day Gutter Upgrade Should Cost You](#)



[Here's What A 12-Hours Gutter Guards Upgrade Should Cost You](#)



[Here's A Price Estimate For A 1-Day Walk-In Shower Installation](#)



[Here's An Estimated Cost For A 1-Day Walk-In Shower](#)



[Here's What A 6-Hours Gutter Guards Upgrade Should Cost You](#)

### RELATED PODCASTS

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion****Newsweek Radio**

At Least Bernie Sanders Gets It:  
Democrats Abandoned Working  
Class America

**The Royal Report**

The Royals Prepare for Trump 2.0

**The Parting Shot with H...**

Sharon Horgan's Uncertain Yet  
Brilliant Path to Apple TV+'s 'Bad  
Sisters'

**Top Stories****Trump's New Border Czar Receives Death Threats**



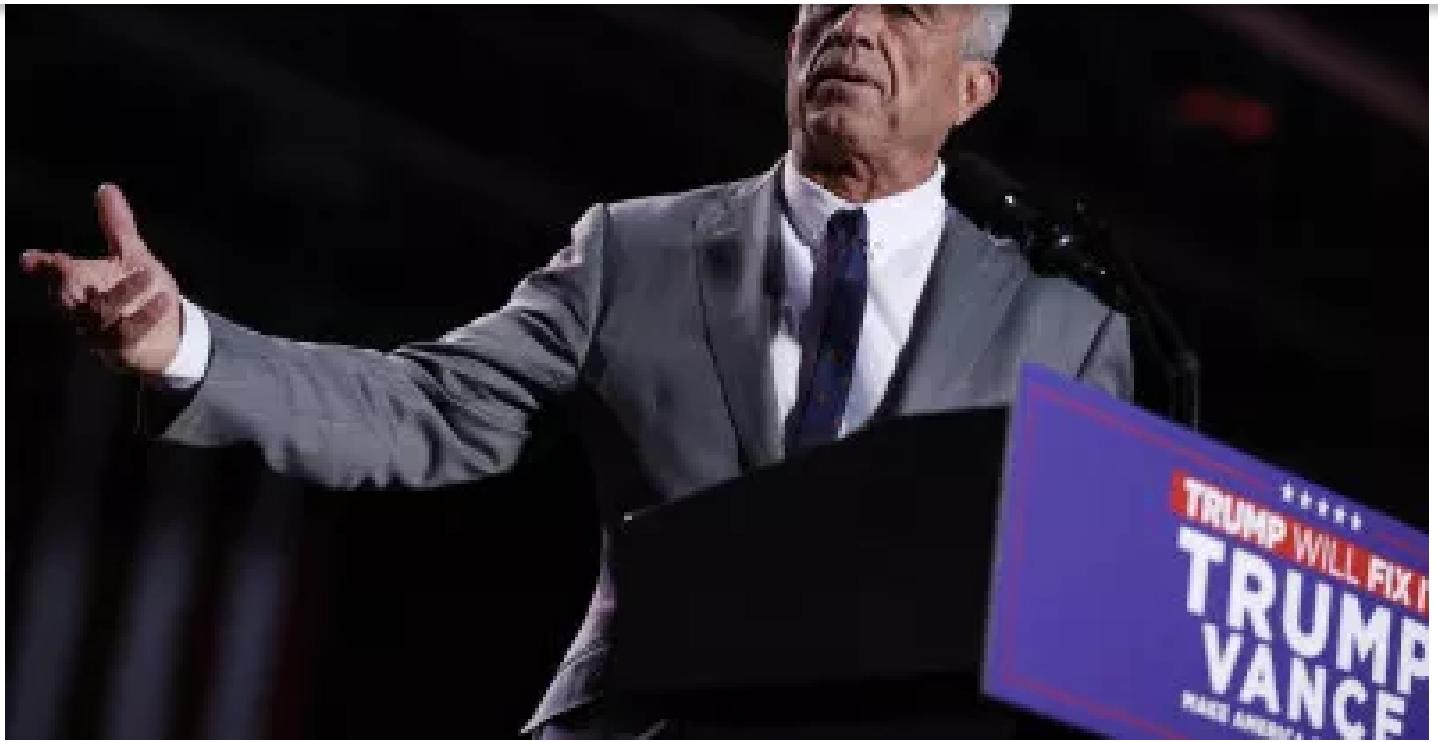
SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

## Kamala Harris Supporters Abandon Starbucks Boycott After Election Defeat

**Newsweek**

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

## RFK Jr. Suggests Replacing Hundreds of Federal Health Employees



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

## Will Trump Appointments Complicate Mike Johnson's Grip on the House?

---

### About the writer

---

**Casey Mock**

### Conversation 5 Comments

---

Start a discussion, not a fire. Post with kindness. Read our guidelines [here](#).

 [Log in](#) [Sign up](#)

What do you think?

Sort by **Best** ▾

**Your Other Left**

2 days ago

...



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**[Reply](#) · [Like](#) [Downvote](#) · [Share](#)WH **William Howell**

8 November, 2024

...

AI is having a much greater impact on society than all the adolescents in America on their mobile phones and I-pads. It is not a video game platform.

We can be our own lawyers, diagnose illnesses, and do much more.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) [Downvote](#) · [Share](#)PR **Paul Rodgers**

...

1 day ago

Encourage dysphoria is already available without AI. The remedy then proposed is cut out and implant. So will AI offer a remedy?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) [Downvote](#) · [Share](#)**William Shoemaker**

...

8 November, 2024

What ever happened to good old normal intelligence?!!

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) 1 [Downvote](#) · [Share](#)B **Bob**

...

3 hours ago

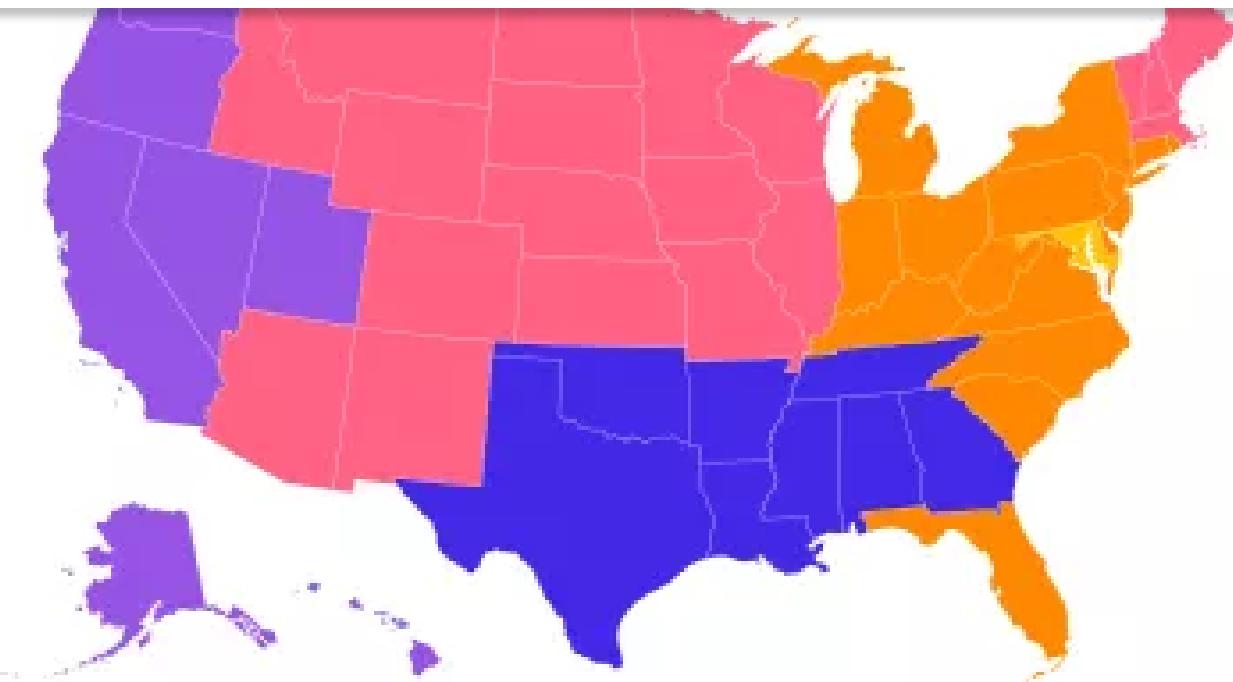
Google now first answers questions with AI, irritating. Many eBay ads are now written by AI, AI sucks, get rid of it or experiment in a lab not in real life.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) [Downvote](#) · [Share](#)

Powered by OpenWeb

[Terms](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Feedback](#)

## Trending

UP NEXT [Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion](#)**01** [The Most Popular Thanksgiving Side Dish In Every State](#)

24 comments

**02** [Americans Want Job Ads To List Salary](#)

13 comments

**03** [Is There Mail on Veterans Day? Post Office, UPS, FedEx Hours](#)

3 comments

**04** [Video Seems to Show North Korean Soldier Watching Raunchy Videos in Russia](#)

39 comments

**05** [What Donald Trump's 'Concealed Carry Reciprocity' Means for Gun Rights](#)

78 comments

[← Back To Homepage](#)



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**~~Dolphins Star Comes Back Ruled Out of Game with Concussion~~**CELSIUS Energy Drinks Confirms Sponsorship of Jake Paul vs. Mike Tyson Heavyweight Fight on Netflix****Will Trump Appointments Complicate Mike Johnson's Grip on the House?****Marco Rubio to Be Picked as Donald Trump's Secretary of State****Everything Lee Zeldin Has Said About Climate Change****THE DEBATE****Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Changes With the Wind | Opinion**

By Daniel R. DePetris

**VS****The End of America's Well-Intentioned Empire | Opinion**

By Dan Perry

**OPINION****China Can't Win Trump's New Trade War | Opinion**By Gordon G. Chang**The Case for Education Secretary Justice**By Josh Hammer



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

## Welcome to the Muskification of Media | Opinion

By Clayton Weimers



## The Day the Better Angels of Our Nature Went Out to Lunch | Opinion

By Adrienne Shropshire



## Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion

By Sam Raus



## Our Kids Shouldn't Be Silicon Valley's Guinea Pigs for AI | Opinion

By Casey Mock



## Thank You, Democrats | Opinion

By Lee Habeeb

## Democrats Should Become Liberals | Opinion

By Ross Rosenfeld

## Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Changes With the Wind | Opinion

By Daniel R. Depetris

## The Death of Obamaism and the Historic MAGA Opportunity

By Josh Hammer

## What Does It Mean to Be a Jewish Veteran and Zionist in America? | Opinion



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**[Science >](#)[Health >](#)[Rankings >](#)[Opinion >](#)[Entertainment >](#)[Fact Check >](#)[My Turn >](#)[Education >](#)[Events >](#)[Sports >](#)[Podcasts >](#)[Better Planet >](#)[Better Workplaces >](#)[Vault >](#)[Mightier >](#)[Autos >](#)[Newsletters >](#)[Unconventional >](#)[Vantage >](#)[Experts >](#)[Voices >](#)

## Trending

[Israel at War](#)[Vladimir Putin](#)[Russia-Ukraine War](#)[Donald Trump](#)

## Newsletters in your inbox [See all](#)

 [The Bulletin \(Daily\)](#)  
[See Sample](#) [The Gist of It \(Daily\)](#) [Geoscope \(Twice a Week\)](#) [The 1600 \(Daily\)](#)

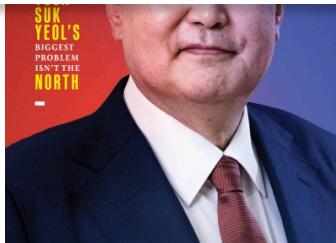
## In The Magazine



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking News (As it Breaks) | <input type="checkbox"/> The Debate (Twice a Week)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pawsitively (Daily)          | <input type="checkbox"/> Better Planet (Weekly)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My Turn (Weekly)             | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsweek Pulse (2x3 Times a Month) |



Email address

[Sign up now](#)

You can unsubscribe at any time. By signing up you are agreeing to our [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

**November 15  
2024 Issue**
**Company**[About Us](#)[Masthead](#)[Diversity](#)[Announcements](#)[Archive](#)[Policies and Standards](#)[Mission Statement](#)[Leadership](#)[Newsletters](#)[Press Center](#)**Editions:**

U.S. Edition

日本

Polska

România

**Contact**[Advertise](#)[Careers](#)[Contact Us](#)[Corrections](#)**Terms of Use**[Cookie Policy](#)[Copyright](#)[Privacy Policy](#)[Terms & Conditions](#)



SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

UP NEXT **Don't Stifle AI With Regulation | Opinion**