Introduction

Girl Security, a nonpartisan, non-profit organization building equitable pathways in national security for girls, women, and gender minorities, is proud to share the inaugural National Girl Security Strategy - an assessment of national security through the lens of twenty-six fellows ages 15 through 20 from across the United States.

The U.S. Government's National Security Strategy should serve as a guide to Congress, as well as the American public and global community, to better understand a particular presidential administration's strategic priorities. The strategy should also provide some detail and depth as to how a particular administration may implement its respective priorities. Often, however, the National Security Strategy remains unfamiliar to most Americans on behalf of whom these crucial decisions are made and actions are taken, despite the lasting and pervasive impacts. This document is intended to provide a dedicated space for girls, women, and gender minorities - those historically underrepresented in national security and often overlooked in national security priorities and pathways - to add their unparalleled insights to discourse around the nation and the world's most pressing security challenges.

As we say at Girl Security, girls and women are taught to fear everything and often secured from nothing. They are the most innately qualified security practitioners, yet the American public and a global community are often deprived of the opportunity to see "security" through their lenses. To create this strategy, fellows were provided a set of themes that represent current national security challenges including: artificial intelligence, climate security, gender-based violence, cybersecurity, nuclear weapons, and domestic terrorism. In cohorts of five, the fellows spent fifteen weeks implementing a research strategy that included informational interviews with leading experts. As the reader will find, each collaborative approached their strategy differently: some took a more granular approach to a particular action or population and others focused their analysis on holistic efforts. Overall, this strategy includes actionable recommendations to bridge the generational gaps in understanding of national security, informed by girls’ and women's lived experiences. In addition, each cohort opted for an intersectional approach to the recommendations.

Girl Security is committed to advancing the occupational identity of girls, women, and gender minorities in national security pathways, as well as efforts to reform those cultures, policies, and practices which have resulted in the exclusion of these same populations.
Girl Security’s mission is guided by a principled belief that continuing to undervalue more than half the population in the most powerful political realm in the world will impede America’s ability to remain agile in a global security landscape, and more importantly, its ability to secure the fundamental democratic values upon which America was founded. Civic empowerment is a core motivating purpose of our work.

At Girl Security, we believe in creating a safe and supportive space for participants to explore and test the boundaries of their own understanding of fundamentally complex issues. We are working to shift norms by supporting the advancement and amplification of girls’ and women’s ideas in a most important domain. Our emphasis on such competencies as ethical decision making, strategy and implementation, and critical thinking equip participants with enduring, transferable skills across professional pathways.

National security is the most important common cause: our continued national security will rely on our nation's ability to forge a new, common understanding of the democratic ideals valued by all and required to preserve the future of American democracy and global security. Girls and women bring from diverse identities unparalleled insights to a new national security understanding and the National Girl Security Strategy captures some of their recommendations.

Girl Security would like to thank Erin Connolly for her leadership, guidance, and commitment to empowering future generations of national security leaders, while also serving her country. We would also like to thank Girl Security mentors, mentees, supporters, allies, and champions for their dedication to building a national security workforce for the future. Thank you to El Nicklin for her creative direction.

On behalf of the Girl Security Team, we want to thank and congratulate the Fellows for their commitment to this work amid such uncertain times.

Lauren Bean Buitta
Founder & CEO
Girl Security
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. ADVANCING A MORE INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO CLIMATE SECURITY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyssa Eamranond (Age: 19), Ilinca Drondoe (Age:17), Jasmine De Leon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Age: 18), Kelly Huang (Age: 18), Nicole Chowdhury (Age: 16),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Prachi Gyanmote (Age: 17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. PROMOTING A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO CYBERSECURITY</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Kay (Age: 17), Amulya Panakam (Age: 17), Sarah Velez (Age: 18),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sravya Kotamraju (Age: 16), and Zayna Cheema (Age: 15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. ACKNOWLEDGING THE PERVERSIVE IMPACTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL SECURITY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abby Tupper (Age: 17), Ashika Srivastava (Age: 18), Gurman Dhaliwal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Age: 19), Kenatu Habetaslassa (Age: 19), and Zikora Akanegbu (Age: 16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. CONFRONTING THE RISE OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimee Yan (Age: 19), Alexandra Rozmarin (Age: 17), Megan Mingo (Age:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19), Rachel Rochford (Age: 16), and Razel Suansing (Age: 19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. ADVANCING A MORE ETHICAL APPROACH TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUCLEAR WEAPONS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ava Luna Pardo-Keegan (Age: 19), Ilyne Castellanos (Age: 20), Kristie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, (Age: 18), Mary Raines Alexander (Age: 17),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Sama Kubba (Age: 18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Addendum: Strategic Implementation Plans</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Endnotes</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. ADVANCING A MORE INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO CLIMATE SECURITY

“The policy recommendations below emphasize the intersectionality of environmental protection, defense and national security, and social justice and equality.”

Alyssa Eamranond (Age: 19), Ilinca Drondoe (Age: 17), Jasmine De Leon (Age: 18), Kelly Huang (Age: 18), Nicole Chowdhury (Age: 16), and Prachi Gyanmote (Age: 17)

Climate change presents a crucial threat to U.S. national security. As a “threat multiplier,” it exacerbates existing national security challenges such as natural disasters, resource scarcity, economic disruptions, mass displacement, and global-power rivalries. A United States strategy to address climate change requires individual action and advocacy at the local level as well as broader change on the national level to mitigate climate change and prepare for its effects.

The implications of climate change on national and international security are multifold. As countries contend with the pressure to accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, geopolitical tensions are forecasted to escalate. Increased drought and natural disasters cause food and water shortages and intensify conflict within and between nations over access to vital resources. Geopolitical flashpoints will be exacerbated by mass displacement due to climate change impacts, which may lead to unrest as well as terrorist recruitment from vulnerable populations. Furthermore, developing nations are disproportionately impacted by the changing climate in addition to being the least able to adapt to such changes. All of these factors will further threaten national security priorities, while resulting in greater U.S. involvement in humanitarian aid and stabilization efforts.

With respect to defense, the Pentagon's October 2021 report on the impacts of climate change states that the environmental crisis is affecting U.S. military installations and service members, while increasing the number of missions conducted by the Department of Defense. Climate change also induces sea-level rise, storm surges, and flooding that are likely to cause infrastructure damage, loss of utilities, and loss of operational capability for defense operations; a sea-level rise of three feet would threaten 128 DoD bases.

The many implications of climate change are poised to affect nearly all Americans and its allies; thus, addressing the impacts of the climate crisis is vital when it comes to ensuring security and future prosperity for both the United States and the world at large. Therefore, the United States must concurrently work to prevent further climate change and adapt to its inevitable consequences. This requires setting targets for long-term reductions in
carbon emissions and collaborating with the international community to plan for the destabilizing effects of natural disasters. Furthermore, a strategy should ensure that those most affected by these impacts (i.e., women, especially women of color) are given a voice at the table during policymaking and strategizing for improved climate security. The objective of this climate security strategy is to promote policies guided by values of resilience, equity, safety, and inclusivity. The policy recommendations provided in this document are sectioned into four key areas: education, whole-of-government approach, elevating marginalized communities, and allocation of resources.

The Current State of Climate Security
It is vital to understand the current state of climate security to properly diagnose U.S. resource allocation and policy changes. Climate change is a macro- and micro-level issue. Individual communities and groups including women, minority, and Native and indigenous communities are adversely impacted through actions like deforestation, globalization, and barriers to education. This has resulted in greater malnutrition, food insecurity, and less biodiversity, while also widening detrimental gaps between those nations that have the resources to implement climate security measures and those that do not.

"Dynamics in the national and international security space such as the COVID-19 pandemic, 'great power' competition with other nation states, and the rise of domestic terrorism, as well as the spread of disinformation and misinformation, can delay progress in achieving greater climate security."

A fundamental challenge to progress in both climate change policy and solution implementation is a concern over how such policies and solutions might compete with other national security priorities. Dynamics in the national and international security space such as the COVID-19 pandemic, 'great power' competition with other nation states, and the rise of domestic terrorism, as well as the spread of disinformation and misinformation, at times can delay progress in achieving greater climate security.
The United States has made important progress in climate policy in recent years, but it still fails to take the necessary leadership in facilitating change. While the 2015 National Security Strategy outlined goals and actions that include significant immediate environmental impacts of climate change, strategies to date do not address the negative consequences on individual groups of people. Understanding the human impact is essential to effective future policies; this approach guides the recommendations presented later in this strategy. In addition, more dramatic changes that would effectively reduce emissions in the United States, like a carbon tax, remain widely debated and considered to be government overreach. Yet, climate change demands more significant action to protect U.S. national security interests.

The Biden Administration seeks to implement new climate policy to address the impact of climate change on national security more quickly. President Biden's plan for a clean energy revolution and environmental justice outlines ambitious goals such as reaching “a 100% clean energy economy and net-zero emissions no later than 2050.” The administration plans to achieve this by increasing spending in the climate sector in order to increase renewable energy use, such as wind and solar, as well as electric vehicle use. In addition, there are plans to work with the United States Environmental Protection Agency in order to cut methane and carbon emissions. Congress has demonstrated interest in intersectional climate change action that seeks to positively include communities of color and women to create more effective climate policy. This demonstrates critical support for the agenda outlined below.

The Connection Between Climate Change and Gender Equality
To understand the impact of climate change, the United States must look at those most affected: primarily, the global population of women. Because this is a global challenge with global repercussions, any strategy requires a global solution that should be aided by United States resources. Gender equality is critical in the discussion of climate change because the correlation between environment and gender is the key to finding long-term climate adaptation strategies. The disproportionate gendered impacts of climate change are particularly acute for women in low-income households globally. This is evidenced by recent data that reveals that an estimated “80 percent of studies find women are more likely to suffer from climate-driven food insecurity.” In 2021, climate-related events will prevent at least four million girls in low- and lower/middle-income countries from completing their education. Not only will women's education be further imperiled, but the increasingly complex and fatal consequences of climate change exacerbate existing imbalanced statuses in society. For example, during natural disasters, the same shelters that provide human refuge trigger fear in women who are weary from domestic and sexual violence, and thus, often avoid using them altogether.
As the world shifts towards increasingly global interactions and influences, United States national security policies and strategies must mirror that transition. Through this National Girl Security Strategy, the United States aims to uplift women in such positions in order to reduce the effect of climate change and thus reduce the threat.

As climate situations become more dire, women are being forced to turn to different methods in order to secure some type of safety for both themselves and their families. Through such avenues, women’s sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) are in peril. The uptick in natural disasters has also contributed to widespread healthcare access issues.

The recent White House National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality emphasizes that “climate-related disasters hinder access to essential services, including sexual and reproductive health care.” In the United States, this was evident in the aftermath of the snowstorm that hit Texas in 2021, which impacted access for many of those seeking abortion care. After Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005, researchers found that women faced higher rates of partner violence and sexual assault. Climate change and weather-related disasters also contribute to increases in child marriage rates as well as heightened interpersonal violence rates, as men use violence as a means to exert control over scarce natural resources.

Inclusive climate change solutions must include recognition and inclusion of Native and Indigenous populations as well. Due to a deep, historic relationship with ecosystems and habitats, Native and Indigenous women bring unparalleled knowledge to climate solutions. Furthermore, the Malala Fund estimates that combined action on girls’ education and sexual and reproductive health and rights is the most cost-effective way to limit the global temperature rise to 2°C higher than pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. If every girl worldwide had access to twelve years of quality education, as well as reproductive healthcare and contraception, carbon emissions would be reduced by as much as 85.4 gigatons by 2050. This measure would be four times as effective as solar
power and the second-most effective solution for avoiding carbon emissions. Propositions that address women's needs, such as the Women and Climate Change Act of 2021 introduced in the House of Representatives in January 2021, detail how policies that are gender-sensitive are also more effective. The Women and Climate Change Act of 2021 states: "Women are shown to have a multiplier effect because women use their income and resources, when given the necessary tools, to increase the well-being of their children and families, and thus play a critical role in reducing food insecurity, poverty, and socioeconomic effects of climate change." Furthermore, this Act draws attention to other critical effects of climate change, including but not limited to: unpaid care work, access to education, access to reproductive health and rights, food insecurity, climate resilience, safety from gender-based violence, and women’s involvement and leadership in the development of frameworks for climate resilience—all of which contribute to a nation's security.

**Priority Policy Actions**

As the world seeks to mitigate the challenges posed by climate change, the United States must not only see climate change as a threat, but also as an opportunity. The policy recommendations below emphasize the intersectionality of environmental protection, defense and national security, and social justice and equality. Developing holistic strategies that integrate these action areas will lead to more durable solutions to the climate crisis.

Going forward, climate policy must incorporate the following policy actions in order to be effective. The United States encourages collaboration with our global allies to fulfill these actions and ensure that climate change, a problem without passports or borders, is met with a global response.

**PRIORITY ACTION #1**

**Whole-of-Government Approach.** Incorporating a whole-of-government approach is essential to creating effective climate policies. The acute need for climate action and attention to environmental issues should be incorporated across sectors and government departments including the National Security community. For example, the United States Navy, Army, and Air Force each have a climate security advisory. On December 5, 2021, the Congressional policy 50 USC § 3060 went into effect, establishing a Climate Security Advisory Council for the purpose of “assisting intelligence analysts with respect to analysis of climate security,” facilitating relevant coordination, and ensuring that the intelligence community “is adequately prioritizing climate change.” The United States should encourage continued progress towards integrating environmental analysis across agencies.

An example of applying the whole-of-government approach to connect climate change and other national security priorities relates to migration. In preparing for increased migration as sea levels begin to rise, the United States should employ a phased approach
to address the communities that are on the frontlines of the climate change crisis. There must be a push towards immigration resources such as career centers, access to education, housing, and health, for example, to facilitate a smooth process and demonstrate America's leadership. Migration tears people and families away from their homes while also drastically altering the social and political landscapes of habitable land. There needs to be extensive diplomatic measures to develop a coordinated effort to address climate-induced mass forced migration that will be occurring.

PRIORITY ACTION #2

**Climate Change Educational Programs.** Through the establishment of a climate change curriculum, girls and all youth in the public education system would be taught the causes of climate change and its effects, but also ways in which to minimize its effects. This includes exposure to an expanded vision of green skills, which are the knowledge, abilities, values, and attitudes needed to live in, develop, and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society. This can be achieved by promoting sustainable values through climate education. The United States must start by implementing training institutions that prioritize core values to inform climate change curricula that can be shared with educators, by creating incentives for climate change education at the state-level or by integrating climate change education into existing science, technology, engineering, and math requirements through federal grants similar to Obama's Race to the Top initiative.\(^{16, 17}\)

Additionally, greater awareness around climate security, especially among younger generations, may spur community-based activism. Empowering students to take action in their respective schools ensures that policy and action will endure over time. This can also be encouraged by granting students excused absences in order to support student activism with federal policy. As a result, a high-level political declaration for the 2022 fiscal year would be effective in encouraging educational facilities to teach about climate change.

PRIORITY ACTION #3

**Elevating Marginalized Communities.** Economic advancement, women's rights, and racial equality are also critical to effective climate policy. Important steps include:

- expanding access to and training for green jobs
- listening to the needs of marginalized communities who are disproportionately impacted by the changing climate and issues of pollution
- ensuring greater access to reproductive and maternal care services
- prioritizing funding towards the equality of ethnic and Indigenous minorities

The aforementioned areas of action, along with others that address the intersectionality between climate change and progress in other key areas, should guide interagency cooperation as well as relevant policies and programs.
In order make certain that climate security policies address the intersectional nature of the climate crisis and its disproportionate impacts on women and girls, the United States must ensure that each policy meets set standards for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accountability. In assessing whether or not policies meet these standards, the United States can draw inspiration from the Bechdel Test: a measure to determine whether media represents women in a three-dimensional manner by asking whether there are two or more named female characters in a film and whether they converse with each other about subjects other than men. With this in mind, it is strongly recommended that all climate security policies implemented by the United States meet at least half of the following measures of women’s inclusion and empowerment:

1) The policy must include at least one clause specifically addressing its impact on women and girls and the way its implementation must consider this impact

2) The policy must include, or provide for, a gender analysis of its implications on women and girls domestically and internationally

3) The policymaking process must include at least 50 percent women in the climate security policymaking processes, and at least half of those women must be women of color (including Native and Indigenous women) to reflect population demographics in the United States

4) The policy must consider the importance of girls’ education, including but not limited to: reproductive health education, climate change education etc.; if relevant, the policy should ensure it promotes access to education, or does not interfere with its completion

Furthermore, the United States must prioritize women’s climate security initiatives and recognize the important contributions of women as experts, leaders, stakeholders, and educators, despite longstanding gender inequality.

"In assessing whether or not policies meet these standards, the United States can draw inspiration from the Bechdel Test: a measure to determine whether media represents women in a three-dimensional manner by asking whether there are two or more named female characters in a film and whether they converse with each other about subjects other than men."
PRIORITY ACTION #4

Allocation of Resources. The United States has a unique role and ability to reprioritize its fiscal resources to address dire climate change challenges:

1) Diplomacy: Undoubtedly, the United States' involvement in wars and as a supplier of weapons and manpower to other countries has led to greater food insecurity, increased destruction, nuclear fall out, and other factors that worsen infrastructure and exacerbate the effects of climate change. By employing greater diplomatic efforts that consider the importance of international cooperation and climate action, the United States can work to mitigate the dire effects of war.

2) Budgeting: the United States should divert funding from its defense budget toward climate change efforts and initiatives that support those most directly affected by climate change in a way that promotes enduring self-sufficiency. Such shifts might mitigate the effects of climate change that spur further military intervention and have positive long-term effects, such as less extreme weather.

3) Unused resources: repurposing old aircraft models and other such devices to help deliver materials and resources would be a beneficial and sustainable alternative to scrapping and disposing of technology in a way that contributes to pollution.

4) Defense: The Department of Defense is the world's largest institutional user of petroleum and correspondingly, the single largest producer of greenhouse gasses (GHG) in the world. Furthermore, the United States military emits more CO2 than many other nation, including Morocco, Sweden, New Zealand, and Switzerland. If the Department of Defense were a country, the Pentagon would be the world's 55th largest CO2 emitter.

The military's dependence on fossil fuels is also a threat to overseas operations; planes, ships, and vehicles can be placed in vulnerable positions when they refuel, with fuel convoys remaining notable targets for improvised explosive devices and other attacks. Statistics from the Department of Defense and the Energy Information Administration indicate that one American life is lost for every 24 fuel resupply missions.

With these factors in mind, the United States must be conscious of the environmental and security impacts of military deployment and seek to transition its military operations to renewable energy systems by 2050 or earlier. Potential initiatives to fulfill this goal include using alternative fuels like biofuel blends to power vehicles, implementing hybrid-electric propulsion technology in new aircraft models, and utilizing renewable energy microgrids to power facilities.
Military installations are also vulnerable with respect to climate change. According to the Department of Defense, approximately 1700 military bases on coastlines alone will be impacted by sea level rise. This type of large scale destruction that would come with further environmental consequences due to debris, abandoned structures, and construction of more bases. The United States should follow the example of the military bases already adapting to rising sea levels, such as Langley Air Force Base which has installed flood water pumps and built a shoreline seawall to protect its facilities. It is also vital that military building codes are revised to consider the impacts of climate change.

Conclusion
As the United States prioritizes national security concerns and reconciles competing priorities, it is important to regard climate change as a threat multiplier that not only exacerbates national security issues, but causes a host of other threats at the micro and macro level. Climate change is a consequential and bipartisan national security concern. Furthermore, it is an issue of equity and justice that disproportionately impacts women and historically marginalized communities. The authors of this strategy urge the United States and congressional leaders to collaborate with both existing partners and allies in mitigating climate change, while amplifying and respecting the voices of those most impacted by the climate crisis.
B. PROMOTING A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO CYBERSECURITY

“Cybersecurity education is essential for the foundations of a secure and successful future.”

Amanda Kay (Age: 17), Amulya Panakam (Age: 17), Sarah Velez (Age: 18), Sravya Kotamraju (Age: 16), and Zayna Cheema (Age: 15)

Technology now permeates every aspect of daily life in the United States. Over the past decade, there has been increasing concern over a workforce shortage in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (“STEM”) fields. The COVID-19 pandemic has fostered a digital transformation, with an unprecedented number of schools and businesses using virtual platforms for education, business, and more. The pandemic highlighted the shortage of talent in technology and exposed pervasive cybersecurity threats to the United States.

The United States faces a multitude of cyberattacks from various groups and nations, which highlights the need for cybersecurity advancements in both the public and private sectors. Calls for greater diversity in cybersecurity teams to confront our most pressing cybersecurity challenges continue to gain momentum. Despite awareness of the importance of diversity in technology fields, cybersecurity has remained male-dominated as girls and minorities are typically discouraged from math and science at an early age. The United States cannot prevent or respond to cybersecurity challenges unless it understands the risk and financial impact of ignoring the demand for cyber-literate professionals alongside the diffusive impacts cyber has on all citizens.

In addition, cyber hygiene is every citizen’s responsibility. As schools moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, cybersecurity became increasingly pertinent for schools, parents, and students due to a growing reliance on computers and other technologies. As the pandemic progressed, schools faced the issue of making sure that students were prepared for full-time online learning. Students needed access to computers, high-speed internet, and other resources that were not always necessary in the classroom. Cybersecurity education is essential for the foundations of a secure and successful future.

A more secure and prosperous future must also recognize the unique impacts of cybersecurity on disadvantaged regions in the United States, many of which are not able to offer cybersecurity education for the youth and do not have access to enough technology for all of their students, with ratios of economically-struggling students to computers being disproportionately high. There are even other regions that have very high-poverty schools that have little to no access to the internet or technology as well. In
fact, almost 20 percent of households in the United States earn an annual income of $25,000 dollars or less, which may not afford basic needs nor technology-centered needs. This will negatively impact their exposure to education as the focus of these families will be more on immediate necessities. Students who are financially struggling or do not have access to technology are severely disadvantaged in their ability to learn about computer science and cybersecurity, such as coding, networking, and how to protect themselves online. Without any hands-on learning, underprivileged students are unable to receive proper education on this matter. Thus, it is imperative that the United States incentivize implementing cybersecurity and computer education to financially struggling regions.

**Priority Policy Actions**

**PRIORITY ACTION #1**

*Creating a Cybersecurity Curriculum for Technology Throughout all Schools in the United States.* The transition to online learning demonstrated the disparity between locations and students that had greater access to technology to those that did not. It directly correlates to cybersecurity education as computers, hard drives, and other technologies are necessary to attain a proper cybersecurity education.

While the US Department of Education (DOE) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) publish recommended teaching strategies for school districts, local governments may adopt or ignore these recommendations. This results in a diminished appreciation of and demand for technical classes. Inability to access these resources impedes students' ability to learn more about cybersecurity firsthand. Access to technology fosters equity in schools and a student's cybersecurity education both in and out of the classroom. Every student learns differently and technology provides even more opportunities for students to learn at a pace that is most suitable for them and their learning needs. Creating a space where both girls and minorities have access to computers to safely learn about cybersecurity would increase girls' and minorities' participation in computer classes while enhancing their cybersecurity education. Providing technology for all students and designing computer courses is critical to this education and promotes a more nuanced understanding of cybersecurity. A United States cyber education initiative will also cultivate a more secure and prepared nation to effectively confront various cybersecurity issues or threats against the United States.

**PRIORITY ACTION #2**

*Incentivizing Cybersecurity As a Core Class.* In order to prepare for the security challenges of our increasingly interconnected and technologically advanced societies, schools must start placing an emphasis on including cybersecurity and technical classes that promote online data security as core classes. Since courses and graduation eligibility are mainly
influenced by state and local governments, this causes a great amount of variation regarding what each area considers “critical” in a child's academic journey. However, the federal government still has an important role to play in education through its distribution of funding under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and assistance programs for children with disabilities.

There have been efforts made to incentivize technology classes, like the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity Education and Training Assistance Program which distributes free cybersecurity, computer science, and STEM curriculum to K-12 educators. The limited funding in the education sector adds a challenge to integrating the proposed cybersecurity programs. This is compounded by the impact of prolonged exposure to technology on children. Online use must be managed for the protection of vulnerable individuals through the implementation of cybersecurity education and web monitoring practices used throughout national security. Even so, access to cybersecurity knowledge in American public schools forms a larger concern over America's future ability to protect from the increasing number of cyber threats. Incentives and the redirection of cybersecurity education are a key step in motivating schools to place a greater emphasis on cybersecurity education.

**Access to cybersecurty knowledge in American public schools forms a larger concern over America's future ability to protect from the increasing number of cyber threats.**

**PRIORITY ACTION #3**

**Implementing/Incentivizing Cybersecurity Programs in Public Schools.** Expanding federal education funding to include an incentive for those school districts that implement the numerous research and technical training strategies recommended by the DOE, NSF, and DHS would create a sense of importance for technical subjects, which are currently largely recognized as optional classes.

1) **Generate Local Grassroots Support.** In order to anticipate pushback by certain school districts, it is essential to generate local grassroots support to demonstrate the need for cybersecurity school programs. Additionally, working with local organizations will help transition such policy from a top-down regulation to a malleable approach informed by the needs of different communities.

2) **Providing Opportunities to Teachers.** Unlike previous efforts in technology literacy training, the proposed policy centers around children in elementary and early middle school at the developmental age where such concepts remain most necessary. Teachers must have the opportunity to increase their knowledge in the subject and be compensated for their time.
In the United States, Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies for children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. As such, the utilization of Title I policy and funds towards bridging the gap between cybersecurity and low-income students will economically benefit the United States and strengthen U.S national security. Students in underprivileged and high-poverty districts are unlikely to be exposed to cyber-security education, and Title I can help overcome this lack of access that hinders opportunities for often underrepresented students to be exposed to opportunities within cybersecurity.

The integration of tech literacy classes at the elementary and middle school levels poses unique opportunities and challenges. With a succinct understanding of the precautions, integrating cybersecurity as a core class and therefore incentivizing cybersecurity programs in public schools requires the former.

PRIORITY ACTION #4

*Provide Disadvantaged Students Access to Technology and Cybersecurity Opportunities.* In order to further incentivize implementing cybersecurity education, the United States should provide broadband access and connected devices to disadvantaged students by increasing the government budget on financial aid to low-income families. This ensures that low-income families and disadvantaged schools can receive sufficient financial aid to be able to afford critical cyber infrastructure.
In order for students to have hands-on-learning for cybersecurity, having stable connections to the internet as well as broadband access is necessary. The Federal Communications Commission has been working on this issue by creating the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program. The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program was created to assist families and households who are struggling to afford internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. This program connects eligible households to jobs, healthcare services, virtual classrooms and more. The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program was recently replaced by Affordable Connectivity Program. The Affordable Connectivity Program was provided $14.2 billion by the Infrastructure Act, and the program provides eligible, disadvantaged households with a discount on broadband services and connected devices. Increasing funding and support from the Department of Education for this program will help enable the United States to provide cybersecurity education to disadvantaged students, bridge the digital divide in U.S. schools, and address inequities within cybersecurity education.

Conclusion
Through the revitalization of cyber education in the United States, underserved communities have opportunities to enter a dominating technology industry that is searching for talent. This creates the necessary groundwork to support marginalized populations, fulfill the shortage of workers in this field, and support and grow student endeavors in this industry. Implementing and incentivizing cybersecurity education can encourage school districts to emphasize cybersecurity education, allocate technology-based learning (to keep up with the digital transformation happening across all sectors), and initiate students to develop critical digital practices. Through cybersecurity education, disadvantaged students have increased access to technology. Ultimately, providing cybersecurity education will strengthen U.S. national security by preparing the future workforce, supporting preventative measures, and informing future generations to be digitally literate to create a cyber resilient America.
C. ACKNOWLEDGE THE PERVERSIVE IMPACTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

“Human trafficking is a violent crime and public health issue that violates human rights.”

Abby Tupper (Age: 17), Ashika Srivastava (Age: 18), Gurman Dhaliwal (Age: 19), Kenatu Habetaslassa (Age: 19), and Zikora Akanegbu (Age: 16)

Human trafficking is a violent crime and public health issue that violates human rights. In the United States, human trafficking disproportionally affects Native American and indigenous communities, yet the issue receives minimal attention. Native Americans are victimized by human trafficking at rates higher than that of the general population. In fact, Native American women are stalked more than twice the rate of other women and murdered at more than ten times the national average. Native Americans are already considered a vulnerable population because they experience higher levels of poverty and entry into the foster system, which are both risk factors for human trafficking.

The United States is failing to protect this vulnerable population and if unaddressed, this national security issue contributes heavily to international human trafficking that fuels conflict. In order to tackle this comprehensively, the United States must provide a multifaceted approach on the tribal, state, and federal level. Such a strategy should be created with an intersectional lens, explicitly include race in datasets to establish the true magnitude of human trafficking on specific populations, establish preventative measures to address complicit institutions, and include Native American and indigenous communities as active contributors in the creation, implementation, and enforcement of legislation.

The State of Gender-Based Violence
The UN Refugee Agency defines gender-based violence (GBV) as harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender, rooted in the abuse of power and harmful gender norms. Sex trafficking is the epitome of gender-based violence. Yet, the issue has lacked awareness and direction of resources, likely because many of the victims belong to marginalized communities in the United States. Despite constituting nearly half of the victims in the United States, Native and indigenous women are often overlooked and left without proper support.

The current administration aims to prioritize the safety of Native American women because they experience higher rates of gender-based violence compared to the national average. Although the current stance is commendable, it must be noted that the history of the United States and Native American communities is marred by violence, subjugation,
and distrust. Numerous treaties (often utilizing offensive language) were broken, thereby eroding trust. The establishment of Indian Affairs within the Department of War in 1824 solidified the hostile attitude and contentious relationship between the United States and Native Americans. Today this hostile relationship is apparent in several facets of Native and indigenous life, including higher unemployment rates, lower household incomes, lack of medical care, shorter life expectancy, and a legal loophole that impedes accountability for crimes against girls and women.

With respect to human trafficking, an estimated 40 percent of women who are victims of sex trafficking identify as American Indian, Alaska Native, or First Nations. The high rate of poverty, historical trauma, homelessness, exposure to violence, and drug and alcohol abuse have created vulnerable conditions for Native and indigenous communities, making them targets for traffickers. Further, Native American women are raped 34.1 percent more than non-Native women, and 1 in 3 women will be raped in their lifetime. Importantly, it must be acknowledged that non-Indians commit 88 percent of violent crimes against Native American women.

There are a variety of contributors to this problem such as the fracking industry. “Man camps,” also referred to as “work-camp modular housing,” established to house fracking workers in remote areas of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota have created a high demand for sex in areas with drugs, alcohol, and limited supervision. Casinos also contributed to the demand for sex trafficking in these areas. The prevalence of sex trafficking of Native Americans is not solely based on the multiple risk factors associated with the community; as experts have explained, it is “a continuation of the marginalization of Native populations in the United States.” Native women have been fetishized, bought, sold, and traded since initial European colonization of the American continent.

Human Trafficking Today
The U.S State Department and International Labor Organization estimate that human trafficking is a $150 billion annual business profiting those in sex trafficking. It is estimated that sex trafficking is quickly exceeding other high-profit crimes such as narcotics and firearms, which may only exacerbate the problem. Current legislation, mostly protecting and assisting victims, is inadequate for addressing human trafficking. While human trafficking may not appear as a national security issue, it must be noted that where there is human trafficking, there is often human smuggling. Human smuggling is defined as “the movement of a person across a border.” Therefore, in order to prevent vulnerable populations from becoming a part of illegal human trafficking schemes, the United States must take steps to ensure that groups – including Native Americans – are provided protection. In summary, 25 million people are annually trafficked worldwide and human trafficking enables terrorist and armed groups, finances criminal organizations, and supports abusive regimes. This illustrates that by addressing human trafficking targeted
towards Native and indigenous communities, the United States can mitigate a global issue by stopping the supply of revenue and power for extremist groups.

Additionally, the lack of data on the issue makes it difficult for government agencies to understand its magnitude. According to Jordan Daniel, Founder & Executive Director of the Indigenous-led grassroots group Rising Hearts, “Indigenous and native women are very much exploited. But at the same time, we are continuously erased and invisible, in the greater public when knowing about how prevalent this violence is within our communities, not just on reservations, but in urban and rural settings.”

Out of the four federal agencies with portfolios that include sex trafficking, only one reports the race and ethnicity of the indigenous victims. Jurisdictional issues between state, tribal, and federal governments allow perpetrators to slip through the cracks because of poor communication between agencies. Non-native people cannot be arrested or prosecuted by tribes, they fall under federal jurisdiction, allowing traffickers to operate with little risk of getting caught. In addition, there is a gross lack of support services for at-risk individuals and rape survivors. Over two-thirds of the 650 tribal lands reported lack of sexual assault examiners and sexual assault response team programs: 381 reported no services within an hour driving distance.

If the United States does not effectively engage with this issue, it will contribute to a growing human trafficking and smuggling industry that undermines national and international security. Human trafficking can fuel conflict because it functions as a source of revenue and power for extremist groups. It also destabilizes communities, thereby amplifying conflict and suppressing development missions. Examples include Africa’s Lord’s Resistance Army, Libyan militias, the Islamic State, and Boko Haram who have all engaged in sex trafficking to force their victims to serve as combatants, messengers, cooks, spies, and attract and mobilize male fighters. If not addressed, human trafficking - specifically sex trafficking - perpetuates a cycle of poverty that leaves communities vulnerable to conflict instigated by extreme actors.
Priority Policy Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
Incorporate an Intersectional Lens Approach. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the term “intersectionality” means “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.” It was coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics “intersect” with one another and inform one’s resulting relationship to power and privilege. In South Dakota, Native American women represent 40 percent of sex trafficking victims, though Native Americans make up only 8 percent of the state population. Without an intersectional lens, efforts to address inequalities and injustice in society, notably human trafficking, are likely to end up perpetuating systems of oppression.

PRIORITY ACTION #2
Include Race as a Factor for Victims in Federal Agency Datasets. One of the unique challenges faced by the Native American community in regard to human trafficking is that 3 out of 4 federal agencies that handle human trafficking cases disregard the ethnicity of the victim. This critical oversight prevents agencies from using aggregate data to report the true magnitude of human trafficking on specific populations. Without supporting statistics from appropriate federal agencies, Native American communities fail to receive appropriate resources and awareness to combat human trafficking. Therefore, the United States must include race as a factor for all human trafficking victims in all relevant federal agencies. This information can be used to highlight the disproportionate impact the Native American community faces from human trafficking and better understand potential solutions. This information will facilitate more awareness and direct more resources to the Native American communities.

PRIORITY ACTION #3
Focus on Contributors through Preventative Measures, not just on Victims. In addition, the United States should pursue preventative policy measures that would help ensure that the United States is targeting the perpetrators and consumers in this industry. As previously stated, there are many industries that are fueling the forced sex trafficking of Native women. The United States should institute a bureau within an agency that will investigate such industries' involvement in the creation of such camps and create measures that punish those involved. The United States must also work with industry to build stronger industry standards that hold accountable and prevent employee involvement in these illicit activities. With these measures in place, there will be a more hostile environment that will reduce traffickers' profit and help reduce the market incentive and potential harm faced by vulnerable populations. Finally, more public education and awareness is required so that when observed these traffickers can be reported to the proper authorities.
PRIORITY ACTION #4

Path Forward to Address Loophole. For a long period of time, Native American and indigenous tribes did not hold tribal jurisdiction over various non-Native violent crime offenders that committed these crimes on native reservations. This is one of many “jurisdictional loopholes” restricting the judicial power of Native and indigenous communities in cases of destructive and violent crimes committed on their own land. On March 7, 2013, former President Barack Obama signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA) of 2013 into law which allowed native and indigenous tribes to exercise "special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction" over offenders of domestic or dating violence on native and indigenous land. However, the scope of this law as applied to domestic violence crimes is limited and is not required for all tribes to follow. The United States must continue to consider how best to amend this law to cover a wider range of crimes and push for its adoption by all tribes. Currently, a bipartisan group of senators is working on a framework to update and reauthorize the VAWA list of crimes resulting in a firearm ban. Therefore, the United States should meet with various tribal leaders to discuss past and current issues regarding the law and to voice these concerns to members of the Senate in order to include these voices when advancing current and future legislation related to the VAWA.

Furthermore, native and indigenous women and girls are often hypersexualized and fetishized which leads to increased rates of sexual assault and murder. Examples of this are found in day-to-day media and culture including exaggerated Native American Halloween costumes and movies such as Pocahontas romanticize native and indigenous women. To combat this, the United States should focus on portraying more authentic women Native American role models and standards in mainstream American culture. This will increase accurate representation of native women and girls to educate and inform the public and decrease unrealistic expectations of native and indigenous women and girls. This effort may also reduce the “othering” of these vulnerable populations and result in increased awareness of the existing challenges faced by Native American populations.
Conclusion
The exploitation and devaluing of Native Americans has persisted since the colonizers came to America. Theft of Native land and the sexualization and illustration of Native Americans in the media has fostered a false narrative for decades and plagues the United States today. Violence against Native communities and the theft of their land in history has transformed into other means of exploitation and discrimination. Loopholes in the law and restricted mental health resources undermines these communities and makes them so vulnerable to human traffickers. The path forward must be a multifaceted approach with policies that include creating a safer environment and increased enforcement for Native Americans within the U.S. through tribal, state, and federal policies. Race and the role that it plays in policing and helping these disadvantaged communities needs to be at the forefront of public policy moving forward. Human trafficking cases need to represent race and the role that plays in the crime being committed. Education of the public should be a priority as well to change the conversation about Native American women and the hypersexualization and degradation forced on them. It is hoped that the enactment of these goals and policies will yield a safer, more just, and more equal America for Native and indigenous girls and women.
D. CONFRONTING THE RISE OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM

“Forming an advisory council of youth to educate policy makers on social media issues from those who use these platforms daily will ensure sustainability and longevity in combating this issue.”

Aimee Yan (Age: 19), Alexandra Rozmarin (Age: 17), Megan Mingo (Age: 19), Rachel Rochford (Age: 16), and Razel Suansing (Age: 19)

Following the January 6, 2021 attack on the Nation’s Capitol, the threat of domestic terrorism within the United States has grown. Concerns are exacerbated by an increasingly divisive political environment.

Partisanism and a divided government are not new features of democracy. For example, the bitter divide over slavery—prompted by regionalism and differing sources of economic revenue—resulted in over 600,000 deaths by the end of the Civil War. Even the undermining of democracy is derivative; the Bleeding Kansas events of the 1850s stem from disputes of voter fraud after the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 decided new territories would decide their stances on slavery through popular sovereignty.

The January 6th attack is only the most recent example of how partisan anger shakes the foundations of the “free world” and the pride it takes in autonomous governing. However, the rise of domestic terrorism predates 2021. In the past two years, the FBI reports that it has doubled its domestic terrorism caseload from about 1,000 to around 2,700 investigations. This rise is due to the impact of several variables, including the pervasive nature of technology and the breadth of communication and connectivity it enables, particularly on social media. The technological product development that has fundamentally changed the social fabric of the 21st century is now being used to enable homegrown terrorists in the United States.

Addressing Social Media as a New Front of Extremism

Experts point to five major themes to demonstrate how social media has catalyzed the process of extremism: the proliferation of echo chambers, more opportunities to be radicalized, radicalization acceleration, no physical constraints, and the opportunity for self-radicalization.

Social Media Algorithms Create Echo Chambers of Extremist Content

Echo chambers are created by platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as a result of their confirmation algorithms. For instance, when Facebook changed its algorithm in 2018, it
shifted to an engagement-based ranking system, meaning content that people engage with—posts that receive larger numbers of reactions, comments and shares—is distributed more broadly. According to Facebook’s own internal research, “angry content” is more likely to engage the platform’s users. Consequently, users who frequently engage with “angry content” are more likely to be shown similar content in the future, creating an echo chamber in which other perspectives are not presented.

Instagram’s infrastructure also breeds personalized echo chambers for users as its algorithm itself is reinforcing. A user clicking on one image will prompt more of that type of image to populate in features like the “Explore” page, especially with certain hashtags. Instagram also suggests that users follow additional accounts similar to those they already follow. In effect, someone who comes across extremist content is exposed to more and more of that content, creating a dangerous cycle. Instagram serves as an “entry” point for this type of content because of the algorithm’s speed in recommending similar content. Instagram combines the most dangerous aspects of other social media platforms: Facebook’s structure and Twitter’s youthful reach. Certain extremist social media accounts have huge followings; for example, @the_typical_liberal has over 2.5 million followers. Many of these social media accounts present the information in the form of memes with humor that disarms people, leaves them more susceptible to the ideas being conveyed, and minimizes the perceived harm these opinions create in the eyes of extremists. Also, Instagram relies on users to report problematic content, which is difficult to apply on a larger scale as a result of private accounts. People who follow the account believe in the ideas and do not report it; there is no outside policing force.

“Forming an advisory council of youth to educate policy makers on social media issues from those who use these platforms daily will ensure sustainability and longevity in combating this issue.”

Social Media’s Large Audience Fosters More Opportunities to Radicalize
Social media is widely used as a platform for recruitment to extremist causes. As of 2020, approximately 240 million Americans, or 72.3 percent of the American population were actively using social media each month. Social media has been widely used by terrorist groups, both foreign and domestic, for radicalization and recruitment purposes. In 2016, social media played a role in 90 percent of the extremists in Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS) data. Further, 73.2 percent of those included in the PIRUS data from 2011-2016 were using social media as a means of consuming extremist content.
Social media provides individuals with far more opportunities to radicalize, and with instant access to divisive content and people, this process is much more likely. Thus, one no longer needs to be in physical contact with another person to be radicalized: the process can be completed digitally. With these additional opportunities and without a need for physical contact, the process of radicalization has accelerated greatly. This acceleration is reflected in the number of domestic terror attacks in the United States. For instance, starting in 2017, the number of domestic-terror-related arrests began to outpace the number of international-terror-related arrests.  

**Instantaneous Nature of Social Media Contributes to Speed of Radicalization**  
A major safeguard against disinformation, hate speech, obscenity, or other harmful content is the flagging of content. In an attempt to combat COVID-19 misinformation, Instagram rolled out a policy to attach a flag with a link to credible health sources on all COVID-19 content. In terms of political content, Facebook and Twitter have policies to flag content from politicians it deemed newsworthy enough to stay up but was false in some way. In a broader sense, these social media platforms have automated systems that flag potentially harmful content that violates policies to be taken down.

Both these types of flags—these are seen by users on content as well as flags that prompt companies to take down content—are a centerpiece in current policy makers' proposals for regulating harmful content. But, studies show that users disregard flags on content. For example, studies on flagged tweets from Former President Donald Trump that contain election misinformation found that tweets with a warning flag spread farther and for a longer period of time than unflagged tweets. Also, algorithm experts assert that a misunderstanding of the limitations of these flagging mechanisms limit their efficiency. These limitations include: one algorithm cannot be applied to a variety of domains; solely automated systems risk the disproportionate censorship of already censored groups as a result of internal biases; algorithms lack the clear definitions of unacceptable speech needed to accurately flag content; and human decision-making needs to always check automated systems' work. Therefore, the speed at which radicalizing or extremist content is posted outpaces the abilities of these current mechanisms to keep the content in check.

**Social Media Circumvents Need for Physical Contact During Radicalization**  
Social media happens primarily on the digital plane. Teenage girls will say that a contemporary stage of sleepovers resulting from the proliferation of social media is the “same-room-text-message-phase,” where despite being in the same room, conversation happens entirely through memes sent on social media platforms. Extremist organizations are no longer encumbered by the demands and costs of real-time organizing. Instead, organizations take advantage of online infrastructures to disseminate their messages. Although they can invest in online bots to further proliferate their message, studies found
that humans are most responsible for sharing misleading content as a result of its shock-factor.\textsuperscript{70}

As extremist groups take advantage of these online structures, digital literacy gaps leave older generations vulnerable. Multiple studies show that older adults, especially over 60, are most unable to identify disinformation as false. In fact, adults over 65 were seven times more likely than those under 29 to post articles from fake news domains.\textsuperscript{71} Therefore, although inequity is intrinsic to many avenues of American life, the digital landscape is steeped in it.

"Social media happens primarily on the digital plane. Teenage girls will say that a contemporary stage of sleepovers resulting from the proliferation of social media is the “same-room-text-message-phase,” where despite being in the same room, conversation happens entirely through memes sent on social media platforms."

Self-Radicalization Possible through Prominence of Disinformation
A user’s experience on social media is self-driven. Thus, users engaging with false information on social media allows them to radicalize themselves or believe in the information enough that they seek out extremist causes.

An overarching theme is the prominence of disinformation on social media that often serves as radicalizing content. The proportion of online content that is “fake” or “real” is difficult to quantify because metrics are unreliable and the proliferation of non-human accounts could total over 40 percent of activity.\textsuperscript{72} Even so, disinformation was a driving force of the Capitol attack on January 6. Not only did a third of Republican representatives support a partisan audit of the election, but the court documents charging participants in the riot explain that beliefs in false narratives like widespread voter fraud prompted individuals to participate.\textsuperscript{73, 74} When people are constantly presented with a false view of the world, it does not take long for them to start accepting it. Experts call this a “post-
“truth era,” where individuals are more likely to believe a piece of information if it fits into their existing world view, regardless of if it is true. Further, disinformation is often more engaging than the truth; one study found that falsehoods on Twitter were 70 percent more likely to be retweeted than the truth. Reducing the amount of disinformation on social media would decrease the amount of anger these sites create and thereby reduce their impact in the radicalization process.

Therefore, addressing the spread of disinformation on social media, the echo chamber it creates, the additional opportunities to radicalize and self-radicalize, the lack of physical contact required for radicalization, and the accelerated process created by social media will be essential in reducing the threat of domestic terrorism in the United States.

**Priority Policy Actions**

**POLICY ACTION #1**

*Requiring Redirection Algorithms to Combat Echo Chambers.* The main problem with current feed-creation algorithms is their lack of variability. Redirection algorithms are tech’s response to this problem and are currently being developed by Jigsaw, a unit under Google committed to combating disinformation, censorship, toxicity and violent extremism. The Redirect Method is an open-source program being developed by Google and Moonshot CVE that uses targeted ads to serve alternate perspectives to users searching for harmful content. This type of advertising does not fall under the category of bait-and-switch, where advertised content is completely different from actual content. Instead, certain searches trigger a variety of content instead of content reaffirming the original search. Therefore, users’ extremist views would be responded to and challenged, which is the most effective and empowering way to change a radical perspective. Although this program in particular was developed to counter ISIS messaging, it can be easily altered to counter American political misinformation.

**POLICY ACTION #2**

*Drafting a Public Forum Clause to Reduce Opportunities for Radicalization.* The creation of a “public forum clause” would directly combat the number of opportunities for radicalization. Such a clause would define social media networks with more than a certain number of monthly users as public forums, enabling further government regulation and public scrutiny. Because these networks impact the lives of so many people, they no longer fall strictly under the private sector but instead act as global institutions and require more transparency than they currently provide.
PRIORITY ACTION #3
Incentivizing Companies to Take Personal Responsibility to Reduce Speed of Proliferation of Information. Repealing sections of U.S. Code § 230 would remove protections for companies when harmful content is published on their sites, incentivising them to introduce faster and more accurate mechanisms for taking down content, reducing the speed at which harmful information is spread. U.S. Code § 230 is a protection for private blocking and screening of offensive material. Subsection C1 of this code currently prevents Internet service providers from being liable for the content published on their platforms. Policy makers currently struggle with incentivizing companies to take responsibility for content or terror plots occurring on their platforms, as these companies are motivated by growth and profit, and engagement with fear-mongering content sells. However, regulating these companies through laws and policies would provide a new motivation to invest resources into cultivating a safer platform free of harmful content.

PRIORITY ACTION #4
Advancing Nationwide Digital and Media Literacy Efforts and Creating an Advisory Council of Youth to Reduce Generational Gap. In order to disseminate the tools to spot and not fall victim to extremist content, the US government should fund both digital and media literacy efforts for both the new generation and the older ones. Implementing required curriculum in middle and high school that teaches students how to spot fake news is important. Further, funding curriculum to be taught at local libraries as well as community centers to help educate older generations on red flags on news articles will leave them less susceptible to disinformation attempts. Further, as mentioned above, efforts to regulate social media by policy makers are futile as a result of their lack of understanding of how social media operates on both a technical and practical level. Therefore, forming an advisory council of youth to educate policy makers on social media issues from those who use these platforms daily will ensure sustainability and longevity in combating this issue. As social media continues to transform in direct response to the needs of users, this advisory council will inform policy.

PRIORITY ACTION #5
Forming a Digital Counterterrorism Unit under Homeland Security to Disrupt Disinformation Plots. When terror plots are underway, the government should form a unit comprised of experts under Homeland Security dedicated to responding to and disrupting these plots. In this way, undue censorship is also prevented, as experts can determine threat levels. Because the problems these units will be fighting are domestic, this unit should fall under Homeland Security’s jurisdiction. Further, this unit could counter both physical organizations—such as another event like January 6—and digital fake news empires.
Conclusion
The role social media has played in furthering extremist causes is incredibly nuanced. Solutions which are implemented will have serious social and economic impacts and therefore must be carefully evaluated for their limitations. Consequently, this memo provides four immediately implementable solutions and three proposals which will require further consideration.

The three ideas for further consideration are as follows: creating a public forum clause in order to further regulate social media networks, repealing subsection C1 of U.S. Code § 230 - Protection for private blocking and screening of offensive material, and searching for positive incentives for social media networks to take greater responsibility for the content posted on their sites. The first two ideas are both rather complex and limited as they veer into legal and Constitutional considerations.

While considering the best ways to reduce radicalization on social media platforms, it is imperative that Constitutional freedoms, specifically First Amendment rights, are kept in mind. Additional regulation in these areas does enter that territory. Even on a Constitutional level, not all speech is protected. In cases where speech presents a "clear and present danger," speech can be restricted. In the case of domestic terrorism, this speech does present this type of danger, but that is at the end of the day up to the discretion of the courts. These actions will require extensive debate and planning before they are pursued.

The general solution to positively incentivizing social media networks to take responsibility for the content on their sites has stumped experts in implementation. The government is limited in its ability to offer or threaten these companies. Consequently, the best solution here would be one of social pressure. Just as the government needs to protect the welfare and well-being of citizens, these companies need to meet the needs and expectations of consumers. Creating a broader public understanding of the impacts of unregulated media networks is the most effective method of pressuring these companies into action while also respecting First Amendment rights and the rights of independent corporations as they are currently defined. Thus, the implementation of other more immediate solutions allows for progress while other avenues are explored.

The four immediate solutions are as follows: requiring redirection algorithms, improving digital and media literacy, creating a digital counterterrorism unit under the Department of Homeland Security, and creating a Youth Advisory Board to help implement these changes.

Redirection algorithms would be essential in reducing the echo chamber effects currently created by social media platforms. With the mass implementation of this software, those
most vulnerable to radicalization would be shown different perspectives rather than receiving constant variations of the same content.

Improving digital and media literacy will be essential in reducing radicalization on social media. In order to recognize the threat of disinformation on social media, individuals need to be able to recognize harmful or suspicious content. Improving these skills could definitely be worked on at school, but this is also an essential skill for older Americans and community programs with this goal would also be imperative.

A counterterrorism referral unit would allow the Department of Homeland Security to actively work to disarm disinformation plots. In this way, the department could take a more proactive role in combatting the online presence of domestic terror groups before it becomes a large issue, as opposed to afterward.

Finally, the implementation of a youth advisory board would allow for fresh perspectives on this issue. Youth are one of the more vulnerable groups for recruitment into domestic terror groups. Consequently, hearing from young people on how to best reduce the impact of these groups’ online presence would be highly beneficial.

Social media is a new phenomenon, bringing new challenges along with it. The use of these platforms for the purpose of recruitment into domestic terror groups is one of these unforeseen issues. However, with the implementation of these four solutions and consideration of the other three, radicalization through social media can be drastically reduced.
E. ADVANCING A MORE ETHICAL APPROACH TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

“The United States should look beyond funding artificial intelligence defense projects and also fund American society’s understanding and integration of artificial intelligence in a broader sense.”

Ava Luna Pardo-Keegan (Age: 19), Ilyne Castellanos (Age: 20), Kristie Moore, (Age: 18), Mary Raines Alexander (Age: 17), and Sama Kubba (Age: 18)

As artificial intelligence and corresponding technologies emerge and integrate themselves into digital U.S. national security systems, it is increasingly evident that this progressive technology must be securely integrated across U.S. national security priorities. Current U.S. policy on the use of artificial intelligence in nuclear weapons enterprise and deployment is nonexistent, and while U.S. nuclear policy public dialogue often prioritizes North Korea and Iran, it is important to factor enabling technologies into a nuclear strategy.

Artificial intelligence is already prevalent across the nuclear technology domain. In an effort to minimize mechanical and human errors, artificial intelligence is integrated in the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of nuclear weapons, in command and control, advisory artificial intelligence that warns of nuclear weapon deployment by other states helps decision makers by yielding organizing data for faster, easier, and ideally more accurate decisions. This drastically helps human decision makers who confront information overload, compressed time, and stress in the moment of important nuclear decisions and has potential to reduce human error in safety protocols. Artificial intelligence is also used in missile defense warning systems and other systems. It is also being used to make nuclear targeting more accurate as the technology is trained to effectively follow moving objects. While early warning and data processing systems are helpful to quickly receive important alerts, over-reliance on this technology is subject to the risk of false reports and system failures. As artificial intelligence research and implementation continues to expand, the employment of the technology in nuclear weapons will only rise, requiring a policy to meet this need.

Moving forward, this strategy emphasizes the need for the secure development and integration of artificial intelligence in the operations of nuclear weapons. This point follows sophisticated advancements in nuclear weapon technology by China and Russia, whose progress aims to match, if not surpass, U.S. nuclear capabilities. In order to retain its position, support allies, and effectively deter and combat other nuclear states, the U.S.
needs to prioritize advancing the technological sophistication of its nuclear arsenal in a way that preserves strategic stability.

"Ultimately, everyone from civilians to scientists are stakeholders in policy and the implementation of artificial intelligence. Instilling a multi-stakeholder model of artificial intelligence is critical in creating technology that addresses ethical flaws such as racial biases that target marginalized communities, as well as system failures that compound others and result in extensive damage to public health, privacy, and safety."

Great power competition between the United States, China, and Russia politicizes nuclear technology and its potential use. The global rise of authoritarian China is a prime competitor to the United States' influence on all fronts of statehood: economic, political (domestically and abroad), cultural and military strength, stability and control. State-sponsored nuclear advancement alongside technological advancement in areas like artificial intelligence are just part of China's expansive efforts. China's emergence has shifted the global power balance as it seeks to compete with the U.S. for economic and security purposes. On the other hand, Russia—an illiberal democracy—utilizes nuclear weapons as a political tool (in addition to and as an extension of its military capabilities) to leverage for greater global influence in negotiations.

The leaders of the great power competition will shape the new global order. A world led by the United States means that democratic values are prioritized as the shaping force of state regimes, their civil societies and international law and institutions in addition to norms around the integration and use of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence. China and Russia are states whose political structures and political legitimacy are founded in authoritarian values, an ideology which could craft a different world operating on fundamentally oppressive principles and prioritize economic gains in partnerships. It is not just the U.S. facing an existential crisis; the guarantee of civil liberties and livelihoods is also at stake. The United States must integrate artificial intelligence in its nuclear weapons technology to remain competitive with China and Russia. In addition to preserving
strategic defense, leading artificial intelligence integration in nuclear weapons gives the U.S. the opportunity to also lead in setting ethical norms and regulations around the practice.

China
Chinese military strategy emphasizes success in localized (to the Indo-Pacific), maritime conflicts through intelligence.\(^7^9\) At the moment, China lags behind the United States and Russia in nuclear forces capacity. China's arsenal includes 320 nuclear warheads, 90 nuclear capable intercontinental ballistic missiles, and numerous advanced nuclear weapons prototypes in development such as a H20 bomber--a supersonic aircraft bomber able to be equipped with conventional and nuclear missiles.\(^8^0\)

China's ambitious nuclear expansion program and its artificial intelligence deployment may be attributed to its fear of its nuclear weaknesses compared to U.S. nuclear capabilities. Robust nuclear forces are also seen as a political tool that would force the United States to cooperate in negotiations. Although China officially asserts a no-first-strike policy, experts more accurately describe China's goal as “assured retaliation” to possible U.S. attacks, mirroring U.S. nuclear development policy.\(^8^1\) It is also important to note Chinese military centralization of conventional and nuclear forces in supply and infrastructure. For example, Chinese nuclear submarines share communication channels with conventional submarines.\(^8^2\)

China has not only pursued growth in the use of artificial intelligence for their nuclear arsenal, but their investment in artificial intelligence has expanded in a variety of industries. Through their artificial intelligence expenditure, China has incorporated artificial intelligence systems into their financial technology, establishing them as the leader in digitized financial processes. For instance, in mobile payments in 2018, Chinese citizens were seen to spend in total\(^9^3\) about $19 trillion whereas American mobile payments fall under $1 trillion. Artificial intelligence dominance does not end with fintech, as China continues to lead\(^9^4\) in nearly all fields of artificial intelligence efficiency with the Chinese speechtech company iFlytek regularly surpassing American companies—Google, Microsoft, Facebook, etc—in system performance competitions between countries in English. With the rapid increase in domestic investment in the private sector, the artificial intelligence advancements that develop from systems such as WeChat and Tencent are further utilized in their weapons of mass destruction.

Considering China's artificial intelligence advancement, it is necessary for the United States to invest to support domestic artificial intelligence advancement to protect U.S. national security. For example, the U.S. is largely dependent on artificial intelligence chips that could become irrelevant if out-paced by progressive Chinese technology, as Beijing pledges to “produce 70% of locally-used chips by 2025.”\(^8^6\) Advancement of Chinese chips
means enhanced capabilities in decision making, facial recognition systems, Chinese user interest assessments, and conventional military strategy that present security challenges to the U.S. With Chinese investments in artificial intelligence research and development surging past American standards, the U.S. lacks intellectual groundwork and hardware necessary to remain competitive with Chinese integration of artificial intelligence into nuclear weapons.87

To achieve the grand vision of matching U.S. nuclear capabilities, China has utilized its skills in "large-scale infrastructure and industrial manufacturing" to support its nuclear capabilities. China has also prioritized technological advancement in its nuclear weapons development program. Following the principle of intelligentized (智能化) warfare, China has looked to integrate artificial intelligence into its nuclear programming through autonomous decision-making, early-warning, guidance, and targeting systems optimized by machine learning. This is made possible by “military-civil fusion” (军民融合)—private and university joint efforts in development on artificial intelligence in nuclear forces. Meanwhile, although the U.S. government regularly sponsors public research, the United States must improve public-private partnerships to address challenges in utilizing private sector development for U.S. national security applications.

A recent successful test of a Chinese hypersonic glide vehicle with possible nuclear and missile space deployment capabilities highlighted the rapid advancement of Chinese technology. This new capability surprised U.S. national security experts, especially since the U.S. currently has no method of stopping attacks deployed by maneuvering space weapons and has failed glide attempts of its own.89 Such a weapon is especially concerning given US reliance on satellites in not just nuclear operations through nuclear command, control, and communications and early-warning capabilities but also in enabling technology in everyday American life.

**Russia**

Since the end of the Cold War, the tense relationship between the U.S. and Russia has largely been shaped by lasting mistrust and the proliferation of new technologies and concern regarding weapons of mass destruction. Despite active treaties to deter conflict, technology developments have increased risks of miscommunication, miscalculation, and an arms race between the United States and Russia. In Putin’s desire to retain relevance and regain the political, economic, and ideological prowess it once had, Russia has focused on building up its nuclear military capabilities. In doing so, Russia aims to make up for its lacking conventional capabilities.

Russia has also pursued niche areas in which the country can advance dominance and gain a unique advantage over adversaries. This is particularly clear with Russia's interest in asymmetric warfare in the digital domain through artificial intelligence, which has already
directly impacted the United States. In addition, Russia’s development of more than 150 new artificial intelligence enabled military systems attests to the threat Russian capabilities pose to the United States and key allies in the region.\textsuperscript{91}

Russia seeks to become a leader in artificial intelligence technology and has already begun to multiply artificial intelligence technology development with a focus on nuclear weapons. However, compared to the United States, Russia is behind in the field of artificial intelligence development and research, especially in the realm of nuclear warfare. Russia has been very clear about the intention to use artificial intelligence systems to enhance nuclear weapons. According to a recent report by East West Center, a think tank focused on analysis around United States, Asia, and Pacific, Russian innovations include: an artificial intelligence-equipped missile-carrying bomber, hypersonic glide vehicles for delivery of payloads, and a nuclear-powered underwater vehicle with artificial intelligence enabling it to be unmanned and still carry nuclear weapons.

Despite Russia’s continued efforts, the state continues to fall behind the United States, partly due to the research methodology. In the United States, artificial intelligence research and related projects are not only developed by the government but with the private sector.\textsuperscript{94} Meanwhile, in Russia, almost all artificial intelligence research projects are government-funded; there is limited risk-prone private sector investment. In response to this deficiency, Russia has launched many new projects in artificial intelligence at the Skolkovo Innovation Hub with research clusters focused on nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{95}

During the Defense Department’s artificial intelligence symposium this past summer, it was noted that Russia is quickly advancing its development of nuclear weapons with artificial intelligence and that it is important to understand that they are becoming a significant threat with artificial intelligence nuclear weapons in the near future.\textsuperscript{96} Thus it is critical that the United States set robust standards and regulations for artificial intelligence in nuclear weapons.

**Priority Policy Actions**

**Priority Action #1**

**Adopt a Cohesive Stance on the Operational and Ethical Principles of Artificial Intelligence.** The United States must integrate artificial intelligence in operational applications such as early warning, steer away from artificial intelligence in launch authority and adopt a cohesive stance on operational and ethical principles regarding artificial intelligence in the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense Review, and U.S. National Security Strategy. Such an integrated framework enables reassured engagement of
academics, practitioners and experts in the artificial intelligence and nuclear fields. The ethical values guiding the integration of artificial intelligence should include a lack of sole-dependence on certain artificial intelligence systems, creating resilience in the network and maintaining human involvement, and artificial intelligence systems should also be challenged with red-teaming, forcing differing approaches to be considered.

Ultimately, everyone from civilians to scientists are stakeholders in policy and the implementation of artificial intelligence. Instilling a multi-stakeholder model of artificial intelligence is critical in creating technology that addresses ethical flaws such as racial biases that target marginalized communities, as well as system failures that compound others and result in extensive damage to public health, privacy, and safety. Having diverse experts behind emerging policy and technology that includes women, people of color, and other groups that will most strongly face the brunt of failures is an ethical concern that must be addressed by the U.S.

Concurrently, the U.S. should encourage international discussions surrounding a nuclear weapons strategy. By working within international frameworks and negotiating new agreements regarding the development and use of artificial intelligence as it relates to weapons of mass destruction, the United States can prevent a Cold War-esque arms race. This can be done multilaterally within related UN bodies or through the negotiation of new treaties that build upon New START between Russia and the United States.

PRIORITY ACTION #2

Increase Investment into Artificial Intelligence Research and Education.

The United States must invest more money into artificial intelligence research, education, and application across the technology domain. The application of artificial intelligence in defense projects is merely a subset of a greater dialogue and more comprehensive understanding of artificial intelligence. The U.S. needs to take advantage of its strong academic and private business communities and commit funding to think tanks, public-private business partnerships, schools and universities, and other academic incubator programming on diverse uses of artificial intelligence to better understand and provoke creativity on its range of application, ethical considerations, accountability, and national security implications.

PRIORITY ACTION #3

Support Track One and Track Two Dialogue About the Role of Artificial Intelligence.

The United States must support track one, and consequently, track two dialogue about the role of artificial intelligence and other technological advancements in nuclear capabilities in international discussions with China and Russia. There should be a focus on dialogues with teams of policy makers, scientists, legal experts, ethical analysis experts and any relevant adjacent experts from each country to discuss the implications of artificial intelligence being
used in nuclear weapons. With a diverse group of experts, more perspectives and ideas can be covered as the topic of nuclear security with artificial intelligence is multidimensional. The United States should advocate for the prevention of artificial intelligence in command and control operations of nuclear weapons in multilateral discussions and set an international standard to support this norm.

It should be noted that the United States and Russia's nuclear arsenals compared to China will create challenges in diplomatic negotiations. A mechanism to enforce agreements is also a needed development as China and Russia should face consequences for not abiding by international regulations. In these meetings, representatives can also discuss strategic collaboration in areas of mutual interest or concern (ex. terrorism, space exploration, and nuclear safety).

PRIORITY ACTION #4

Create a More Agile U.S. Posture toward China and Russia.

The United States should understand and consider Chinese and Russian military strategies and operational structures when tailoring its own nuclear defense strategy and seek opportunities to increase mutual understanding and provide clarification to prevent miscommunication and escalation. The centralization of Chinese command structure with conventional and nuclear forces can be a vulnerability in the necessary case of direct military confrontation. Russia is currently behind in artificial intelligence research and tactics in nuclear security compared to the United States which can also be used by U.S. intelligence for strategies. Otherwise, the U.S. should remain cognizant of this vulnerability and understand that an attack on conventional forces could lead to nuclear warfare if China or Russia feels threatened.

"The U.S. needs to invest in space military defense technology and training, but must also maintain space as a peaceful realm through diplomatic negotiations."

PRIORITY ACTION #5

Advance Enhanced Protections for U.S. Satellites.

The United States needs to bolden its protection of pre-existing nuclear infrastructure, specifically in space. Satellites are valuable and crucial to the U.S., both for their civilian and defense implications, particularly in enabling nuclear operations. With Chinese advancement in nuclear-capable space technology, the United States needs to take steps to protect its space infrastructure through both military development and diplomatic negotiations to create norms that preserve the peaceful use of space. The U.S. needs to invest in space military defense technology and training, but also must maintain space as a peaceful realm through diplomatic negotiations.
Addendum

Spring 2022 Fellows
Strategic Implementation Plans
A. CYBERSECURITY STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SIP) 39
Jillian Brodie (19), Peyton Dashiell (18), Rhea Sethi (16), Aisha Ismael (16),
Aurelia Van der Wilde (19)

B. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SIP 50
Adriana Baez (18), Sophia-Nicole Bay (16), Claudia Nachega (17), Yasmin
Nayrouz (19), Redgiouna Pierre-Louis (18)

C. CLIMATE CHANGE SIP 60
Bailey Canham (16), Janelle Enriquez (19), Michelle Jin (15), Pariya Sarin
(16), Joann Shin (19)

D. DOMESTIC TERRORISM SIP 74
Grace Cassineri (17), Asma Mothana (18), Emilie Reitinger (18), Nina
Verner (16), Sydney Zulich (19)

E. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE/WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION SIP 86
Caroline Covey (Age: 20), Abigail McDonough (Age: 20), Maria Donnelly
(Age: 20), Amanda Hart (Age: 19), Camila Kelly (Age: 18)

F. Endnotes 111
---

## A. CYBERSECURITY STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspirational Endstate to INSPIRE</th>
<th>Strengthen cyber policy nationally through a holistic approach to cyber security that is innovative, accountable, and empowers citizens.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strategic Objectives to ADVANCE | **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1** Promote a holistic approach to cybersecurity.  
**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2** Reform current cybersecurity systems and practices that optimize critical infrastructure and public/private companies and promote cooperation between the public and private sectors. |
| Lines of Effort to ORGANIZE     | **LINE OF EFFORT 1** Organize a task force that facilitates communication across the ISACs, including technology updates and new threats. CISA will preside over this task force to facilitate public and private sector cooperation. This group will focus on organizing and promoting incentives that promote innovation and cooperation.  
**LINE OF EFFORT 2** Create a campaign to educate the public about cybersecurity. This campaign should be led by civil society and will include influential people in society and people from all walks of life. This campaign will be two-fold; first, it should teach the public WHY. Why does cybersecurity matter, why should they care, and why do they need to follow certain practices. The second part of the campaign is to educate the public on sustainable cybersecurity practices to equip them with the knowledge needed so they can protect themselves.  
**LINE OF EFFORT 3** Update equipment and increase training on backups. Also, identify areas of vulnerability starting with malware detection which is the most common. To promote security, ensure that there is a backup system at a separate location that can take over with the smallest amount of downtime. Some examples include independence between systems, updating outdated equipment and systems, and relying on automation where necessary. |
| Priority Actions to EXECUTE     | **PRIORITY ACTION 1** Identify experts in the field to be appointed to the task force. This group should include a few spokespeople for a variety of groups that speak a variety of languages and can communicate with a variety of age groups.  
**PRIORITY ACTION 2** Identify and connect with trusted members of the public from all walks of life, this will include everyone from TikTok influencers to politicians from both parties. These individuals will be briefed and taught why cybersecurity matters which they can then share. After people understand why it matters, we can establish a campaign that promotes safe internet practices through letters, online ads, and social media initiatives. Identify key populations to target (age, education, etc) and which platforms are best to address them. This would also expand the US Digital Corps program to incoming undergraduate students. This would expand both the size and diversity of cyber employees. Another modification to the current program would be a focus on communication with the public, and as part of the fellowship, participants would spend one summer educating the public about safe cyber practices such as VPNs and multifactor authentication. Future expansions could include making the program accessible for younger students (16+) similar to ROTC or the Youth Corps.  
**PRIORITY ACTION 3** Establish a resilient system by promoting cybersecurity hygiene within the system, both in terms of infrastructure and in current cybersecurity systems involving energy infrastructure, data security, bank security, and healthcare institutions. |
---
A. CYBERSECURITY STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

“It is vital to empower citizens through cybersecurity knowledge, as a system is only as strong as its weakest link; empowering citizens makes us stronger and more resilient as a country.”

Jillian Brodie (19), Peyton Dashiell (18), Rhea Sethi (16), Aisha Ismael (16), Aurelia Van der Wilde (19)

Aspirational Endstate

Strengthen cyber policy nationally through a holistic approach to cybersecurity that is innovative, accountable, and empowers citizens. This end state was identified through reflection on what an ideal cybersecurity system would look like. The three action words: innovative, accountable, and empowers were chosen because they perfectly encapsulate a cybersecurity vision for policy, laws, and education for the U.S. The word “innovative” is relevant because having a cybersecurity system that is malleable, so as to keep up with and stay ahead of the ever-changing/developing threats, is crucial. Prioritizing innovation is vital to a strong cybersecurity system since technology changes at a rapid pace and the cybersecurity laws and infrastructure must be kept up with. Next, the word “accountable” illustrates an approach to cybersecurity that holds people responsible for their actions. Companies should be held accountable for their employees’ actions when it comes to the company’s cybersecurity. Therefore, it’s imperative that companies train their employees to eliminate the risks of mistakes such as downloading dangerous software, etc. Finally, a system that empowers citizens is essential for long-term prosperity for the people of the U.S. This is accomplished through education, providing training and information on how to better secure personal data, and cultivating the next generation of cyber leaders. It is vital to empower citizens through cybersecurity knowledge, as a system is only as strong as its weakest link; empowering citizens makes us stronger and more resilient as a country.

Strategic Objectives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1

Promote a holistic approach to cybersecurity. Currently, the United State's federal cyber policy for securing federal networks and data is derived from the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002. FISMA is a set of rules that grade federal agencies on different cybersecurity benchmarks. Many have said FISMA is too focused on ‘checking boxes’ and not nearly dedicated enough to prevent future attacks, highly unmalleable, not geared towards the current cybersecurity climate, and can’t keep up with the growth of the cybersecurity sector.⁶ Now, with new threats, it is imperative that these
policies be updated to reflect the demand of the times. Normally, updating these rules requires legislation being passed in Congress; in fact, there is currently legislation in the works to update FISMA. Approaching cybersecurity in a holistic manner requires a variety of approaches, including updating legislation and ensuring that politicians are educated about the issues when voting.

It is vital that this is prioritized and this can be done by promoting cooperation and communication between CISA and Congress. It is also crucial that voters are made aware of these issues, which can be done through communication between cybersecurity experts on the federal, state, and city levels. Cyber policy is important, and while legislation is paramount, we must ensure that legislation passed is high quality and that voters understand the issues. This objective will require identifying spokespeople for the task force, identifying members of the ISACs who would be involved, and communicating with these parties to determine the exact structure of this task force.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2
Reform current cybersecurity systems and practices to optimize critical infrastructure and public/private companies and promote cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Approaching cybersecurity in a holistic manner requires a variety of approaches, including updating legislation and ensuring that politicians are educated about the issues when voting.

The Colonial Pipeline Attack was a wake-up call for the U.S. cyber policy and for infrastructure. It’s widely acknowledged by cybersecurity professionals that countries-including Russia, North Korea, Iran, and China— all have the capability to launch a cyber attack that could disrupt the U.S. power grid, similar to the attack launched by Russia against Ukraine in 2015.¹² In 2020, the Department of Homeland Security conducted an assessment that concluded: “We remain concerned about China’s intent to compromise
U.S. critical infrastructure in order to cause disruption or destruction."²⁶ These attacks have the potential to cause prolonged blackouts that could disrupt hospitals, banks, schools, gas stations, and more. Perhaps the most daunting notion is that the U.S imports transformers and other equipment from Russia and China, and does not readily stock spares. This means that not only do these countries have the advantage of an attack on their familiar equipment but should something happen to this equipment, the U.S. is reliant on Russia and China for the majority of the replacements, exacerbating the vulnerability in the case of a cyberattack by either country. In 2020 the US imported 66 Chinese transformers, 54 of which were classified as being able to handle enough power to cause significant blackouts should they be targeted.⁴ For this reason, it is vital to promote the production of critical infrastructure parts such as transformers domestically, which would promote economic and technological growth and increase domestic security.

Additionally, existing equipment that is imported should be carefully monitored and updated when possible. Should a sophisticated, malicious cyber attack directed to the power grid happen, data security, bank security, and healthcare institutions, among many others, would be completely compromised. To execute this strategic objective, legislation needs to be lobbied for and passed that incentivizes utility companies to upgrade their equipment to be sourced from allies or produced domestically in an effort to help prevent attacks.

In addition, further legislation should be passed that allocates a substantial amount of money to start importing or domestically producing federal critical infrastructure equipment in the U.S. Another facet of reforming cybersecurity systems within the public/private sectors is updating equipment as possible and promoting the prioritization of cybersecurity hospitals, banks, and other areas deemed critical. These systems and hardware should be updated as new equipment becomes available.

**Lines of Effort**

**LINE OF EFFORT #1**

*Organize a task force that facilitates communication across the ISACs, including technology updates and new threats. CISA will preside over this task force to facilitate public and private sector cooperation. This group will focus on organizing and promoting incentives that promote innovation and cooperation.* Organizing a task force will help facilitate a better relationship between Information Sharing and Analysis Centers (ISACs) while promoting and upholding a commitment to national security. While the ISACs are great for sharing information and best practices among similar companies, there is little communication between different ISACs; for example, there is no established method for communication between the aviation sector and the maritime sector. Communication between all ISACs is crucial to upholding national security. To remedy this, a task force would be created and led by CISA.
CISA presiding over the group would ensure that high-profile individuals such as government officials would be aware of issues during press conferences, and in turn, entice companies to foster a better relationship between the public and private sector. The task force would be an opportunity for companies to share their experiences during meetings and learn about new technologies. The companies represented would include a representative from each of the ISACS as well as cybersecurity technology developers. Having representatives that are both consumers and producers ensures that companies can learn about newly available technology and foster competition that improves innovation within cyber security.

Task forces have been used on a state level, with the California Cybersecurity Task Force established in 2022, and in 2021 Kansas established a task force as well. This has proven to be effective in promoting communication between the public and private sectors through a report submitted to Governor Laura Kelly. The findings of the report included “recommendations that can increase the cybersecurity posture of Kansas and grow its cybersecurity workforce”. The report also brought awareness to cybersecurity within the state and brought awareness to the issue by providing recommendations to legislators and voters, which can turn into real change. It is vital that this is done on a national level in order to create these changes quickly and efficiently.

The goal of this task force is to establish better communication lines between individual companies of different ISACs, companies, and the federal government. Better communication leads to a united front and a stronger national security stance against foreign adversaries since not only is the federal government secure, but now private/public companies have a better security posture. This supports the first strategic objective as it would promote safe cyber practices, therefore improving cyber security and policy on a national level.
LINE OF EFFORT #2

Create a campaign to educate the public about cybersecurity. This campaign should be led by civil society and will include influential people in society and people from all walks of life. This campaign will be two-fold: first, it should teach the public WHY. Why does cybersecurity matter, why they should care, and why they need to abide by certain practices. The second part of the campaign is to educate the public on sustainable cybersecurity practices to equip them with the knowledge needed so they can protect themselves. A campaign to educate the public about cybersecurity was chosen as a line of effort because if the general public is educated on cybersecurity, the U.S. will be better prepared for potential threats. This supports the aspirational end state, as cybersecurity education ensures that it is inclusive and increases accessibility. Additionally, this supports the second strategic objective as it will strengthen the US’s cyber policy on a larger scale. The education effort would be led by non-governmental organizations such as Cybersecurity Non-Profit (CSNP) as well as governmental organizations such as the National Institute of Standards in Technology (NIST) along with other national, state, and city-wide cyber education programs. CNSP is a non-profit that is working to improve cyber education in the US, and NIST is a government agency that aims to advance technology. The goal of this is to ensure that all people, regardless of their feelings towards the government, are included in the campaign outreach. Collaboration between the public and private sectors is key in education efforts to ensure that all resources are used. Furthermore, by having the public and private sectors collaborate on both a local and national scale, the individuals running the program can customize the education materials to fit the needs of the individuals they are working with.

This program will have two parts. The first part will educate the public about existing threats and the importance of protecting themselves. This campaign will include a variety of messaging, one of which is statistics about cybercrime. For example, the average cost to rectify a compromised account is “$290 and 15 hours to repair”.¹ Statistics such as this will resonate with large portions of the population and therefore encourage them to practice better cybersecurity hygiene. It will also include personal stories from people who have been impacted by hacks, identity theft, etc. This will be important, as most people do not believe that they will ever be one of the 800,000 people who were victims of cybercrime.¹³ In this phase, it will be crucial to have a variety of examples and spokespeople who speak a variety of languages and are from a variety of backgrounds. If citizens do not understand why they should protect themselves and practice good cyber hygiene, they will be less inclined to take measures to protect themselves and practice good cyber hygiene. As a result, this first phase must be executed well and given adequate timing and funding.

The second phase will educate the public about the best personal cybersecurity practices and how they can protect themselves and their loved ones. This will be done through a
variety of campaigns that reach as many people as possible. The implementation must be carried out by the same organizations that did the initial outreach, as a foundation of trust was established during the first phase. Similar to the first phase, this group will also include instruction in a variety of languages and teaching styles depending on the target audience. This education will focus primarily on simple yet effective fixes that all individuals can do on their own, with the opportunity for further education. An example of the primary curriculum would include information about how two/multi-factor authentication can block “80-90%” of cyber attacks⁸, as well as instruction on VPNs, password structure, and more. Material that has already been created such as those created by CISA, which include both training and education materials for professionals and adults, as well as those for children such as the CIAS® K-12 Cybersecurity Program, will be used as they have already been created but not yet implemented to their full potential. The implementation of the campaign will include a combination of radio advertisements/shows, community events, posters, podcasts, social media outreach, and more. All of these will be made by local groups in a variety of languages to ensure that the maximum number of people receive the information in a tailor-made way to their community. The groups will also advocate for increased cyber education in schools, and ensuring that all Americans have access to educational materials should they wish for it.

LINE OF EFFORT #3

*Update equipment and increase training on backups. Also, identify areas of vulnerability starting with malware detection which is the most common. To promote security, ensure that there is a backup system at a separate location that can take over with the smallest amount of downtime. Some examples include independence between systems, updating outdated equipment and systems, and relying on automation where necessary.* This line of effort was selected because it is vital that cybersecurity systems are updated and have backups that can defend itself from attacks and withstand those that come. This will require incentivizing individual firms, which may have short-term goals to collaborate with the public sector, which focuses more on long-term security. This requires the infrastructure to be resilient to attacks and practice good cybersecurity hygiene.

Malware detection and phishing were chosen to be prioritized because they are some of the most common and harmful types of attacks. Phishing accounted for “90% of data breaches” in 2021¹¹. Malware is also selected as it can do the most damage and there is less awareness among the public. It is vital that time and resources are prioritized to protect people from the most harmful and costly types of cyber attacks, as this will have the most impact.

This line of effort supports strategic objective two because importing most of our power grid equipment from Russia and China is not secure or resilient. To accomplish this line of effort, physical equipment will need to be updated, new equipment will need to be either
imported from a trusted ally or produced domestically, and people should be incentivized to go into cybersecurity and become a master in a particular area. A healthy balance of masters and jack-of-all-trades is necessary.

Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
Identify experts in the field to be appointed to the task force. This group should include a few spokespeople for a variety of groups that speak a variety of languages and can communicate with a variety of age groups. This Priority Action connects to the first line of effort and will identify who will represent the different agencies and departments within the task force. Having a task force with individuals from a diverse variety of backgrounds is vital to ensuring that the security of people from all demographics is taken into account. Furthermore, it is vital that these representatives are thoroughly qualified to work in their positions to avoid misinformation and disinformation. Often, in today's political climate, officials are appointed to positions because of demographics. The spokespeople are vital to the team’s success as well. The US has many different racial, geographic, and age demographics, and having a variety of spokespeople will ensure that the task force's objectives and messages are communicated clearly to the public. This transparency ensures that the public understands both what threats exist as well as how to protect themselves.

PRIORITY ACTION #2
Identify and connect with trusted members of the public from all walks of life, this will include everyone from Tik-Tok influencers to politicians from both parties. These individuals will be briefed and taught why cybersecurity matters, which they can then share. After people understand why it matters, then there will be a campaign that promotes safe internet practices through letters, online ads, and social media initiatives. It will be necessary to identify key populations to target (age, education, etc) and which platforms are best to address them. This would also expand the U.S. Digital Corps program to incoming undergraduate students, which would expand both the size and diversity of cyber employees. Another modification to the current program would be a focus on communication with the public, and as part of the fellowship, participants would spend one summer educating the public about safe cyber practices such as VPNs and multifactor authentication. Future expansions could include making the program accessible for younger students (16+) similar to ROTC or the Youth Corps. This Priority Action connects to the second line of effort, as this is an effective method of educating the public about cybersecurity. It will consist of two parts. The first part is focused on highlighting the importance of safe internet practices. This would include statistics that highlight the costs of cybercrime and also include personal testimonies from victims of cyberattacks. The effort would be implemented through in-person programming at community centers and libraries, and virtual events.
where people could talk to experts and learn about types of cyber threats such as malware.

This campaign would also take place on social media and include using social media algorithms designed to saturate the public with information, coupled with implementing targeted ads as different demographics tend to be more active on different social media platforms. Exclusivity with a single platform could cause a wide gap in those reached, which would prove counteractive to the initiative. Once individuals understand the issue better, then the second part of the plan can be implemented and individuals will learn how to protect themselves from multi-factor authentication (MFA) to VPNs. There is already educational material available created by the US government and private sector which can be repurposed with a greater focus on distribution and wide reach. The biggest challenge with current cybersecurity efforts is that people are not told why they should care, hence the decision to educate on the "why" prior to the "how".

Furthermore, expanding the U.S. digital corps would make cybersecurity more accessible and increase the overall talent pool. This would also increase overall awareness about cybersecurity as these individuals would share their experiences with their communities. This step is crucial in increasing the diversity of cybersecurity and would also help bridge the gap between the public and private sectors as individuals would have experience working with the government.

PRIORITY ACTION #3

Establish a resilient system by promoting cybersecurity hygiene within the system, both in terms of infrastructure and in current cybersecurity systems involving energy infrastructure, data security, bank security, and healthcare institutions. This Priority Action connects to the third line of effort, as this is a fail-safe measure. Fail-safe measures will provide insurance and added protection. This is especially important given what is at risk should there be a security breach. A resilient system is crucial for the continued security of the
United States’ security systems. Additionally, promoting cybersecurity hygiene will ensure that hackers can not get into the aforementioned systems. Implementing this will involve training employees on topics such as having regularly updated, secure passwords and refraining from distributing sensitive information on shared networks. Further efforts in regard to physical infrastructure could include updating operational technologies (OT) such as valves and generators. Moreover, it could potentially include the purchase and acquisition of physical protections such as Binary Armory, which monitors communication to the operational technology.

**Assumptions & Limitations**

Cybersecurity programs exclusively included the United States' internal cybersecurity systems. Given the breadth of a globally inclusive outlook, a single strategic implementation plan would not be practical to address the scope of issues and needs. Additionally, it was assumed that the United States would maintain a primarily defensive approach to cybersecurity as it has done in the past. Furthermore, it is assumed that it is more important to protect and update current cybersecurity systems in order to be prepared for any future threats. As a result, there was a focus on updating and enhancing current systems as well as educating the public as opposed to advancing offensive capacity. Beyond enhancing current systems, there was a focus on cooperation between the public and private sectors as this is one of the biggest challenges in cybersecurity currently. Cooperation between the two would also encourage stable policy throughout various administrations. As a result of working with the government, we had to make the assumption that the current policy-making procedures and limitations would remain, requiring votes in Congress or an Executive Order. The scope of this investigation is appropriate given the timeline and goals of our aspirational end state.

**Conclusions & Recommendations**

Overall, the vision of U.S. cybersecurity policy for the future involves collaboration between the government and citizens to keep cybersecurity systems safe and protect the nation from attacks. The U.S. government can manage national systems and frameworks, but in the end, the 330 million citizens of the U.S. must participate in a collective effort to ensure that their accounts are secure and protected.

Strengthening cybersecurity is a key step in achieving this goal. This will be done by first educating citizens about the prevalence of cyber hacks that can potentially compromise their data. Then, once citizens understand why they should care about cybersecurity and protecting themselves, they will be provided through education the tools to protect themselves. In addition to strengthening cybersecurity education across the country, cybersecurity must be seen as a crucial policy issue to the majority of voters -- that way, there will be more elected officials who make it a priority in their platform. While cybersecurity is vital for the security of our country and protection from foreign threats,
cybersecurity policy is a lot more removed from the everyday life of voters compared to issues like taxes, gun control, and COVID-19 policy.

Finally, oversight must be a priority for this new cybersecurity policy plan. Annual and semiannual audits of the committees must be planned to show that funding is being used appropriately, and a performance evaluation of the plan should be implemented to measure the results and find additional ways for improvement and reform.

Two important areas that were not discussed within this strategic implementation plan include international cyber policy and the prosecution of cybercriminals. These are two important areas that could be covered by future researchers. Additionally, the education material has already been created by both the public and private sectors. This means that rather than creating new material, efforts should be focused on improving communication between citizens and educators. This education process will take time in order to build trust and promote understanding of threats posed by cybercrime.

The task force is an area that may benefit from future research, as while we do have agencies such as CISA, there is a large communication gap between the agency and the public. In order to foster rapport between the public and private sector, it is important that educating implementers are patient and come from various socio-economic, political, race, and religious backgrounds. This will ensure that even those who have not been receptive or included in previous public education efforts are reached. Some people are inherently distrustful of public messaging, so showing off progress and fostering rapport is important.

Cybersecurity is an ever changing field, but is not going away anytime soon. From Zoom calls and classes to our hospital and banking systems, the internet has connected us all and this has become more obvious throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital that cybersecurity is prioritized to ensure the safety of all people. Cybersecurity must be accessible to all and requires bold action now. From our classrooms and community centers to corporations and the government, cybersecurity must be inclusive to reflect the diversity of its users. If increased cybersecurity awareness can protect just one person from malware, then it is worth it. The internet can connect people from all over, from Seattle to Singapore and San Francisco, and it is crucial to protect this environment, and everything impacted by it.
## B. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**Summary**

Every Native American and Indigenous woman will be secured from sex-trafficking’s disproportionate impact on them by providing lawmakers with the necessary knowledge and tools to help mitigate the violence inflicted upon Indigenous women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspirational Endstate to INSPIRE</th>
<th><strong>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1</strong> Community Building in High-Risk Areas</th>
<th><strong>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2</strong> Implement Legal Policies and Justice Reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objectives to ADVANCE</strong></td>
<td><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 1</strong> Community building efforts, conduct on the ground research, allocation of funds</td>
<td><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 2</strong> Develop robust services for Native and Indigenous women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lines of Effort to ORGANIZE</strong></td>
<td><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 3</strong> Ensure sufficient implementation of proposed legal policies (e.g. Biden’s 2022 VAWA Reauthorization) and create necessary legal reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority Actions to EXECUTE</strong></td>
<td><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 1</strong> The creation of a research campaign that will gather extensive data on the sex trafficking of Native American women to provide researchers, policymakers, and the general public with relevant and up-to-date data.</td>
<td><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 2</strong> The second priority action focuses on developing adequate services for the mental and physical health of Native Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 3</strong> Focus on legislative implementation and accountability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

“National security priorities must include ending the exploitation and victimization of these women, as well as protecting the most vulnerable communities in its population.”

Adriana Baez (18), Sophia-Nicole Bay (16), Claudia Nachega (17), Yasmin Nayrouz (19), Redgiouna Pierre-Louis (18)

Aspirational Endstate

The proposed aspirational endstate states that every Native American and Indigenous woman will be secured from sex-trafficking’s disproportionate impact on them by providing lawmakers with the necessary knowledge and tools to help mitigate the violence inflicted upon Indigenous women. It must be recognized that Native American and Indigenous women remain at much higher risk for falling victim to sex trafficking than any other racial group in America.¹⁶ This aspirational endstate requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach in order to provide lawmakers with the necessary knowledge and tools to help mitigate the violence and pursue grassroots initiatives. From a political standpoint, the passage and successful implementation of substantive policies to prevent and end sex-trafficking begins with increasing awareness amongst those who have the ability to make relevant political changes. Raising awareness allows for the abuse to be brought to the immediate attention of lawmakers and prompt them to address it and take action. Additionally, providing victims of sex-trafficking with resources and healthcare to meet their imminent needs while launching community building efforts to execute additional preventative strategies must occur in conjunction with policy reform. Sex-trafficking is modern-day slavery. It violates the human rights of Native American and Indigenous women in such a way that very intimately and pervasively strips away their human dignity and sense of self. National security priorities must include ending the exploitation and victimization of these women, as well as protecting the most vulnerable communities in its population. Allowing sex-trafficking’s proliferation within this minority group poses a significant threat to the destabilization of surrounding communities, increase in criminal activity, and in turn, living in an overarching sense fear for all women nationwide.

Strategic Objectives
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1
Community building in high-risk areas. This strategic implementation plan aims to create change from within Native and Indigenous populations by establishing community building in high-risk areas. Community building can be defined as grassroots efforts and initiatives
This allows for expanded access to jobs and economic security for Native and Indigenous women. Statistically, equipping women with the resources they need to economically succeed translates to a better quality of health and wellbeing, but more specifically, higher levels of physical security because traffickers tend to exploit low-income people with limited resources.¹⁵ Economically empowering marginalized and vulnerable Native and Indigenous women, who make up 40% of female sex-trafficking victims, lifts them out of dire socio-economic situations that put them at risk of being targeted and abused. In addition to vocational programs, setting up educational workshops for women to learn how to recognize signs of sex trafficking will help communities overcome the stigma that prevents women from speaking up and allow them to get help.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2

**Implementation of legal policies and justice reform.** In order to ensure long-term changes are in place to support Native American and Indigenous women, a second strategic objective related to structural reform has to be established. As a result, policies and justice reform to ensure long-term accountability were examined by the committee. Biden's 2022 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) makes it evident that jurisdiction over non-Natives committing crimes on tribal lands isn't always thorough.⁴ Also, sections addressing the disproportionate impact of sex trafficking on Native and Indigenous women must be acknowledged. To accomplish this, a system of accountability must be in place for Biden's 2022 reauthorization of the VAWA, as well as ensuring that it is efficiently implemented. Overall, legal protection for Native American and Indigenous women needs to be strengthened while criminals are held accountable.

**Lines of Effort**

**LINE OF EFFORT #1**

**Community building efforts, conduct on the ground research, allocation of funds.** This line of effort supports community building in high-risk areas through the allocation of funding for socioeconomic services and the organization of a research campaign to provide policymakers with the knowledge to help Native American communities. Different grants given to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, such as the Family Violence Prevention and Services Grants to Tribes, can cover the cost of services like shelters.⁵ Working with policymakers, particularly those in Congress, to secure grants and funding for services will be necessary. According to an FBI agent who works to fight trafficking, nonprofits are typically operating most shelters and domestic violence services, therefore, it will also be imperative to coordinate with them as well.

Strategic plans that target the root causes and social conditions which lead to sex trafficking will ensure effective preventative measures.⁵ However, extensive data is vital in order to ensure that policymakers have the knowledge to adequately alleviate the
conditions of Native American communities. The holes in the current data on sex trafficking of Native American and Indigenous women can be patched through a research campaign that organizes existing data to make it more accessible and collects additional on the ground research.

Economically empowering marginalized and vulnerable Native and Indigenous women, who make up 40% of female sex-trafficking victims, lifts them out of dire socio-economic situations that put them at risk of being targeted and abused.

LINE OF EFFORT #2

Develop robust services for Native and Indigenous women. This line of effort proposes developing robust services for Native American and Indigenous women because, as stated in the NSS report, “the high rate of poverty, historical trauma, homelessness, exposure to violence, and drug and alcohol abuse have created vulnerable conditions for Native and Indigenous communities, making them targets for traffickers”.¹⁷ Developing robust services such as free drug and rehabilitation services, housing/shelter services, and mental health care services will help reduce Native and Indigenous women’s vulnerability to sex trafficking. This Strategic Implementation Plan also advocates for community, educational, and training workshops in which Native and Indigenous women are taught how to identify sex trafficking and learn critical and diverse skills in order to successfully defend themselves and lessen the frequency of sex trafficking. Furthermore, the curriculum in public schools should be revised to include lessons on recognizing signs of sex trafficking. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, YWCA, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program are the specific stakeholders planned to assign to this line of effort because they will be able to help with funding and provide grants to help effectively provide these services to support and uplift Native and Indigenous women. Since one of the leading causes of sex trafficking for women is poverty, this can also be addressed by providing women with vocational training and education to obtain jobs.²

LINE OF EFFORT #3

Ensure sufficient implementation of proposed legal policies (e.g. Biden’s 2022 VAWA Reauthorization) and create necessary legal reform. In order to ensure that the current, passed legislation to help Native American and Indigenous women is carried out from start to finish, this plan calls for greater transparency and regular reports on the status of such policies. There have been many proposed programs to help combat gender-based violence (even within the Indigenous community), but information about their effectiveness is not available (i.e. no data can be found on the individuals affected by these programs -like the
Missing and Murdered Unit).³ The main reason for choosing this line of effort was to approach the task not from a preventative rehabilitative stance, but from one that takes action. To do this, already established laws and on-the-ground task forces that analyze and deal with the victims and abusers of human trafficking in real-time need to be strengthened.¹ ⁷ Asking these various organizations to be more upfront about their data and practices will help to build confidence in the communities that support and rely on their efforts (i.e. help spawn more concern and hold these organizations accountable). With many promises and goals established with the VAWA and other reforms like the Savanna Act and the Not Invisible Act, detailed data from the organizations that fight against human trafficking detailing how beneficial the reforms have been (explaining how it varies geographically, the specific populations the proposed policies affect the most, what it improved, etc.) are vital in adequately assessing the problem and forming solutions.¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁶

More specifically, regarding governmental initiatives, there should be guidelines put in place to measure the effectiveness of each governmental program and for every proposed policy.¹¹ With this, the hope is to limit the tape of bureaucracy. Instead of just creating another task force, the ones already established should be fine-tuned to be able to adapt and respond to the growing/developing human trafficking problem within the U.S., especially within the Indigenous community.
Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
For the first Priority Action, this plan calls for the creation of a research campaign that will gather extensive data on the sex trafficking of Native American women to provide researchers, policymakers, and the general public with relevant and up-to-date data. One method for data gathering will be to send out surveys to Native American and Indigenous women to understand their needs and the high-risk factors for sex trafficking. The survey results will be used to identify the areas of focus for training programs and workshops, as well as to help Native American and Indigenous women prepare themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge to combat sex trafficking. With the knowledge and skills attained, Native American and Indigenous women will be able to effectively identify sex trafficking and protect themselves, as well as learn their rights and safety. Another method for data gathering will be conducting interviews of sex trafficking victims. Qualitative methods such as interviews will provide personal accounts of sex trafficking that will allow individuals to garner an in-depth understanding of the issue and how it plays out in people’s lives. It will also help policymakers and researchers empathize more with the victims because they will be able to understand the story behind the data. Lastly, the final method for data gathering should be more focused on providing the general public with data that is visible, accessible, and trustworthy. This would include statistical and textual analyses of existing research on the sex trafficking of Native American women. By compiling all of the existing data on the issue on one platform and supplementing it with qualitative data from surveys and interviews, this research campaign would make this data more widespread, organized, and easily accessible, which in turn will educate more of the public.

Since the sex trafficking of Native American women is widely underreported, collecting this data and providing it to lawmakers will encourage the development of laws or policies based on the needs of Native American and Indigenous women by raising awareness on the sex trafficking of these communities.¹⁷
Lastly, representatives should be encouraged to vote in favor of a higher budget for funding these causes by presenting them with the extensive data from the research campaign that outlines the urgency and prevalence of the issue. They should also be encouraged to specifically allocate funds for developing community resources that support women with the budget request from the Department of Interior. Increased funding will help create offices within the Bureau of Indian Affairs to create, promote, and maintain training and vocational programs, and it will be used to employ more Native American and Indigenous women. With more Native American and Indigenous women, their voices will be heard, increasing awareness about sex trafficking and ensuring more representation.

PRIORITY ACTION #2
The second priority action focuses on developing adequate services for the mental and physical health of Native American and Indigenous people and providing free vocational training to promote financial stability. This priority action is significant because it focuses on community-building, which is a critical preventative measure against sex trafficking. By nurturing high-risk areas, a variety of contributing factors may be tackled, such as unemployment, poverty, and drug and alcohol abuse. All of the resources recommended will be easily accessible by locating them near highly populated areas for Native Americans and Indigenous peoples. Using the Family Violence Prevention and Services Grants to Tribes, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) should build temporary safe shelters on reservations for women, and then help with federal funding provided to nonprofit organizations such as the YWCA in constructing and maintaining shelters.² Because Native American and Indigenous women face high rates of poverty and homelessness, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development needs to assist in providing housing assistance to these communities. According to the NSS report, "restricted mental health resources undermine these communities and make them so vulnerable to human traffickers,"¹⁷ so establishing physical and mental health resources such as therapists and Native healers will help reduce the vulnerabilities and risks that Native and Indigenous women face. The Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (the Federal Health Program for American Indians and Alaska Natives) can provide free drug and rehabilitation services and substance abuse education programs in schools to Native communities.

This plan also proposes collaborating with SOAR, which provides training to equip professionals such as public health experts and social workers with the knowledge and skills needed to identify, treat, and respond effectively to human trafficking.¹⁵ Because they are trained to recognize the verbal and nonverbal indicators of human trafficking, as well as identify needs and available resources to prevent human trafficking, these trained professionals can assist with the training programs (private sector training) and community and educational workshops being developed for Native and Indigenous women. Native American and Indigenous women can be taught in-demand skills in the technology sector, as well as resume-writing sessions and interview preparation to help them acquire jobs.
and provide for their families. Community workshops in high-risk areas should be arranged to teach young Native American women about sex trafficking, safety, their rights, and how to navigate social media safely due to the evolving nature of sex trafficking recruitment in the virtual realm. Women can be given access to a support network that will allow them to interact with survivors and hear their personal stories, which will help reduce the stigma associated with victims speaking up about sex trafficking and teach young women how to protect themselves. Within human trafficking, underreporting is a large issue, according to the American Indian Law Review.⁹ To address the multiple barriers that lead to underreporting by victims, we propose creating training workshops for businesses and universities to teach others how to recognize the signs of trafficking. Additionally, this plan recommends adding to the public high school curriculum units that teach students how to identify the signs of trafficking because if “law enforcement and concerned citizens recognized the signs of human trafficking, the underreporting problem could be alleviated”.⁹

PRIORITY ACTION #3
With the desire to create a more effective approach, our third priority action focuses on legislative implementation and accountability. We see this being accomplished through public displays and other requirements. For instance, the 2022 VAWA Reauthorization included an executive order that directed multiple departments to create a strategy to improve public safety and justice for Native Americans and to address the epidemic of missing or murdered Indigenous peoples by establishing the Missing and Murdered Unit.⁴ To ensure successful implementation and accountability, the plan recommends this unit reveals the objectives of their strategy and prepares yearly public reports revealing the average length of investigation and other insights in order to hold them accountable. These reports will be beneficial, as it will create an internal evaluation to improve the unit’s efforts each year, as missing people cases disproportionately impact Native American and Indigenous women. Missing people cases are also directly connected to trafficking, as “thousands of human trafficking victims targeted and exploited in the US every year, of whom only 10% are ever identified”.¹⁸

Additionally, as part of the President’s State of the Union address, the President will discuss the results and benefits of VAWA’s Reauthorization. This will put pressure to ensure VAWA is being implemented and will emphasize the importance of such reauthorizations, while making the American public more aware of violence against women.

This 2022 reauthorization also relaunched the Trilateral Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls with the Governments of Mexico and Canada, which the U.S. will host its fourth meeting this summer.⁴ The recommendations include requiring them to agree to have a publicly signed commitment to what proposals they discussed
during their meetings at the end of the summer. These agreements should include a deadline to meeting their proposals.

In the next reauthorization, this plan proposes adding a resolution that tribal courts have jurisdiction over all crimes where Native Americans and/or Indigenous peoples are victims on tribal land, even if the act is committed by a non-Native. This will reduce confusion in the general legal process and rebuild trust with the legal system, as many Native Americans and Indigenous people don't report incidents because they don't trust the legal system. As the American Indian Law Review found, factors to underreporting, such as the lack of confidence in justice, “relate to the general distrust between tribes and the federal government”.⁹ Additionally, the complexity of jurisdictional rules creates confusion as “when prosecuting crimes that occur on Indian lands, jurisdictional complexities result in harmful, additional delay. Native American women face significant challenges in bringing their perpetrator to justice”.⁹

With the desire to promote Native and Indigenous women's physical and mental security, legal protections in the cases where trafficking victims receive the brunt of the punishment (like in a prostitution charge) should be assessed differently and added to the next reauthorization of the Vawa, as there is a high correlation between prostitution and sex-trafficking.⁶ In an effort to ensure these victims successfully reintegrate into society, prostitution charges should be easily expunged or excused so support the victims' efforts for gaining employment or applying for federal aid for educational advancement.

For centuries, Native American and Indigenous people have felt the lingering effects of colonialism. Sex trafficking reflects these colonial structures because it is a process of enslavement and exploitation.

Assumptions and Limitations

Some assumptions that were made during the creation of this plan is that policymakers will be receptive to the communications and will be willing to allocate more funding to the Department of Interior and specifically the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Additionally, with the proposed vocational and educational programing, the accessibility of such must be considered, like potentially offering courses online. With these programs and other services, such as drug rehabilitation or therapists, the assumption is that women are in safe environments to access these services, but it's important to acknowledge some domestic situations and abuse prevent women from doing so. It is also assumed that there will be proper methods to advertise these programs and make them known. The
The interchangeability of the terms “human trafficking” and “sex trafficking” was taken to not distort the intention of the original proposed strategy. Lastly, it is acknowledged that the VAWA may not be implemented, so implementation outlined in this strategy includes ensuring it is fully implemented so that the government will be held accountable.

Some limitations to successfully implementing these recommendations include not having enough funds, staffing, resources to develop the plan in its entirety. Additionally, there is a concern with the difficulty the nation is facing in securing employees, because the recommendations require the creation of new resources or strengthening of current ones, which require more staff. We also may have limitations in terms of our survey and on the ground research, as there are many rules with research in terms of ethics. We have to be prepared that some people may not respond to research, especially if the government, such as the Department of the Interior or the Bureau of Indian Affairs communicates with Native Americans and Indigenous people who don’t necessarily have high trust in the government based on historical and present instances of poor treatment. There are also security limitations, as these staff and services are located in high-risk areas.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The disproportionate sex trafficking of Native American women is routinely omitted from policies and under researched. The path towards solving this issue must take a multidimensional approach that encompasses a proper allocation of funds, preventative measures through community-building, and legislative implementation and accountability. For centuries, Native American and Indigenous people have felt the lingering effects of colonialism. Sex trafficking reflects these colonial structures because it is a process of enslavement and exploitation. It is evident that colonial structures still exist in the status quo, which is why it is so important to actively remember the past, work towards repairing damages, and create a more sustainable future.

One area that may benefit from further research is examining human trafficking through the lens of prostitution and migration policies. Because of the strong correlation between these topics, it is important to look at how changes in those laws affect human trafficking.¹² There could also be more research conducted on the fracking industry that the Fall 2021 cohort of Girl Security Fellows discussed, which has led to the development of “man houses,” where sex traffickers can act with impunity due to their isolated locations without government oversight. Although thinking of new approaches to improving the issue is effective, it is also important to consider how reforms in current policies can help. By delving more into the Savanna Act and Not Invisible Act, researchers can identify areas that are failing to address the needs of Native Americans and Indigenous women. Future researchers should also continue to follow the Savanna Act and Not Invisible Act in order to analyze their true effectiveness over time.¹³ ¹⁴
### C. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspirational Endstate to INSPIRE</th>
<th>Reduce the national and global impacts of climate change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strategic Objectives to ADVANCE  | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1  
Reduce emissions and global warming with the highest efficiency. |
|                                  | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2  
Have the United States take responsibility for its impact on climate change by practicing sustainable solutions in education, engaging in diplomatic cooperation, and taking accountability for historical climate policy failures. |
| Lines of Effort to ORGANIZE      | LINE OF EFFORT 1  
Implementation of eco-friendly technologies/alternatives that are beneficial to the economy. |
|                                  | LINE OF EFFORT 2  
Raise awareness of the importance of states implementing climate change education in their K-12 curriculum. Spread education through public service projects and through collaboration with the private sector. |
|                                  | LINE OF EFFORT 3  
Government should reassess past climate policies. They should strengthen and improve current climate policies. |
| Priority Actions to EXECUTE      | PRIORITY ACTION 1  
Lobby for the implementation of policies that take spending away from defense and repurpose a part of their budget for climate programs and technologies. |
|                                  | PRIORITY ACTION 2  
Federal incentive for states to implement and adopt climate change curriculum. It is an important topic to include in K-12 education since the climate crisis will be increasingly difficult to manage.  
Conduct public service projects or partner with private sector museums and exhibit centers to further educate the public. |
|                                  | PRIORITY ACTION 3  
Lobby for Congress to fund independent research on radioactive contamination and how to clean it up. |
“Given that climate change has no borders (natural resources are shared), mitigating both domestic and global impacts of climate change would not solely benefit the United States. It will help other countries, which can bolster our strategic alliances with them.”

Bailey Canham (16), Janelle Enriquez (19), Michelle Jin (15), Pariya Sarin (16), Joann Shin (19)

Aspirational Endstate
The purpose of the climate change strategic implementation plan is to examine the impacts of climate change and discuss ways to transform both public policy and societal attitudes so as to make progress toward solving this major national security problem. The reason why climate change is a major national security issue is that climate change is a threat multiplier, exacerbating current societal problems which could potentially trigger new conflicts or worsen existing ones.¹ Because climate change is a security concern that surpasses borders, it has fundamentally depicted the circular relationship between inequality, climate change, and resource scarcity. In fact, Brookings Institution has observed a direct relationship between rising temperatures and conflict in the Sahel region: a 1 degree Celsius increase in temperature results in the potentiality of civil war occurrences by 4.5%.² Climate change renders societies more vulnerable to conflict, and conflict makes societies more vulnerable to environmental change since they are unable to cope with climate change's effects, such as extreme weather and resource scarcity.

One prominent example of climate change as a threat multiplier is the Syrian Civil War. In the past, Syria's farmers have benefited from relatively fertile and productive lands. However, the country of around 17 million people has been hit by three droughts since the 1980s.³ The most recent one lasted from 2006 to 2010 and has been attributed heavily to climate change. The decreased precipitation, combined with rising temperatures, resulted in the desertification of agricultural land, leading 800,000 people to lose their income and 85% of the country's livestock to die.³ Consequently, food prices doubled and 1.5 million rural workers headed to the cities for work. This large-scale migration exacerbated the socio-economic stresses that underpinned Syria's descent into war. There is no denying that climate change is a top priority issue.

This strategic implementation plan focuses on the scientific and diplomatic aspects of the climate crisis by providing direct solutions that will mitigate the impacts. This plan will identify the impacts on two main sectors: agricultural and industrial. Moreover, this plan will identify methods to help educate younger generations about climate change because
it is a time-sensitive issue. By providing a climate change-oriented curriculum that is equitable for all, the younger generation can be proactive in combating climate change and use the knowledge gained from that curriculum to be advocates and activists.

The government currently allocates a very small portion of defense funding towards climate change, investing less into sustainable practices and research within the military. Since the urgency of global warming outweighs most problems at the moment, more funding needs to be apportioned within the government to mitigate the impacts of the climate crisis. Every dollar that is put towards this effort will save people’s livelihoods. Thus, this strategic implementation plan identifies this catastrophic inequality and aims to correct it. Given that climate change has no borders (natural resources are shared), mitigating both domestic and global impacts of climate change would not solely benefit the United States. It will help other countries, which can bolster our strategic alliances with them. Without a doubt, the climate crisis cannot be addressed by just one nation. However, the United States’ global standing in the international community can directly influence other nations.

**Strategic Objectives**

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1**

It is important to reduce the national and global impacts of climate change. The first strategic objective proposes there should be a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by utilizing techniques that provide the greatest efficiency. This first strategic objective was implemented to create a strategy that would create big strides towards solving the problem of climate change. The plan is to execute this objective by addressing the national global impacts of climate change on two specific sectors: agriculture and industry.

By focusing on the agricultural sector, this plan aims to address a diverse scope of people that are impacted by the climate crisis, such as those from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Also, the agricultural sector contributes largely to the exacerbation of the climate crisis through practices such as deforestation, the increased use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, and water and energy wastage. Specific agricultural techniques, such as slash and burn agriculture, can also severely damage the environment. Since agriculture plays a significant role in the globalized economy, the United States can negotiate policies and agreements that can serve as a template for other nations. According to the United Nations, the United States is leading climate action by establishing “ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions” and signing “legislation that ramps up renewable energy”.⁴ We could further relations with allies and other nations through key agricultural legislation and reforms.

The industrial sector encompasses topics that include energy, transportation, and
healthcare. This sector contributes to the increasing amount of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere and the spread of pollutants. This sector also impacts rising sea levels, which have caused buildings to collapse and flooding to take place in coastal regions. This plan aims to address systemic concerns of the climate crisis that directly impact human health and wellbeing so that vulnerable populations will not have to face greater consequences. This can be done by promoting technologies that improve air quality, providing alternative energy sources, and encouraging the removal of microplastics in the environment. This is not unprecedented; CFCs, an industrial compound, were banned in the late 1900s because peoples’ health was declining along with stratospheric ozone, which allows harmful UV radiation to damage the tissues and DNA of living organisms. In fact, California recently passed a law that plans to clean up microplastics.⁵ Other states can follow in their footsteps to contribute to climate action in the industrial sector.

STRAategic OBJECTIVE #2
The second strategic objective is to advance increased accountability of the United States for its impact on climate change by practicing sustainable solutions through education and collaborating with other nations. It is critical that the United States is using tools of education and diplomacy to improve its stance on climate policy. This includes lobbying Congress to raise awareness of the importance of including climate change-related lessons in K-12 education, creating interactive climate-change education stands in museums and the public, lobbying for the government to invest further in climate research, and initiating conversations about climate change with our strategic allies. In a democratic nation, policies will only stay intact if people are actively educating themselves about them, so it is critical that we achieve this objective.

The United States ought to leverage its power as a global model in order to help advance other nations' climate goals along with its own.

The United States has exacerbated the climate crisis by producing nuclear waste through nuclear testing. According to the Los Angeles Times, “Between 1946 and 1958, the United States detonated 67 nuclear bombs on, in and above the Marshall Islands — vaporizing whole islands, carving craters into its shallow lagoons and exiling hundreds of people from their homes”.⁶ Contaminated soil and lethal debris were by-products of these tests, which have been stored in the Runit Dome. Although the Runit Dome has served to prevent the leakage of these lethal wastes, there have been increasing concerns from the Marshallese leaders about the potential collapsing of the structure. In an article by the Scientific American, the United States is called to take accountability for the nuclear wastes on the
Marshall Islands. According to the reading, “leakage from the dome – already occurring – is likely to increase and higher tides threaten to break the structure open in the coming decades”.⁷ Sea levels have continued to rise over the past decade due to human-induced warming, so it is possible the structure of the dome will collapse. A potential radioactive incident may occur, which will be detrimental to the surrounding environment. Although the Department of Energy concluded that the “Runit Dome is not in any immediate danger of collapse or failure” in its investigation for Congress, the Marshallese say otherwise.⁸ There is clear evidence that the integrity of the dome is at risk of collapsing, so the United States should take accountability for making it unsafe in the first place.

The United States approach to international engagement with other nations in terms of climate discourse should both be re-analyzed and strengthened ethically. The United States ought to leverage its power as a global model in order to help advance other nations’ climate goals along with its own.

**Lines of Effort**

**LINE OF EFFORT #1**
The first line of effort is to implement eco-friendly technologies and alternatives to ensure sustainable practices. An often under-recognized contributing sector to climate change is animal agriculture. By mandating certain agricultural practices and banning others, emissions and deforestation can be greatly reduced by 2050. Along with the agricultural sector, the energy sector can do its part to achieve this goal by keeping up to date with other countries’ alternative energy resources by adopting nuclear, hydroelectric, wind, solar, and geothermal energy. This line of effort also promotes technologies that increase recycling efforts and reduce microplastics. Innovation and further research into climate change technologies and practices are vital to stop global warming, and therefore, should be a priority to have increased funding. This line of effort specifically addresses Strategic Objective #1 by revealing the techniques to decrease greenhouse emissions.

**LINE OF EFFORT #2**
States must implement climate change education so students can practice sustainable lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint. If climate change is not emphasized in K-12 education, then students will not be able to comprehend the negative consequences of the climate crisis. They must be knowledgeable about the climate crisis’s current situation to address the issue later. In addition to gaining basic knowledge about climate change, the curriculum would also include a community component, where students would have to volunteer or come up with a way to make a real-world impact on climate change in their community. This will make students understand that this is simply not a theoretical issue, but a real one that they should continue to find solutions for. One example of this can be seen in several districts in California that have pushed for additional climate change
education. They passed resolutions for more emphasis to be placed on environmental education through hands-on projects, such as taking care of gardens at schools. While bottom-up approaches have been effective in getting students to become climate literate, states have failed to enforce widespread environmental education. Although California schools are encouraged to teach about climate change, the Education Code does not mandate them to teach it.

Progress is being made slowly with California Assembly Bill 1939, which “would require the science area of study to include an emphasis on the causes and effects of climate change and methods to mitigate and adapt to climate change”. However, this bill hasn't been passed yet, so more work needs to be done to get states to actually implement climate change education.

Even though education does not immediately translate into change, not learning about or attempting to think of solutions to the climate change problem just reinforces the notion that it is not an issue that needs to be dealt with. Education does not need to be formal either; public service projects can greatly enhance citizens' understanding of the climate crisis. Moreover, it provides a platform for citizens to combat climate misinformation in the future. All in all, by implementing climate change education, we are ensuring that our fight against climate change is not abandoned in the future.

LINE OF EFFORT #3
The government should work to reassess and strengthen past and current climate policies because climate change is an ever-evolving problem that we need to stay on top of. They can achieve this by making climate change a higher priority, funding research, and looking into other countries' approaches on how to mitigate climate change. For example, the United States can collaborate with South Korea and Japan, two regional allies in East Asia who have stated ambitious goals of cutting carbon emissions by 2030.

When reassessing prior climate policies, the United States needs to reassess its strategic
alliances overall. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the government should take on initiatives with Japan, such as reducing support for overseas coal projects or increasing resources to ensure international financial institutions will sustainably invest in developing countries' economic goals.¹³ The United States should leverage its relationship with global allies to put climate change on their agendas, which could strengthen diplomatic relationships. However, it should not coerce or threaten countries since each state is entitled to political autonomy.

Moreover, the United States should reassess and strengthen its involvement in international agreements and conferences regarding the climate crisis. When the United States and China, two of the world's largest emitters, agreed to boost climate cooperation by a joint agreement at COP26 (2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference), both nations proved their ability to cooperate on critical issues even among political tensions.¹⁴ Providing technical experts with a platform to evaluate climate policy solutions could prove beneficial in improving technical discourse about climate change.

Although there are many federal agencies responsible for mitigating climate change impacts, the Department of Defense (DoD) will be the main area of study for the focus of this strategic implementation plan. Since the DoD is central to ensuring the nation's security, it must contribute to the fight against climate change. Moreover, a 2019 report by Neta C. Crawford identified the DoD as “the world’s largest institutional user of petroleum and correspondingly, the single largest institutional producer of greenhouse gasses (GHG) in the world”.¹⁵ Thus, the United States military must reduce its role in emitting large amounts of greenhouse gasses. This can be done by having the DoD prioritize addressing environmental issues and increase funding for research that would improve environmental technologies.

Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
The first priority action is to lobby for policies that support the implementation of eco-friendly technologies, solutions, and policies. Under this priority action, the adoption of new technologies to help manage the climate crisis, such as reducing the particulate matter in the air and increasing the implementation of agricultural innovations, can be done. For example, a process called fluidized bed combustion, which burns solid fuels, can be implemented to remove SO2 from the atmosphere. Certain technologies, such as catalytic converters that remove pollutants from the air, have already proven to be effective and improved air quality since being used. Other examples include electrostatic precipitators and baghouse filters that remove particulates.

Although many technologies exist that would be beneficial to the environment, there has
not been a widespread application of these technologies due to cost and lack of incentives. In many industrialized countries, primary treatment is the minimum level of treatment required for wastewater. However, tertiary and disinfection treatment of wastewater is crucial to protecting the environment from bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Another example involves using energy. The burning of fossil fuels and nonrenewable energy seems to be a more efficient, cheaper, and reliable source of energy in the short term. On the other hand, the more environmentally-friendly alternative does not appear to be too attractive due to high initial costs. Moreover, the fossil fuel industry holds a tight grip on nonrenewable sources.

By incentivizing the use of green energy, the dilemma of industries caring more about profit rather than the environment can be resolved. Examples of incentives regarding renewable energy include increasing tax credit, increasing carbon tax, and placing greater regulations on nonrenewable power plants. Since the implementation of the increased tax credit, solar panels have achieved an annual growth rate of 52%. Furthermore, there are strategies to increase carbon tax without compromising economic growth and development, such as increasing carbon tax gradually to allow industries enough time to adapt and allow relief for low-income households. These implementations, which have already proven to be efficient, will incentivize greater growth in the use of renewable energy, and help meet the goal of stunting global climate change by the middle of the century.

The emission of greenhouse gasses does not fully encapsulate the energy sector's problem, and the problem cannot simply be solved by switching to renewable energy. There should be more incentives for recycling programs to reduce the number of recyclable materials that end up in landfills. For instance, aluminum accounts for a substantial portion of energy consumption. Since more aluminum is produced due to a lack of recycled aluminum, a positive feedback loop is created where greater consumption and lack of recycling lead to greater energy consumption. Another problem is the extraction of resources through mining and logging. These practices lead to loss of habitat and biodiversity, erosion, contamination of groundwater and runoff into waterways, and a host of other threatening problems. The management of mining-affected regions remains worrysomely lax, and mandated water monitoring in local streams and rivers is not as strictly enforced as it should be. In all areas and sectors, eco-friendly practices should be ensured. Passive solar building design, which is often neglected, is an excellent technique to lower the amount of energy a structure requires without causing too much inconvenience or expenditure.

Because agriculture is generally overlooked as one of the major drivers of environmental degradation, it is extremely important to recognize and minimize its effects. Instead of using synthetic fertilizers, which runoff into waterways causing eutrophication and other
adverse problems, farmers should be required to use organic fertilizers, depending on the size of the agricultural plot. Pesticides and insecticides should be regulated, and endocrine-disrupting compounds like atrazine should be outlawed. Tilling increases erosion and releases carbon dioxide sequestered in the soil by reducing soil compaction. Hence, it should be banned. Certain types of irrigation are less efficient, and they lead to soil degradation through waterlogging and salinization. Although the worst irrigation practice is furrow irrigation, it is widely practiced since it is easy and inexpensive. Transition to drip irrigation can allow for more water efficiency, leading to better crops being a long-term investment. Thus, greater amounts of money should be allocated towards funding environmentally-friendly agriculture to promote a long-term investment into maintaining arable and nutrient-rich soil.

In regards to animal agriculture, which is significantly worse than plant agriculture, more ethical and safe techniques should be implemented. There should be a reduction in the use of antibiotics and chemicals that not only threaten the health of livestock and agriculture but also of humans. Overall, there should be a widespread mandated implementation of certain technologies, techniques, and funds going towards these initiatives. Most importantly, there should be increased funding for research and development. This would make the race against the climate crisis a possible victory for humans.

For this priority action, there are several potential partners.16 They are listed below:

1. Environmental Defense Fund
2. Oceana
3. National Wildlife Federation
5. The Nature Conservancy
6. ClearPath Foundation
7. Sierra Club
8. The Wilderness Society

With their help, influencing climate policies to decrease greenhouse gas emissions can be achieved.
PRIORITY ACTION #2
States must be given a federal incentive to increase environmental awareness among younger generations. This can be accomplished by providing increased funding by adopting climate change curriculums, specifically the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS should be adopted because it includes specific curriculums for K-12 students to learn more about climate change. According to the National Science Teaching Association, “Twenty states and the District of Columbia (representing over 36% of U.S. students) have adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)”.¹⁷ Unlike Common Core, states do not have the financial incentive to adopt NGSS, so less than half of the states have added NGSS to their curriculums. On the other hand, federal funding was used to get states to adopt the Common Core State Standards. Thus, “forty-one states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)” adopted it according to the Common Core State Standards Initiative.¹⁸ To ensure that more states would adopt the NGSS with the new climate change curriculum, a federal grant should be allocated to states that adopt it. Without any funding attached, it is unlikely for states to teach climate change in classrooms.

Even though there is enough scientific evidence indicating the climate crisis is very much a pressing issue, some states have barely implemented curriculums about it. Opposing responses have made it difficult for climate change curricula to be taught at schools. According to the Brock Education Journal, Truth in Textbooks Coalition (TNT) is one organization that has continued to discredit the reality of the human-induced climate crisis.¹⁹ To this day, climate change continues to be a debatable topic in certain states. By adding and incentivizing the climate change curriculum, we are increasing the odds that states will adopt a climate change curriculum leading to more people taking this issue seriously. Even if the grant only encourages one more state to implement a climate change curriculum, it would still impact thousands of children and encourage them to try and make a difference. This supports the second line of effort in raising awareness for climate change education.

For this priority action, potential partners are Achieve, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Research Council, and the National Science Teachers Association. Since these organizations advocated and created the NGSS, it would be best to collaborate with them.²¹

Beyond investing in educational curriculum, the United States needs to harness the power of public education campaigns to further educate everyday citizens about climate change. The United Nations Virtual Reality Campaign has begun using films as a means of public education, and local governments could utilize the UNVR Campaign’s actions as a platform to launch public service projects and open-air installations, including outdoor interactive booths or museum exhibits to further climate education.²¹ While a major concern of such
public service projects would be public sanitation, such open-air installations could be a platform for increased accessibility in climate change education.

PRIORITY ACTION #3
The third priority action supports the third line of effort in having the government reassess and strengthen its climate policies. The government must fund research to address radioactive contamination since the United States was the one to instigate the problem by producing radioactive waste. Along with taking accountability for its actions on harming other countries, funding research to identify the next steps in addressing the climate crisis would make the United States better prepared for what’s to come in the future. The United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Energy, and Alliance for Nuclear Accountability can be partnered with for this priority action since these governmental organizations are responsible for handling the use of radioactive materials.

The DoD needs to do more to address climate change. Out of $715 billion, $617 million (0.086%) was devoted to addressing climate change in the fiscal year 2022, whereas $3 billion (0.388%) out of $773 billion was requested to tackle the crisis in the fiscal year 2023. Although the budget has increased since the fiscal year 2022, it is not enough since the percentage of increase from the fiscal year 2022 to 2023 has been roughly 0.302%. Moreover, the low percentage indicates not much funding is being apportioned to address the issue.

Although the DoD is one of the biggest contributors to global warming, it is not prioritizing the climate crisis above all else. More should be invested, especially under the current Biden administration, since tackling the climate crisis is one of his top agendas. Thus, out of the $130.1 billion (16.8%) that is planned to be invested in advanced technological research, some of the funding should go into researching radioactive waste or “bolstering [their] installation resiliency and adaptation to climate challenges.” The research would benefit the Marshall Islands and other communities impacted by nuclear waste. Although the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy are responsible for regulating radioactive wastes, the DoD should put some effort into handling the issue since it has taken part in several tests.

Although the DoD is one of the biggest contributors to global warming, it is not prioritizing the climate crisis above all else.
It’s interesting to note that the term climate has been more frequently mentioned in the fiscal year 2e022 and 2023 Defense Budget Overview (see appendix A). By conducting a qualitative analysis of the number of times the term “climate” alone appeared in the Department of Defense’s budget request in each fiscal year since 2010, the aforementioned conclusion was made. In the Overview – FY 2013 Defense Budget, the term “Microclimate Cooling Units” was mentioned, but it was not counted despite the fact the term climate was present.²⁵ Once again, the term climate alone was counted.

Below, the bar graph displays the number of times climate appeared over time.

![Number of Times "Climate" Appeared Since 2010](image)

The graph displays the DoD has been recently revamping efforts to directly address and tackle the climate crisis. This is reflected in the increasing frequency of the term’s usage. Moreover, the U.S. Army released its first-ever climate strategy in 2022.⁴⁰ Other branches of the military must follow behind, and the DoD should mandate all the other branches to create a similar plan.

Progress is being made. However, there is no guarantee the DoD will increase its measure to tackle the climate crisis in the future. The DoD must continue to invest its resources to counter the climate crisis since it is one of the greatest threats to global security. There are heavy security implications, such as political instability and exacerbating humanitarian crises.
Assumptions & Limitations

Some of the limitations of this strategic implementation plan are listed below:

1. Every sector that has been impacted by climate change was not covered in the plan.
2. Out of many governmental agencies and corporations, the DoD was studied. Other organizations must invest more resources to mitigate the climate crisis. However, not enough research was conducted to specifically analyze each agency and corporation in the United States.
3. There are limitations to any policy being passed. Although climate change is a less contentious issue compared to other ones, political polarization between the two political parties in the United States may limit cohesive action.

Some of the assumptions of this strategic implementation plan are listed below:

1. Citizens will be responsive to the policies implemented
   a. For example, it is assumed that citizens from low-income communities will be receptive to a free climate-change educational curriculum. However, many of these communities may rather hope for more immediate needs, such as food or housing to be addressed.
   b. There has been a tense relationship between the turn towards renewable energy and the sentiment of citizens living in “fossil fuel communities”. With over 1.7 million people working in fossil fuel industries in 2019, many are hesitant to adopt climate-friendly policies like renewable energy that may come at the expense of their own careers and financial futures.⁴¹
2. Citizens will be receptive to taking away funding from defense spending and apportioning it to climate change investments.
3. In reality, some individuals prioritize other issues above climate change. According to the Pew Research Center, the public’s top priority for 2022 is strengthening the nation's economy since 71% of U.S. adults rated it.⁴² On the other hand, dealing with climate change placed 14th.
4. The United States wields much influence in shaping global climate change policy.
   a. One nation can only control a portion of the global fight against the climate crisis. For example, the United States cannot dramatically influence the oil-supplying Middle East’s energy policies. It can only lead by example, as it has done at global climate conferences and treaties.
Conclusions & Recommendations

When it comes to combating climate change, it is highly recommended that a host of other factors, including amplifying minority voices and looking at how climate change intersects with other domestic issues, be taken into account. There must be greater integration of minority communities into the climate discussion and more diplomatic engagements since climate change is an intersectional issue across all levels.

Although this strategic implementation plan did not address these social issues, the world cannot move forward without coming to a consensus on how to deal with them quantitatively. Research on climate change should continue, and solutions to mitigate global warming should be developed. While the United States should put more emphasis on climate change, other countries should do the same. The race against the climate crisis impacts all humans. It all comes down to whether or not the planet can be saved before the situation worsens. There can be no sustainable future without all countries contributing to mitigating the effects of climate change.
## D. DOMESTIC TERRORISM STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Summary

**Aspirational Endstate to INSPIRE**

Prevent domestic terrorism by mitigating the contributing factors before crises can occur by reaching young members of the community through increasing access to resources and reducing MDM in order to decrease attacks and increase trust in the government.

### Strategic Objectives to ADVANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broden educational resources and opportunities to increase exposure to diverse perspectives.</td>
<td>Decrease foreign influence and echo chambers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Lines of Effort to ORGANIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>LINE OF EFFORT 5</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Federal Bureau of Investigation will partner with the Department of Education and the Department of Homeland Security's disinformation task force to create a network of interactive resources on how to process different sources and assess their validity.</td>
<td>Work with social media platforms to flag content as potential misinformation.</td>
<td>Collaborate with education based nonprofits and businesses in the private sector to promote diverse education and independent thinking.</td>
<td>Collaborate with intelligence organizations (CIA, NSA, DOD, SD) in order to expand counterintelligence in an effort to combat disinformation and foreign involvement.</td>
<td>Department of Education to collaborate with prominent educators to share school resources that offer diverse perspectives for all age ranges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Priority Actions to EXECUTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>PRIORITY ACTION 5</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create grants in order to incentivize an increase in states’ civics education through the DOE.</td>
<td>Create legal task force to assess how speech can potentially directly impact domestic terrorism. Work with nonprofits to create ongoing task force.</td>
<td>Create Youth Advisory Council to advise on how misinformation affects various youth age groups.</td>
<td>Release selective educational sources to highlight a priority in diversity.</td>
<td>Therapy for all programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. DOMESTIC TERRORISM STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

"Critical thinking is necessary in a world of information flow, and this can be encouraged by flagging media that may relate to significant world or local issues."

Grace Cassineri (17), Asma Mothana (18), Emilie Reitinger (18), Nina Verner (16), Sydney Zulich (19)

Aspirational Endstate

Domestic terrorism is a product of several factors, including lack of information. There are three types of false or misleading information: misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation, also known as “MDM”. To combat domestic terrorism, it is critical to implement a plan that will decrease American youth’s exposure to these MDM that may underlie radicalization. This plan is not meant to target any specific group, but instead, offers a widespread approach to decrease rates of domestic terrorism.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has outlined the following three factors as the main contributors to the rise in domestic terrorism in the United States leading up to 2022:

1. "the proliferation of false or misleading narratives, which sow discord or undermine public trust in U.S. government institutions;
2. continued calls for violence directed at U.S. critical infrastructure; soft targets and mass gatherings; faith-based institutions, such as churches, synagogues, and mosques; institutions of higher education; racial and religious minorities; government facilities and personnel, including law enforcement and the military; the media; and perceived ideological opponents;
3. calls by foreign terrorist organizations for attacks on the United States based on recent events."

In order to decrease cases of domestic terrorism within the United States, the factors outlined by the Department of Homeland Security must decrease as well. Therefore, the purpose of this strategic implementation plan is to prevent domestic terrorism by mitigating the contributing factors before crises can occur by reaching young members of the community through increasing access to resources and reducing MDM in order to decrease attacks and increase trust in the government.
Strategic Objectives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1
Acts of domestic terrorism often stem from individuals or groups who have developed radicalized beliefs.¹⁸ In this context, the definition of radicalization being used is “a process of developing extremist beliefs, emotions, and behaviors.”¹⁸ Radicalization is the fuel that produces the fire of intergroup conflict. It magnifies the differences between in-groups and out-groups, which creates intensified “in-group superiority and out-group inferiority.”¹³ Out-groups are defined as “a group that is distinct from one's own,” while in-groups are the opposite. Ingrained in-groups and out-groups cause people to have intense favoritism for their in-group. A person misbehaving in an out-group will have a much bigger impact than someone misbehaving in one's in-group.¹² As groups become further entrenched, domestic terrorism becomes more and more likely to occur.

The primary strategy utilized to combat this occurrence is counter-radicalization, a strategy used by the United Nations in their mission to combat terrorism. It can be described as “social, political, legal, and educational prevention programs designed to discourage disgruntled and perhaps already radicalized people from becoming terrorists.”¹⁸ Within this strategy, there are also universalist and targeted approaches to reach all members of the community with a focus on susceptible groups. Susceptible groups are identified as those with a “‘cognitive opening’—the moment when an individual who faces discrimination, socioeconomic crisis, and political repression is trying to understand life events and suddenly [their] previously accepted beliefs are shaking and [they] become vulnerable and receptive to the new way of thinking—radicalized ideology.”¹⁸ People moving down a path towards domestic terrorism often begin at a place of perceived deprivation.¹¹ Perceived deprivation can include economic changes, loss of healthcare, religious intolerance, and more. It can be defined as the extent to which one believes they have poor relative deprivation; relative deprivation is “is the lack of resources (e.g. money, rights, social equality) necessary to maintain the quality of life considered typical within a given socioeconomic group.”¹¹ It is also possible that perceived deprivation encourages one to have absolutistic demands, which can push one further into a search for extremist groups and to view themselves as better than others.¹⁸ Targeted actions can be used to influence the very beginning of the radicalization process, creating an impact before someone even starts to radicalize.

This strategic objective will be accomplished through working with nonprofits to promote resources and civic education nationwide. Collaborating with education-based nonprofits will allow for work with professionals who vary in their areas of expertise and their organization’s circle of influence. This plan intends to have nonprofits advise on various products that are marketed towards students, teachers, and academic administrators.
These products may include magazines, books, and videos. This plan also emphasizes a focus on K-12 students, as increasing exposure to diversity should start early. Through promoting materials with diverse points of view and people of diverse backgrounds, the objective is to limit social categorization, or at least teach students to recognize that being different is welcomed. Limiting the feeling of in-group superiority, which is best done through educating people when they’re young, is incredibly important.

In order to promote civic education, several factors need to be considered to formulate an effective multi-dimensional approach. Americans need to possess critical thinking skills so they can appropriately decide when to trust and when to critique the government, especially when analyzing the government’s actions against domestic terrorism. Only ¼ of Americans can name all three branches of government, and many states are light on building skills and agency for civic engagement.¹⁹ Proper civic education should include, “youth [gaining] an understanding of the processes of government, prevalent political ideologies, civic and constitutional rights, and the history and heritage of the above.”¹⁹ While 42 states have some form of civic education, the quality and depth of civic education is lacking. Having students learn about these topics will aid them in becoming active citizens in their communities, equip them with critical thinking skills, and infuse them with an understanding of their governing bodies. These effects will influence kids to become adults who feel in control, which supports the goals of this plan, as feeling out of control is a considerable factor that leads people onto a path of radicalization.

**Americans need to possess critical thinking skills so they can appropriately decide when to trust and when to critique the government, especially when analyzing the government’s actions against domestic terrorism.**

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2**

American domestic terrorism is generally associated with violent, far right extremism, especially following the January 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol. In the past 10 years, over 300 people have been killed in American right-wing extremist acts of violence. With domestic terrorism cases on the rise, a deeper examination of the sources of domestic terrorist ideologies and contributing factors reveals a specifically strong tie between violent American right-wing extremist groups and foreign countries, specifically Russia, that isn’t present in other manifestations of American domestic terrorism. Russia has been cited for spreading misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation, while provoking tensions between various groups in the United States. American white supremacist leaders, such as David Duke, have cited Russia as being the key to “white survival.”
Additionally, American white supremacist leaders such as Jared Taylor and Matthew Heimbach have met with Russian political leaders prior to planning terrorist attacks. The Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) publicly declares that one of their goals is to unite radical right-wing white supremacist organizations and movements across the world, and RIM is known to work closely with Rodina, the far right-wing political party in Russia.⁹ As Russia works to sow distrust and misinformation in media, social media platform algorithms that are prone to creating echo chambers lead to consumers becoming malinformed and potentially prone to radicalization.

In order to approach this problem and minimize its impacts, it is important to work with social media platforms in order to make consumers aware of facts as opposed to falling victim to MDM messaging. Critical thinking is necessary in a world of information flow, and this can be encouraged by flagging media that may relate to significant world or local issues. Additionally, media platforms should be encouraged to minimize the creation of echo chambers by altering algorithms so that various kinds of media are presented. America should consider diplomatic engagement with Russia surrounding this topic and attempt to exhaust all angles of soft power in order to ensure that America is kept safe. It is important to root out this significant contributor to right-wing domestic terrorist radicalization in the United States through these channels.

**Lines of Effort**

**LINE OF EFFORT #1**

In order to decrease levels of misinformation in the United States of America, the Federal Bureau of Investigation will partner with the Department of Education and the Department of Homeland Security’s disinformation task force to create a network of interactive resources on how to process different sources and assess their validity. These resources will further the existing efforts of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that is already implementing media literacy and critical thinking programs.¹⁵ People will be able to learn about how news sources or social media can present misleading information and how individuals may personally be susceptible to different tactics. In order to increase trust in the American government, these resources will not shy away from offering insight as to how Americans should read government sources with a critical eye as well. The White House identifies social media as one of the dangerous channels through which disinformation is spread.¹⁵ In many instances, sources on social media may make up an expert or conspiracy theory in order to spread panic. In addition to increasing trust in the government, this line of effort is meant to increase America’s ability to process potential MDM. Some ways people can present misleading information can be citing a false expert as their main source or discrediting real experts in their field to create confusion. The proposed resources will teach American citizens how to be cautious of these types of posts and articles that they may come across in their everyday life. This is especially critical in the days of social media in which people may repost an article without reading it, simply
because they see an “expert’s” name. Not only will this teach many Americans how to process information, but it may prevent mass hysteria from reposting unread articles. These resources will target young people in the United States to decrease the likelihood of being recruited into terrorist organizations and lessen the American people’s susceptibility to calls for attacks on the foundation of the United States.

**LINE OF EFFORT #2**

Promoting diverse educational and independent thinking by collaborating with educational based nonprofits can help expand open and active minds. The Federal Department of Education (DOE) works with individual states’ DOE and educational businesses and nonprofits to create community resources. Some of the organizations that have been identified to potentially work with include: Khan Academy, Crash Course History, Carnegie Institution, and the Boys and Girls Club of America. Many of these organizations have a direct impact on children’s exposure to information and the type of education that they are receiving.

The Education Trust is a nonprofit organization who gives a voice to underfunded schools, LGBTQ+ students, students of color, and low income students.⁴ Organizations like this provide educational opportunities for youth who are disproportionately affected by education gaps. By closing these education and achievement gaps, youth in these communities have the opportunity to engage with students of different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

We can learn from these national organizations and model similar experiences in our local
schools and community centers. We will partner with these organizations to promote and implement opportunities for students to share their own experiences and develop empathy for each other. Preconceived ideas or notions about a particular group or affiliation can begin early in childhood.⁶ By introducing diversity through activities such as puppet shows, story time, or teaching through song, our youth will learn early that not everyone is the same and it’s our differences that make us unique. Ultimately, these experiences will lead to higher connectivity between students who are different from each other who are more likely to grow into being open minded adults. When students are exposed to backgrounds different from their own and form bonds between each other, the likelihood of falsehoods perpetuating about a particular ethnicity or protected group greatly diminishes and thereby reduces the chances of hate groups from forming and elevating to instances of domestic terrorism.

LINE OF EFFORT #3
Counterintelligence efforts will be expanded in an effort to slow the spread of misinformation and decrease the risks of foreign influence with American domestic terrorist organizations. A Digital Counterterrorism Unit should be formed in order to predict, plan for, and appropriately deal with outbreaks of conspiracies and misinformation. As a part of the FBI, this unit will monitor social media channels as well as media networks in order to detect the proliferation of MDM. The unit will work with social media networks to remove users who continuously contribute to the proliferation of MDM. This unit will also be responsible for flagging any media that it deems to be false, misleading or harmful in any way, and providing access to accurate information via vetted information. This way, radicalization can be rooted out before much of it starts. Ideally, this plan will prevent many cases of radicalization by creating a well informed civilian population. This unit will be similar to the MDM Team of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which seeks to educate Americans on the dangers and impacts of MDM so that they will be equipped to protect themselves from the risks. By flagging inaccurate or harmful information, consumers will be able to evaluate information for themselves without infringing on the free speech rights of others.¹⁴

Additionally, a center will be established in order to examine foreign influence in domestic terrorism. Intelligence organizations such as the FBI and DHS will dedicate counterintelligence resources to the detection and exposure of foreign actors attempting to sow disunity in the United States. In this way, this plan can minimize this key factor in the creation of division in the United States.

LINE OF EFFORT #4
Gaining community trust is a crucial step in ensuring that educational resources to combat domestic terrorism are being utilized. To achieve this, research from the Stanford Social Innovation Review suggests that leaders should create programs that engage with
community members directly.¹ To do this, the Department of Education will collaborate with prominent educators in communities to share the diversified curriculum in Line of Effort #1 to encourage critical thinking. Similarly to Michelle Obama’s contributions to the “Let’s Move” initiative as a leader, community leaders will be asked to promote the resources so that parents, students, teachers, and schools have a familiar figure they trust sharing the resources given to them.

Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
In line with Strategic Objective #1, the first priority action is to create categorical formula grants in order to incentivize an increase in states’ civics education through the Federal Department of Education. While the federal government cannot directly influence states’ education programs, it can offer incentives to achieve national priorities. Therefore, the goal of this priority action is to maximize the amount of children that are getting exposed to civics education.

The requirements to receive this grant would be the following: incorporating civic knowledge, civic values, and civic behaviors, in the form of a required, year-long civics course prior to high school graduation. The following three aspects of civics education are outlined by Brookings education as necessary to receive a comprehensive civics education: civic knowledge and skills, civic values and disposition, and civic behaviors. Knowledge and skills refers to an understanding of the government, while values and disposition includes developing a student’s own values and being exposed to those who have values that differ from their own. Finally, civic behaviors are the engagement of students in their community, which can include volunteering, activism, or simply voting.¹⁹ Along with including all three of these things in a civics course, the state must incorporate this course as a graduation requirement, rather than an elective. While 42 states already have civics education requirements of some sort, the goal is to provide quality over quantity. For example, many states have civics requirements that only include educational criteria, but have no programs in which students can learn to foster their own ideas and opinions, which could play a factor in making them less susceptible to others’ opinions.⁴ Furthermore, only nine states and the District of Columbia require the full year that this plan proposes.⁴ Though some states may be reluctant to incorporate these suggestions, the goal is to offer a comprehensive civics education to as many students as possible and increase the quality of civics education across the board. One potential issue is that some states allow local governments to handle all education responsibilities. In this case, money will be offered to the state to distribute exclusively to the local municipalities who adhere to the guidelines previously outlined.

In order to monitor the success rate of this proposal, there will be new positions in the
Department of Education (DOE) created to coordinate with each state individually to create programs that work for them within the guidelines of the grant. The team will then meet to discuss the effectiveness of this program in the various states and regions. These DOE employees will also be creating resources on how to get involved in the community for the constituents in their assigned states. This is increasingly important because out of all the states that require some semblance of civics education, only Maryland and the District of Columbia require community service. Many people report increased self confidence and sense of purpose after volunteering. By incorporating volunteering into this program, people will not only have an easier time interacting with those in their community, but they will most likely become less susceptible to calls for attacks on the American infrastructure.

PRIORITY ACTION #2
The spread of hate speech increases violence, especially on the internet, as the Council of Foreign Relations reports that “hate speech online has been linked to a global increase in violence toward minorities, including mass shootings, lynchings, and ethnic cleansing.” MDM is also considered by the Department of Homeland Security as a tool used by both domestic and foreign terrorist to inspire violence. Because of Brandenburg v. Ohio, both hate speech and MDM are protected under the first amendment, unless the speech is likely to incite “imminent lawless action,” which leaves a legal battle to determine the nuance of which speech is considered as an imminent threat. Since hate speech is linked to an increase in violence, and MDM is used as a tool for domestic terrorists, this priority action will create a legal task force to investigate and link hate speech and MDM to eminent lawless actions.

The legal task force will be housed within the FBI in collaboration with the DOJ to consist of both investigators and prosecutors. It will investigate hate speech and MDM to assess the affects both of these threats have on the audience it reaches and on domestic terrorism as a whole, then challenge it to be taken down. If there is sufficient evidence to prove that the speech is likely to incite violence, the prosecutors will take appropriate legal actions against the perpetrators and ensure the material is taken off the internet.
Community outreach to schools, parents, community-based organizations, workplaces, and other groups will also be conducted to inform them of the options they have of reporting hate speech and MDM. Collaboration with social media companies will also be conducted to start preliminary investigations of reports they receive regarding violent speech. This task force will be set so that it does not infringe on the constitution’s first amendment right of free speech—in cases where the speech does not pose a threat, the speech will not be targeted. The type of speech that will be targeted is that which poses as a threat to national security and fuels violence and domestic terrorism.

PRIORITY ACTION #3
A youth advisory council will be formed as a part of DHS in order to make policymakers aware of the various impacts misinformation has on youth. Policymakers are sometimes unable to relate to and understand many of the issues impacting youth in America. Youth will be recruited from various high schools, colleges, and universities in America, and will be representative of the American youth population, ensuring that all marginalized communities and minorities are represented, including but not limited to racial, gender, sexuality, religious, and socio-economic diversity. In previous cases, youth advisory councils have been successfully implemented in order to advise policymakers on issues that they may not have direct experience with. For example, foster youth in Missouri are able to participate in the Missouri State Youth Advisory Council, in order to offer insight to the issues facing Missouri foster youth.³ The youth advisory council on MDM would provide policymakers the insight that they need to make informed decisions regarding topics such as social media policy. The youth advisory council will allow motivated youth to participate in government, and policymakers to interact with youth on a personal level, which can result in more informed policy.

PRIORITY ACTION #4
Youth not being exposed to people with various backgrounds and identities that are different from theirs can have substantial long term effects; including favoritism of one’s in-group and being more harmful to members of their out-group. Studies show that people make moral judgements quicker and are more likely to harm others who are not in their in-group.¹¹ Exposure is one of the key strategies to creating relationships between groups. Because of this research, the focal point of this priority action is on promoting visual media that exposes students to people of different backgrounds and viewpoints. Additionally, anti-radicalization programs need to focus on building resilience, for instance, through education, as discussed in the “Aarhus Model.”²² The Aarhus Model is a 360 degree program that focuses on the early prevention and exit processes radicalizing people who may engage in violent acts and terrorism.²² This model emphasizes localizing programs and avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.²² Building resilience in this context simply means giving students the resources to understand the world around them and take action as they see fit. Students feeling like they can take charge of their lives will prevent them from
progressing to a state of extreme perceived deprivation.

The intention is for the federal government to release an overall statement of their goal on increasing diversity in education. Then, they will partner with nonprofits and outside of school programs to promote visual resources. For instance, these visuals could be videos to be played in classrooms to assist teachers with educating students on the curriculum but in a different way or to fill in curriculum gaps. The videos might be an author of color reading a chapter of the book she wrote to a class that is reading that same book, so they could put a face to the content in the book. To make education plans that are feasible, state and local governments should collaborate to assess areas for growth. This idea of localizing this program to various areas will increase the effectiveness as every area's students need different types of assistance. Non-profits will support in identifying and publicizing great resources that are already out there, which does some of the work for teachers. They will also assist in transparently explaining the reasoning behind the choosing of the resources. After-school programs like daycares or the Boys and Girls Club will be able to have resources readily available to choose. Organizations in different areas will also need to convince academic administrators that these resources are worthwhile. To accomplish this, the federal government and local organizations will promote and give shout-outs to principals who implement the resources identified. Through this system, change can occur from the bottom up.

PRIORITY ACTION #5
The Department of Education already has several social and emotional learning programs to ensure that students have the mental support that they need.²⁰ The Department of Education would streamline this process and ensure that every student in the United States has fair access to therapy and other mental health facilities, should they need or want them. This will be seen in the form of free therapy programs for any student that qualifies for free or reduced lunch, as well as resources for students to find any mental health facilities they might need access to, regardless of their families' income. There will be an all call for therapists to participate in this program, as it will require a large number of them in each state, for the program to be a national success. Furthermore, nonprofit organizations such as The Youth Mental Health Project will be partnered with as a way to further ensure the program’s success.

A team lead on the countering foreign influence task force in the Department of Homeland Security emphasizes that mental health can be a factor of radicalization, after causing feelings of isolation and leading people with poorer mental health to trust the wrong people. The United States Department of Homeland Security has already identified the support of mental health as a way to “provide ‘off ramps' away from terrorism and targeted violence, both protecting the American people and reducing the burden on the criminal justice system.”² Furthermore, this priority action is meant to decrease American
reaction to foreign calls for attacks on the United States, and hopefully help the American people put more faith into their government, who will be prioritizing their mental health to the best of its ability. Healthy minds are needed to combat MDM and the influence of others calling for attacks on the foundations of this country.

Conclusion

The points and evidence utilized in this strategic implementation plan come together to form a plan based on creating long term systematic change. Getting ahead of the influential causes of domestic terrorism could limit the need for mitigating damages after they’ve occurred.
E. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE/WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

“The United States will take a decisive stance of nuclear nonproliferation, both domestically and internationally, and will subsequently lead a more involved and active global effort to achieve this goal.”

Caroline Covey (Age: 20), Abigail McDonough (Age: 20), Maria Donnelly (Age: 20), Amanda Hart (Age: 19), Camila Kelly (Age: 18)

General Description and History

The United States Department of Homeland Security defines weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) as being “a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological, or other device that is intended to harm a large number of people”.²⁸ This National Security Strategy is concentrated on nuclear weapons, as viewed through the concept of nuclear nonproliferation.

Nonproliferation is an effort to control or limit an excessive spread of nuclear weapons globally.¹⁷ The concept of nuclear nonproliferation originated with the creation of the Atomic Energy Convention in January 1946, which concentrated on providing the United Nations with peaceful measures for atomic energy.¹⁰

A common method of advancing nonproliferation is international treaties, which act as a code of conduct for both nuclear-possessing and non-nuclear states. It took time and drastic increases in tension before nuclear treaties were created, especially when considering the dates of proliferation for the two leading powers. The United States achieved proliferation in approximately 1945 and the Soviet Union in 1949.

The first major example of a nonproliferation-based treaty is the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, a bilateral treaty between the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom. It required all testing to occur within a country’s own borders. This was an attempt at limiting the potential spread, not the reduction of weapons stockpiles. However, France and China refused to sign the treaty. The superpowers who did ratify it rarely adhered to it, thus the agreement failed to achieve real means of success.¹⁰
Nuclear nonproliferation was not widely accepted by many governments until the late 1950s. It was originally seen as a tool by superpowers to prevent other states from developing weapons.¹⁰ Around 1957, the United Nations devoted a greater concentration on nonproliferation, and by the 1960s, it became a centerpiece to international relations.²² This led to the development of the multilateral Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1966. Through a “Zero-Yield” policy on testing weapons and the use of formalized on-site inspections, the treaty was a significant attempt at the control of nuclear development. Currently, the treaty is signed by 161 countries, making it a staple example of nonproliferation in action.²⁹

The rise of nonproliferation throughout recent history, and subsequently the formalization of on-site inspections for verification, demonstrates both a domestic and international desire for stronger security by limiting capabilities for nuclear aggression. Bilateral and multilateral treaties have demonstrated success and failure in nuclear policy. The United States is an active country in both efforts, but because of its influential roles as a military and economic superpower, it is necessary for an “all-in” leadership strategy focused on nonproliferation to be established.

Successful nonproliferation and arms control treaties have been developed between the United States and Russia, such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). The INF Treaty was created in 1987 and strictly focused on long-term arms control measures. To do so, it set destruction quotas on intermediate-range warheads and delivery systems, and such measures were verified through in-person inspection groups. This motivated the creation of the U.S. On-Site Inspection Agency. The United States withdrew from INF in 2018 due to Russian non-compliance, but the benefits were indisputable to decreasing the nuclear threshold of the two superpowers.¹⁰

Contemporarily, there are two primary treaties that have shaped the nuclear sphere, one being the bilateral Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). The original START was written in 1991, though it had phases and resignings. It concentrated on the reduction of warheads and delivery systems in totality. It was designed to include eastern bloc countries after the fall of the USSR in 1992 with the Lisbon Protocol, which allowed the
newly sovereign countries to hand over their nukes for destruction. This was all continued in New START, signed in 2010, which focused more on validation of maintenance and stockpile reports and allowed each party flexibility in how they deployed their limited deployed stockpile.⁸ Both heavily relied upon on-site inspections to confirm compliance with limitations, reductions, and reporting measures. New START is the only remaining nuclear arms control treaty between the United States and Russia today.

Today's nuclear foundation also relies upon the multilateral Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is the modern example of nonproliferation on an international scale upon.²⁵ It is intended to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons through a focus on disarmament strategy, a pledge to not pursue nuclear weapons, and promotion of peaceful nuclear energy usage.²⁷ It utilizes the International Atomic Energy Agency Committee (IAEA) for collecting and reporting information on nuclear action, as they create safeguards and conduct on-site inspections. Violations are reported to the UN Security Council, who can then impose different sanctions to enforce cooperation. The IAEA is also vital to the maintenance of the nonproliferation regime and to the NPT Review Conference meetings that occur every five years.²¹

The rise of nonproliferation throughout recent history, and subsequently the formalization of on-site inspections for verification, demonstrates both a domestic and international desire for stronger security by limiting capabilities for nuclear aggression. Bilateral and multilateral treaties have demonstrated success and failure in nuclear policy. The United States is an active country in both efforts, but because of its influential roles as a military and economic superpower, it is necessary for an “all-in” leadership strategy focused on nonproliferation to be established. This would be best concentrated on the global sphere, though country to country relations must not be ignored.

**Current State of Nonproliferation**

Today there are nine countries who possess nuclear weapons, five of which have signed the NPT. These states include Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China. India, Israel, and Pakistan currently possess nuclear weapons as well, but never signed the NPT. The ninth state to become a nuclear power is North Korea, who withdrew from the NPT in January of 2003 and has continued to pursue nuclear weapons since then.²

Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Libya have all pursued nuclear activities at various times, but current intelligence maintains that they do not currently possess nuclear weapons or stockpiles. These nuclear nonproliferation failures dwarf in comparison to many significant successes thus far. For example, South Africa pursued and acquired nuclear weapons but voluntarily gave them up and joined the NPT.
Under Saddam Hussein, Iraq pursued a covert nuclear program, but was forced to dismantle it under UN Supervision following the Gulf War in 1991. According to current reporting, Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs nor ballistic missiles.¹⁸ Iran and Libya have pursued secret nuclear activities as well, violating the treaty’s terms. Syria is suspected of having done so as well.² With this said, the nuclear nonproliferation failures dwarf in comparison to the many significant successes thus far.

Prior to the NPT, nuclear stockpiles around the world numbered in the tens of thousands. Since the creation and signing of the NPT, the world has seen a limit on numbers and major reductions. The table below depicts the current number of nuclear weapons that each state holds.

**States With Nuclear Weapons and Arsenals Defined²:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Name</th>
<th>Number of Nuclear Weapons (Strategic Deployed)</th>
<th>Military Strategic</th>
<th>Retired</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>4,497</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1,389</td>
<td>3,750</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the definitions provided by the U.S. Arms Control Association Website, the number of nuclear weapons are based on New START counting rules which attribute “one deployed warhead per deployed heavy bomber no matter how many warheads each bomber actually carries”.² The term “Strategic Deployed” means the warheads that are on ballistic missiles, while “Military Strategic” refers to “warheads assigned for potential use on military delivery vehicles; includes active and inactive warheads”.² Retired warheads are no longer in the stockpile but still exist and are intact, waiting to be taken apart.

Nuclear states, particularly Russia and the United States, continue to work on modernizing their delivery systems. However, the New START limits each state to a maximum of 1,550 strategic deployed warheads. Russia and China additionally possess tactical, non-strategic nuclear warheads, which are not capped by the treaty. New ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and sea-based nuclear delivery systems are being pursued. By developing tactical nuclear weapons with capabilities to counter perceived conventional military threats countries have “lowered the threshold” for nuclear weapons. Also, in violation of its previous pledge to denuclearize, North Korea is still testing and developing its nuclear program. Although the true size of North Korea's stockpile remains unknown, they are estimated to have created enough fissile material for about 40-50 warheads. All together, these nine countries possess about 13,080 nuclear warheads, plenty more than necessary to destroy the world as we know it.²

**Immediate Proliferation Concerns:**

Today, the United States’ primary concern in regards to proliferation is Iran’s pursuit of a uranium enrichment program and eventual development of weapons. Since withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Biden Administration finds itself in a deadlock with little hope for negotiating a new deal with the Iranians.²³ Also of concern to the United States, a site in Syria was assessed to be a nuclear reactor in the midst of construction with aid from North Korea⁶ but it was bombed in 2007 by Israel. The IAEA opened an investigation into this, but Syria has refused to cooperate, making it difficult to reveal the facts about the site. Back in 2003, the IAEA claimed that Iran had taken on covert nuclear activities, but in 2015 this was remedied with the negotiation of a long-term agreement to verify and reduce Iran’s capacity to produce nuclear materials.²³ Since then, the IAEA has launched another investigation into Iran’s alleged “undeclared nuclear activities,” but the investigation faced challenges during Covid-19 and remains ongoing. Today, the degree of nuclear cooperation between North Korea and Syria is unclear and Syria’s lack of cooperation with IAEA investigations poses additional challenges.
Current U.S. Stockpile and Maintenance

Currently, the United States stockpile includes approximately 3,700 active and inactive warheads.²⁶ Active warheads can be both strategic and non-strategic weapons that are fully functional, available, and ready to be used in combat.²⁴ Inactive warheads are not readily available for combat, but can be used to replace or repair weapons in the active stockpile.²⁴

The United States is currently focusing on modernizing and maintaining the current stockpile technology, which includes a full nuclear triad so that the United States can deliver weapons by air, land, and sea. The weapons systems within such are assessed annually through a series of evaluations that look into safety, security, reliability, and military effectiveness. Maintaining the stockpile consists of several different components. Periodic nuclear explosives safety studies are required and limited life component exchanges of gas transfer systems, power sources, and neutron generators must be replaced to ensure functionality. Maintaining the stockpile also includes attending to any issues emerging requiring maintenance, such as: minor repairs and rebuilds, incorporation of surety features, and making sure materials are available when spare and replacement parts are used to upkeep stockpile operations.⁷ In addition to maintaining the stockpile, the United States is also focused on modernizing it. This consists of activities executed through planned LEPs, Mods, and Alts. LEPs refers to refurbishing warheads to extend their lifespan along with stability and security. Mods change operational capabilities of a weapon to slim the margin of failure, increase safety, or replace LLCs. Lastly, Alts are material changes that do not change weapon capability, but are important for assembly, maintenance, storage, or test operations.⁷ The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that this process will cost about 634 billion over the next ten years.⁵

Aspirational Endstate

Nonproliferation relies heavily on advocacy from federal governments and their civil societies, both domestically and internationally. Before the United States can take the position as the leading superpower for this movement, the country must further concentrate on education and nuclear waste cleanup to develop a concrete plan for the use of nuclear weapons after their use. Internationally, nonproliferation has historically served as a method for the de-escalation of tension between superpowers and their
respective allies. This has been done by maintaining a focus on modernized but limited arsenals, universal regulations, and treaties that create greater awareness and caution surrounding nuclear weapons. The United States has been very active in this regard since the 1960s, though more bilaterally than through leading a global effort. Hereafter, due to an increased push for united nonproliferation, the United States must make a firm stance on its position on nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and it will subsequently further a global effort.

Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION #1
Educate the public on reasons for nonproliferation of weapons and pro-nuclear energy. The United States government should fully disclose to the public the reasons why nonproliferation is their official stance on nuclear weapons policy and complement it with a pro-nuclear energy educational campaign that emphasizes the benefits of nuclear energy when not used in the context of weapons of mass destruction. The consequences of using nuclear weapons are catastrophic, yet in a 2019 poll carried out by The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, only 48% of Americans interviewed were able to identify the possibility of a new arms race as a critical threat to the United States.¹¹ The percentage of the American public who are not exposed to the potential effects are more prone to condoning an attack of nuclear scale were the United States ever to seriously consider one. This poses a security risk to the United States and other countries that must be addressed. This lack of awareness can undermine the government's incentive to act on arms control and nonproliferation.

Modern technologies exist that can simulate the after-effects of a nuclear attack and provide a key educational tool. One such program is Nuclear Secrecy's Nuke Map, which can be found on the internet for free.¹⁹ These technologies should be made readily accessible to the public, especially the educational sector, through a campaign that expands awareness of their existence. The more exposure to the irreversible, destructive capabilities of nuclear weaponry, the more negatively the public will view it. Thus, the masses will have more information at their disposal about nuclear weaponry in order to make informed decisions when deciding which political candidates they would like to support and consequently which political candidates they would like to see in office.

The United States government should also promote nuclear energy through an educational campaign in order to debunk the negative connotations surrounding it. It would act as a model for other nuclear states' options for disarming their nuclear stockpiles and converting them into efficient fuel sources as laid out by the NPT. A pro-nuclear energy educational campaign can inform the public on available options for clean energy efficiency and usage. A pro-nuclear energy educational campaign would be distributed
through government-sponsored programs and curriculums.

The campaign would target the mass public and would cover topics including, but not limited to, the impact of uranium mining, the nuclear fuel cycle, the safe storage and disposal of radioactive waste, and the beneficial impact of nuclear energy on countries like the United States. The campaign should especially emphasize the ability for nuclear weapons to be converted into sources of nuclear fuel, thus contributing to a positive effort that rectifies ethical dilemmas surrounding nuclear politics and policy.¹⁵ In effect, it should reduce the stigma around nuclear power as a mode of war, and instead as a mode of progress towards a more peaceful, and energy efficient world.

This program could also serve as an example for how other nuclear states and non-nuclear states can engage in peaceful discourse surrounding the disarmament of nuclear stockpiles and denuclearization. The Nonproliferation Treaty stipulates the terms on which nuclear and non-nuclear states have agreed to halt the spread, exchange, and transfer of control of nuclear weapons to one another.³ Not all nuclear and non-nuclear states have agreed to the terms of the treaty. The treaty acknowledges and encourages the exchange of equipment, material, scientific, and technological knowledge for peaceful purposes, such as the conversion of nuclear energy into electricity.³ This peaceful exchange could potentially aid underdeveloped nations and is a current focus for positive growth. For those nations that are not a part of the NPT, the United States should use their pro-nuclear energy campaign to model a new international norm for nuclear power and energy. The more states that sign on, the more others will feel obligated to join, cementing the norm.

**PRIORITY ACTION #2**

**Full force and support for the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and for a comprehensive nuclear waste clean-up program.** The International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) is a partnership of 25 countries with a unified goal of developing procedures in place that can ensure cooperation and trust when disarming nuclear weapons.³ This partnership also emphasizes the safeguarding of security measures to ensure nonproliferation efforts.

This program is co-headed by the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the U.S. Department of State, who have worked together with other countries to develop a comprehensive 14-step plan to achieve the goals previously stated. In a 14-step monitoring and verification activities for the process of disarmament, the IPNDV has outlined how a nuclear weapon in any particular country would eventually be disarmed, while maintaining confidentiality and facilitating trust for the rest of the world to know that disarmament was completed successfully.³ The United States should further fund the program and fund research for the IPNDV, as this is an excellent program that furthers global efforts for nonproliferation.
Taking such a clear, firm, and decisive stance as a supporter and endorser of nuclear nonproliferation would ensure the security of citizens and promote similar nuclear policies around the world for a safer and more stable future.

In addition to funding, the United States should continue to recognize the program and promote its goals in the other nuclear states that have not attended IPNDV activities, including North Korea and India. By doing this, the United States would be working to achieve the global goal of nonproliferation by ensuring the participation and compliance of all nuclear states in the IPNDV. In addition, this program would help to solve the lack of trust and transparency that continues to plague nonproliferation goals, as countries could trust, through specialists and on-site overview, that disarmament was being fully carried out. Countries can review the current 14-step plan and decide on further verification processes, such as allowing for more visuals during the dismantlement process or keeping the nuclear weapon at one facility for the whole process. These steps could eliminate any further uneasiness that states may have for full transparency purposes.

In addition to moving with full force and support for the IPNDV, the U.S. should do the same for a comprehensive nuclear-waste cleanup program that emphasizes research and development. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants the Department of Energy (DOE) the “responsibility to site, build, and operate a deep geologic repository for the disposal of high-level waste and spent nuclear fuel” through the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (EPA). In order for the DOE to operate under these standards, it must meet requirements at its clean-up sites, which are established by the EPA. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission determines whether or not a repository opened by the DOE meets these requirements (EPA). Unless otherwise authorized by Congress, the EPA can prohibit the DOE from “conducting site specific activities at a second site” indicating the adjudicating role of the government in the transition of retired warheads to nuclear energy (EPA).

The DOE is currently in charge of overseeing and managing the storage and disposal of nuclear waste at all clean-up sites or repositories in the United States. Out of the 107 cleanup sites the DOE has managed over the years, 92 have been completed.¹ They have achieved this level of success through immense funding towards research and development efforts to clean up years of contamination created as a result of nuclear
weapons production. In October 2021, the Government of Accountability Office published a report that examined a significant reduction in funding for research and development into nuclear waste cleanup by the DOE.²⁰ It is important for the DOE to increase the funding for research and development of nuclear waste cleanup to provide better guidance for individual sites in order to improve their operations beyond just meeting their immediate needs.

In effect, the increased funding for the Department of Energy’s efforts into nuclear waste cleanup would foster the trust of the public in the government’s ability to manage such waste without a large environmental footprint. Consequently, the public would feel more secure knowing that nuclear waste is more a byproduct of nuclear power used for purposes other than nuclear weapons manufacture.

PRIORITY ACTION #3

**Fully supporting and ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and joining the efforts of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization.** The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was opened for signature in 1996 and has been signed and ratified by over a hundred different countries, both nuclear and non-nuclear. However, the treaty needs to be ratified by 44 specific states, including all nine nuclear weapon states. The United States has signed and should ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and join the efforts of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in order to push international cooperation in nonproliferation.

The treaty seeks to ban nuclear explosions and to limit the development of nuclear weapons, which support the goals of nonproliferation. Furthermore, when the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is finally ratified, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization would officially be supported. As of now, there is the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO which supports the Treaty’s objectives. Through this organization, the states with nuclear weapons would work collaboratively and with other countries to achieve nonproliferation goals.¹² The Preparatory Commission CTBTO works closely with the IAEA to monitor achievements of goals and work to implement the treaty and handle any treaty-related issues, such as non-compliance or nuclear testing. The CTBTO would also be led by an Executive Council that would be made up of actors from all regions of the world, ensuring accurate global representation and encouraging collaboration on nonproliferation goals. This organization has a lot of strong components that could encourage compliance between states.¹² In addition, most states with nuclear weapons at this point already observe nuclear testing moratoriums, and North Korea has not had a nuclear explosive since 2017. Therefore, nuclear weapon states have set the global taboo against nuclear testing in the twenty-first century, and this organization and treaty can be the tool that they use to enforce international norms and protect the world against proliferation initiatives.
For all these reasons, the United States should ratify this treaty and encourage the creation of the CTBTO. Currently, Congress is blocking the ratification of the treaty and there will need to be significant action by the U.S. Senate to approve. This can be done through in depth information on the treaty that can be understandable by all to ensure transparency and comprehension. With this objective, the United States would be taking a decisive international stance to promote nonproliferation efforts. It could begin to encourage allies and other nuclear weapon states to ratify the treaty as well and begin to utilize the resources available within the organization and with the IAEA.

PRIORITY ACTION #4
The United States should fully engage in the Nuclear Threat Initiative’s Global Enterprise meetings with the goal of participation from all nuclear state actors and many non-nuclear state actors, which promotes conversations around global nonproliferation in order to better support the NPT Review Conference. The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) created the Global Enterprise meetings (GE) in order to further support and strengthen the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This is achieved by developing a short list of ideas that participants can constructively focus and seek to carry forward collectively before the NPT Review Conference.⁹ The NPT review conference convenes every five years in accordance with the terms of the NPT.⁹ Plenary meetings of the GE are convened twice a year, and informal meetings are held regularly on the margins of international conferences.⁹ Officials from more than 20 countries and non-government experts have been active within these meetings.
The GE was created due to the increasing international polarization that continues to affect the performance and stability of the NPT. In addition to affecting the stability of the NPT, increasing polarization also impacts positive conversation that could promote peace and nonproliferation. The GE aims to try and resolve these issues through dialogue in a series of ways. One way is by having participants engage in constructive dialogue that furthers understanding of different perspectives and state priorities along with how different state goals overlap and intertwine. In addition, by finding common ground around initiatives and actions, trust can be built to further achieve progress on NPT goals, such as creating a more robust, interactive, and multi-layered dialogue between the Permanent 5 and all NPT States parties. The GE aims to try and understand why certain commitments have faced difficulty in implementation and identify ways to overcome these challenges.

For example, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty cannot go into effect until it is ratified by 44 specific states, five of which have still not taken this step. The GE has also functioned as a space for participants to discuss areas of potential government action pertaining to nuclear risk, reduction, transparency, and fissile material management. This has been achieved by creating priorities and ideas to be adopted ahead of the Review Conference with support from commissioned papers by experts to enhance conversation.

The United States should encourage this program to promote positive dialogue regarding nuclear arms control and nonproliferation in addition to positive conversation amongst the nuclear states. Additionally, by utilizing this program, the United States should aim to gain a better understanding on what states would like to prioritize as well as their stance on topics to be discussed before the NPT Review Conference (RevCon). By doing this, the United States will be taking an additional step towards proving their support for nonproliferation and healthy dialogue amongst the nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapon states. This not only improves diplomatic relations, but contributes towards the effectiveness and efficiency of the NPT Review Conference.
Conclusion

The United States is a global hegemony with the legitimacy and power to influence the actions of countries around the globe in regards to nuclear policy. If the U.S. government were to follow the priority actions and prioritize nuclear arms control and nonproliferation, it could encourage other countries, whose nuclear goals differ, to do the same. Taking such a clear, firm, and decisive stance as a supporter and endorser of nuclear nonproliferation would ensure the security of citizens and promote similar nuclear policies around the world for a safer and more stable future.

It is acknowledged that this approach might not be conducive to the approach of hostile nuclear states like North Korea, but it is with hope that by setting an example through global initiative, these states will begin to take more dramatic steps toward nuclear nonproliferation.

The threats posed by the failure of nuclear nonproliferation are catastrophic and therefore the United States must prioritize securing nuclear arsenals and preventing harmful technology from spreading. Through educating the public, supporting the IPNDV, ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and engaging in the NTI’s global enterprise meetings, the United States will lead by example and encourage the international community to continue working towards global nonproliferation by renewing efforts and engagement in negotiations.
Notes (Climate Change NSS)


9. Ibid.


13. Ibid.


19. When interviewed, Professor Nichola Minott of Boston College stressed that what needs to happen now is a shifting funding away from the most harmful expenses, such as fossil fuels, towards policies that emphasize and support renewable energy and energy saving technologies.


28. Statistics on student to computer ratio and internet access in disadvantaged regions: https://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICCOMPCLSS.pdf


30. CETAP grant and programs: Cybersecurity in the Classroom | National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies (cisa.gov)


Notes (Gender-Based Violence NSS, Cont.)


47. Daniels, Jordan Marie. Interview by Ashika Srivastava


49. Ibid., 34.


52. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black ... (n.d.). https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf


Notes (Domestic Terrorism NSS, Cont.)


Notes (Artificial Intelligence NSS)


82. Ibid Brown, “Understanding the Risks.”


84. Ibid Allison, “Is China Beating Us?”

85. Ibid Allison, “Is China Beating Us?”


87. Ibid Allison, “Is China Beating Us?”


90. Ibid Brown, “Understanding the Risks.”


96. Ibid Tadjeh.
Notes (Cybersecurity SIP)


15. “6 Industries Most Vulnerable to Cyber Attacks.” Western Governors University, Western Governors University, 3 Aug. (retrieved June 15, 2022).


Notes (Cybersecurity SIP, Cont.)


Notes (Gender Based Violence SIP Cont.)


Notes (Climate Change SIP)


10. Ibid.


United States Department of Defense
Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Report</th>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th># of Times Climate Appeared</th>
<th>Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DoD FY 2010 Budget Request Summary Justification(^26)</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview – FY 2012 Defense Budget(^28)</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview – FY 2013 Defense Budget(^29)</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview – FY 2014 Defense Budget(^30)</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>There are two instances where climate was used differently. 1. “Leaders are actively engaged to help the Army community understand that a climate that respects and grants dignity to every member of the Army family increases combat readiness.” 2. “In compliance with law, the Army is adding full-time sexual assault response coordinators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
United States Department of Defense

Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview – FY 2014 Defense Budget³⁰ (Cont.)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and victim advocates to each brigade level unit. Certifying those personnel, and executing more frequent command <strong>climate</strong> surveys in units.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview – FY 2015 Defense Budget³¹</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two instances where <strong>climate</strong> was used differently. 1. “...reflects the difficult trades-offs that were necessary in the current fiscal <strong>climate</strong> but continues to fund the critical weapons systems needed to enhance warfighting capability.” 2. “The Combat Air Force is constantly assessed in relation to the dynamic security environment and Joint Force needs, but is necessarily shaped by current fiscal <strong>climate</strong>.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview – FY 2016 Defense Budget³²</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is one instance where <strong>climate</strong> was used differently. 1. “The FY 2016 President’s budget request balances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (Climate Change SIP Cont.)

United States Department of Defense

Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

| Overview – FY 2016 Defense Budget³² (Cont.) | 2016 | 4 | current readiness needed to execute assigned missions while sustaining a high capable fleet, all within a tough fiscal climate.” |
| Overview – FY 2017 Defense Budget³³ | 2017 | 3 | There is one instance where climate was used differently. 1. “The Army actively pursues methods to eliminate sexual harassment and sexual assault by creating a climate that respects the dignity of every Soldier, civilian, and family member.” |
| Overview – FY 2019 Defense Budget³⁵ | 2019 | 2 | There is one instance where climate was used differently. 1. “Its modernization efforts will embrace this innovative climate and emphasize investments with mission-focused |
### Appendix (Climate Change SIP Cont.)

United States Department of Defense
Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times *Climate* Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview – FY 2020 Defense Budget$^{36}$</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>There is one instance where <em>climate</em> was used differently. 1. “The Marine Corps is focused on improvements to their aviation safety awareness program, risk management information system, ground/aviation survey support and command <em>climate</em>, and automatic collision avoidance systems (AGCAS) on the F-35.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview – FY 2021 Defense Budget$^{37}$</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>There is one instance where <em>climate</em> was used differently. 1. “The Marine Corps is focused on improvements to their aviation safety awareness program, risk management information system, ground/aviation survey support and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (Climate Change SIP Cont.)

United States Department of Defense
Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

| Overview – FY 2021 Defense Budget³⁷ (Cont.) | 2021 | 1 | and command **climate**, and automatic collision avoidance systems (AGCAS) on the F-35.” |
| Overview – FY 2022 Defense Budget³⁸ | 2022 | 52 | There are four instances where **climate** was used differently.  
1. “...in order to ensure our Sailors and Marines are always ready to fight and win in any **climate** or place.”  
2. “I will fight hard to stamp out sexual assault and to rid our ranks of racists and extremists and to create a **climate** where everyone fit and willing has the opportunity to serve this country with dignity.””  
3. “Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, and corrosive **climate** negatively impact our future force...”  
4. “Simultaneously, the Army has initiated independent command **climate** assessment |
Appendix (Climate Change SIP Cont.)

United States Department of Defense
Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

| Overview – FY 2022 Defense Budget | 2022 | 52 | teams to identify, and respond to, systemic problems before they emerge. |
| Overview – FY 2023 Defense Budget | 2023 | 31 | There are six instances where climate was used differently. |

1. “With the understanding that a military family’s economic security is critical not only a Service member’s well-being, but to command climate and mission readiness…”
2. “The IRC returned 82 recommendations to advance four lines of effort: Accountability, Prevention, Climate and Culture, and Victim Care.”
3. “Leaders at all levels are responsible for fostering a climate of inclusion that supports diversity, is free from problematic behaviors…”
4. “We are committed to building positive command climates at
### Appendix (Climate Change SIP Cont.)

United States Department of Defense
Title of Report | Fiscal Year | # of Times Climate Appeared | Was the usage of the term different from the climate crisis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview – FY 2023 Defense Budget³⁹ (Cont.)</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. “In combination with a positive command climate, the Army is focused on reducing harmful behaviors within our formations.”
6. “Army leadership is focused on establishing a positive command climate at scale and reducing harmful behaviors throughout the Army.”
Notes (Domestic Terrorism SIP)


Notes (Domestic Terrorism SIP, Cont.)


Notes (Domestic Terrorism SIP, Cont.)


Notes (AI/WMD SIP)


