Senator Schumer Opening Statement
Fifth AI Insight Forum
November 8, 2023

Good morning. Welcome to our fifth bipartisan AI Insight Forum, on Elections and Democracy.

Thanks to Senators Rounds and Young for helping organize today's forum, as well Senator Heinrich who is unable to join this morning.

Also thanks to my Senate colleagues and staff in the audience. And thanks to our participants.

I'm proud that we have a balanced and bipartisan group here, to discuss a topic that unites us all: equipping our democracy for the age of AI.

This morning's discussion will be split into two sections, each lasting an hour.

Senator Rounds and I will lead the first section about some of the risks AI poses to the integrity of our elections and the health of our democracy.

Senator Young and I will lead the second section about the potential for AI to improve our democratic institutions.

Of all the ways AI will reshape our lives, few are as immediate and stark as the impact it could have on our elections.

Americans agree. A new AP poll from just last week found that a majority of Americans – Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike – are worried AI will increase the spread of false and misleading information during the 2024 elections.

This isn't theoretical…it's already happening.

AI-generated deepfakes and misinformation reaching voters here in the U.S. and abroad – just see what happened in the Slovakian elections a few weeks ago.

Political ads have already been released this year using AI-generated images and text-to-voice converters to depict candidates negatively.

Uncensored chatbots have already been deployed at a massive scale, targeting millions of individual voters for political persuasion.

This is happening today.

We must move fast to figure out how best to avoid further weaponization of these technologies.

Congress is already taking action to create safeguards:

Senator Klobuchar, Chair of the Rules Committee, is leading two bipartisan bills to crack down on political advertisements containing AI-generated images or video. She's done great work alongside Ranking Member Fischer. But of course, more will have to be done.

And while bills like Amy's are critically important, the responsibility for protecting our elections will not be Congress's alone.

It will take all of us here in this room working together to create robust safeguards.

And to be clear, it also means using the awesome power of AI to improve our democracy – strengthening our elections, increasing civic engagement and reimagining the democratic process.

So, I look forward to our discussion.