

# THE BUFFALO NEWS

## Another Voice: RAISE Act will protect New Yorkers from unchecked AI

By Alex Bores and Wayne Spence

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Keeping the public protected and healthy is the basic function of any public employee, which is why New York needs to stay focused on making sure that new technologies, artificial intelligence in particular, are developed for the public good.

Since the emergence of ChatGPT in 2022, AI has become ubiquitous in the public and private spheres. The benefits – from helping to cure diseases to helping government employees complete tasks – are clear. But if left unchecked, AI also creates new risks that no one should have to shoulder.

That's why we support the Responsible AI Safety and Education (RAISE) Act. This legislation would set commonsense rules for the most powerful AI systems, ensuring that innovation in New York happens responsibly and with the public's safety front and center.

AI is already capable of causing real harm. Leading labs have released models that can assist in the development of biohazards and viruses. In experimental settings, AI systems often threaten engineers and lab employees to avoid being shut down.

The RAISE Act offers a straightforward solution. It requires companies developing the most advanced AI systems to follow clear safety protocols, report problems quickly and give state officials the information they need to act if things go wrong.

Some say that regulation slows progress. We disagree. Rules like these make progress possible. Think of basic building codes: They don't stop construction — they make sure what we build is safe. The RAISE Act is to AI what asbestos and lead inspections are to construction: A basic safeguard that few could criticize in good faith.

We entered public service to help people, and the potential of catastrophic harm to the public undermines that duty. Technology should serve people, not the other way around.

We've seen what happens when government acts too late to regulate emerging technologies. From financial markets to data privacy to social media, failing to put up guardrails early leaves ordinary people paying the price.

New Yorkers deserve to benefit from the promise of AI without being exposed to its worst risks. By signing the RAISE Act, Gov. Kathy Hochul can chart a path that other states will follow.

*Assemblymember Alex Bores, 73rd District, is co-sponsor of the RAISE Act. President Wayne Spence has led the Public Employees Federation since 2015.*