# 2AC---UKRR---Race 2---Read

## Manufacturing ADV

### Manufacturing---Impact---General---2AC

### AT: Not loq

#### 1---Manufacturing isn’t surging anywhere it’s in the grave absent the plans efforts to revitalize. That’s Bonvillian

<<<FOR REFFRENCE>>>

Manufacturing is a critical sector for American economic well-being. The value chains in the American economy that rely on manufactured goods account for 25% of employment, over 40% of gross domestic product (GDP), and almost 80% of research and development (R&D) spending in the United States. Yet U.S. leadership in manufacturing is eroding. U.S. manufacturing employment plummeted by one-third—and 60,000 U.S. factories were closed—between 2000 and 2010 (Bonvillian and Singer, Advanced Manufacturing: The New American Innovation Policies, MIT Press, 2018, 52, 265.) Only some 18% of the production jobs lost in the United States during the Great Recession were recovered in the following decade, and production output only returned to its pre–Great Recession levels in 2018. This hollowing out of U.S. manufacturing has been largely driven by international competition, particularly from China. China passed the United States in 2011 as the largest global manufacturing power in both output and value added. The nations have literally traded places: China now has 31% of world manufacturing output while the U.S. has dropped to 16%. The U.S. has not just lost leadership in low-price commodity goods: As part of its massive trade deficit in 2023 of $733 billion in overall manufactured goods, the U.S. ran a deficit of $218 billion in advanced technology goods.

Declining U.S. manufacturing has sharply curtailed a key path to the middle class for those with high school educations or less, thereby exacerbating income inequality nationwide. As a country, we are increasingly leaving a large part of our working class behind an ever-advancing upper middle class. The problems plaguing the domestic manufacturing sector are multifold: American manufacturing productivity is historically low; the supporting ecosystem for small and midsized manufacturers has thinned out so they are slow to adopt process and technology innovations; manufacturing firms lack access to financing when they seek to scale up production for new innovations; manufacturing is poorly supported by our workforce-education system; and we have disconnected our innovation system from our production systems.

The United States can address many of these problems through concerted efforts in advanced manufacturing. Advanced manufacturing means introducing new production technologies and processes to significantly lower production costs and raise efficiency. This would reposition the United States to better compete internationally. Advanced manufacturing also requires that we reconnect innovation with production. A milestone in advanced manufacturing came in 2012, when the federal government established the first of 17 Advanced Manufacturing Institutes with two more planned. Each institute in this network is organized around developing new advanced technologies, from 3D printing to digital production to biofabrication. Each also represents a collaboration among industry, government, and academic institutions. Three federal agencies invest a total of approximately $200 million per year in the institutes—an amount matched by industry and states.

#### 2---Continuing to decline across the board---anyone who says otherwise is avoiding facing reality

Meghan Ostertag 24, research assistant for economic policy at the Information, bachelor's degree in economics from American University, “The Census Bureau Confirms US Manufacturing Has Declined”, August 9th, 2024, <https://itif.org/publications/2024/08/09/census-bureau-confirms-us-manufacturing-declined/>, DOA: 8/23/25, Rslish

The latest data from the United States Census Bureau (Census Bureau) demonstrates that manufacturing in America is steadily declining. Once the world leader in manufacturing, the U.S. relinquished that title in 2010, now producing $2.4 trillion less than China in manufacturing. Yet, pundits and Washington insiders continue to deny the facts, claiming that all is well in a concerted effort to avoid any blame for globalization.

The comparison of the Census Bureau’s quinquennial manufacturing data from 2002 to 2022 reveals a stark and depressing reality: in just two decades, the number of manufacturing firms fell, jobs diminished, payroll failed to keep pace with national growth, and productivity stalled.

MANUFACTURING FIRMS

Let’s start with the number of manufacturing firms in the U.S., which declined by 21 percent in 20 years(figure 1). This drop accounts for a decrease in firms in every manufacturing sector, labeled according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS; see table 1), barring the production of food (311), beverages and tobacco (312), and chemicals (325). The clear outlier among the industries displayed in Figure 1 is beverages and tobacco, which has experienced an extraordinary 348 percent growth rate over the past two decades. This growth can be attributed to the spike in popularity of boutique sodas, kombuchas, seltzer waters, and ready-to-drink cocktails.

### Manufacturing---Impact---Readiness---2AC

### AT: Circumvention---General---2AC

### AT: Circumvention---NLRB---AT: Thompson

#### 2. The NLRB is operating effectively regardless of quorum

Laura Pierson-Scheinberg & Richard Vitarelli 25. J.D. from the University of Maryland Law School. J.D. from Suffolk University Law School. "Many States' Employee-Friendly Labor Laws Take Effect as NLRB Remains Quorum-Less." JacksonLewis. 8/29/2025. jacksonlewis.com/insights/many-states-employee-friendly-labor-laws-take-effect-nlrb-remains-quorum-less

Cowen also noted that, despite the absence of a quorum, the Board’s work has been largely unaffected. Regional offices continue to process cases, and the acting general counsel has been delegated authority to initiate litigation that is normally exercised by the Board. Nonetheless, the Board is expected to resume full operations once a quorum is restored.

What’s Next for the Board?

President Donald Trump has nominated Scott Mayer and James Murphy to fill the Board’s two vacant seats. If the Senate confirms both nominees, the Board would have a quorum, empowered to issue decisions and address ever-growing case backlog

### AT: Good Faith---AT: Guerin

#### 1. Industry-wide bargaining reduces the number of disputes, reduce incentives to stonewall, and raise pressure to compromise, making outcomes more effective. That’s da Silva Bichara.

<<<FOR REFFRENCE>>>

Brandl (2022) refers to it as a cartelizing effect, where the homogenisation of wages and working conditions prevents companies from using wage reduction or working conditions as a competitive strategy. Therefore, higher level collective agreements and coordination encourage companies to increase their competitiveness through innovation or adoption of new technologies, rather than reducing labour costs. This argument matches in part with that of duopoly models. Duopoly models generally conclude that centralization of collective bargaining favours innovation by more innovative, or more competitive, firms; as opposed to individual bargaining (Basak & Mukherjee, 2018). The innovation decision of the collectively bargained firm is related to market structure. Individual bargaining introduces higher transaction costs (Willman et al., 2004), and confirms the hypothesis of Bhuller et al. (2022). On the other hand, Haucap and Wey (2004) show that the benefits of innovation are higher for a highly productive firm when bargaining is centralised versus individual; both for process innovation and for job creation and employment.

As shown by Willman et al. (2004), following transaction cost theory (Williamson, 1981), unions reduce transaction costs in two ways, by providing an agency role for the employer, enforcing and monitoring contracts and improving information flows; by reducing the transaction costs faced by employers by assisting them in their management functions.

#### 3. Research proves sectoral bargaining increases binding outcomes.

David Madland 24, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress Action Fund, “Sectoral Bargaining Can Support High Union Membership”, June 6th, 2024, <https://onlabor.org/sectoral-bargaining-can-support-high-union-membership/>, DOA: 8/25/25, Rslish

The cases of Amazon workers in Italy and organizing campaigns in several U.S. cities and states show that the structures of sectoral bargaining systems can motivate workers and help them succeed. In these cases, workers organized around sectoral issues, rather than free riding, and the sectoral systems helped workers achieve their goals and motivated further organizing. In these cases, there was also often an interplay between workplace and sectoral organizing, with efforts at both levels supporting the other.

In short, the research shows that sectoral bargaining generally supports high union membership.  Sectoral bargaining can encourage worker engagement and make their efforts more likely to succeed, creating a virtuous circle that boosts union membership.

## Monopsony ADV

### Monopsony---Impact---Inequality---2AC

### AT: Inequality Low---AT: Gramm

#### 1. STUDIES. Newest studies prove inequality is on the rise---it’s a direct result from reduced bargaining power. That’s Zwysen

<<<FOR REFFRENCE>>>

There is growing evidence of workers being in an increasingly vulnerable position relative to their employers. This is evident in different ways such as a decline in the share of income going to labour (Berlingieri et al. 2017; Paternesi Meloni and Stirati 2022; Lombardi et al. 2023) but also in greater inequality between workers. Across many countries, rising wage inequality increasingly reflects differences in pay setting between firms for otherwise similar workers (see e.g. Criscuolo et al. 2020; Tomaskovic-Devey et al. 2020; Zwysen 2022). Workers also face rising uncertainty in the labour market, for different reasons, heightening workers’ dependence and reducing their power to affect or negotiate their working conditions (Flecker 2010; Weil 2014; Rubery 2015). These trends all indicate an increase in employers’ power over workers. While there are several important factors contributing, such as the weakening of labour market institutions protecting workers (see e.g. Tomaskovic-Devey et al. 2020; Zwysen 2024a), and macro-trends such as globalisation and digitalisation, increasing attention is also given to the issue of labour market monopsony power.

#### 3. Err AFF---Neg studies miss the full scope---newest data proves.

Bivens et al 25, Josh Bivens, chief economist at the Economic Policy Institute, PhD in Economics from New School for Social Research, and BA in Economics from University of Maryland; Elise Gould, Senior economist at EPI, PhD in Economics from University of Wisconsin, MPA from University of Texas at Austin, and BA in Sociology from Wesleyan University; Hilary Wething, Economist at EPI, Ph.D. in public policy and management from University of Washington, Undergrad in Mathematics and economics from Creighton University; Ben Zipperer, Senior economist at EPI, PhD in Economics from University of Massachusetts, and BS in Mathematics from University of Georgia, “Deliberate policy decisions have disempowered workers and increased labor market inequality”, March 17th, 2025, <https://www.briefingbook.info/p/deliberate-policy-decisions-have>, DOA: 7/15/25, Rslish

However, this wage compression was highly unusual in historical context. As Gould et al (forthcoming) show, the wage compression between 2019 and 2024 was preceded by four decades of widening inequality from 1979 to 2019. Moreover, even after accounting for inflation, annual wage growth at the bottom and middle of the wage distribution was much faster in absolute terms over the last four years than it was in the preceding four decades. Annual real median wage growth in particular was twice as fast between 2019 and 2024 as it was between 1979 and 2019.

The Current Population Survey (CPS) data which lies behind Figure A—which can be accessed from 1973 to 2024 here— is useful for all sorts of purposes, but its main drawback is that “top-coding” of high incomes means it misses the full scope of how much income is made at the very top, and so it blunts presentations of just how unequal the U.S. economy has become and why that matters for typical workers and their families. Figure B takes another tack, charting the growth of workers’ compensation (wages and benefits) for production-nonsupervisory workers in the private sector and net labor productivity between 1948 and 2024. We choose to display average compensation trends for production/nonsupervisory workers rather than all workers because this group, which makes up around 80% of the workforce, excludes well-paid managerial roles like corporate executives, who have seen astronomical pay increases in recent decades. In our view production/nonsupervisory workers represent the “typical worker” more faithfully than an overall average.

We use economy-wide labor productivity, inclusive of output from farms, government agencies and nonprofits, net of depreciation, in order to capture the potential growth in living standards for the entire economy. To ensure the growth of compensation and productivity is an apples-to-apples comparison, we use the same mixed-CPI series to deflate both measures, rather than a pay-specific one for compensation.1

[Figure Omitted]

Between 1948 and the late 1970s, pay for the typical worker climbed together with productivity. However, since the late 1970s, workers have experienced a sharp divergence between the growth in their pay and that of labor productivity of the entire economy. In effect, a good share of the potential growth in compensation, as measured by productivity, ended up in pockets that were not the typical worker.

While there has been some criticism that using average compensation for all workers instead of compensation for production/nonsupervisory workers would better capture “economy-wide” compensation, in our view this misses the point. Incorporating the pay of managers and CEOS would lead to rising growth in compensation, likely close to on par with the growth in productivity, yet the fact that we see a wedge when they’re excluded shows that that growth was uneven, with managers, CEOs, and highly-privileged professional workers (think specialty doctors and corporate attorneys) taking the lion’s share of the potential pay generated by rising productivity.

It’s possible then, that voter dissatisfaction with the economy in 2024 was pent-up frustration that built while inequality rose for decades. Why this frustration boiled over and became seemingly decisive in 2024 is a question for others, but profound dissatisfaction with how the U.S. economy delivers for the vast majority would not have been unreasonable in 2024 or any other year since the late 1970s.

Who benefited from productivity growth if typical workers mostly didn’t?

A natural question that arises from these data is just where did the “excess” productivity go if not to the paychecks of typical workers? A significant portion of it went to higher corporate profits and increased income accruing to capital and business owners. But most of it went to those at the very top of the wage distribution. As shown in Figure C, earnings for those at the top grew much faster than the average of the bottom 90% of earners. In fact, when the very top 0.1% of the earnings distribution is on the graph, the bottom looks incredibly flat: growth for the bottom 90 percent was 44% over this period, but growth for the top 0.1% was 354%.2

[Figure Omitted]

### Monopsony---Impact---Civil War---2AC

### Monopsony---Impact---Disease---2AC

### AT: No Impact---Econ---2AC

## OFF

### T Subsets---2AC

#### 2. ‘Strengthen CBR’ moves towards duty to bargain.

Noel D. Johnson 11, Assistant Professor of Economics at George Mason University; et al., June 2011, “Pick Your Poison: Do Politicians Regulate When They Can’t Spend?” *Mercatus Center Working Paper*, pp. 14, https://www.mercatus.org/media/54351/download.

We use two approaches to examine the impact of fiscal restrictions on regulatory policies. Under the first, we use panel data on four specific regulatory measures: “Workersʼ Compensation,” “Minimum Wage,” “Right-to-work,” and “Collective Bargaining.” Workersʼ Compensation is total benefit payments per 10,000 persons.13 Minimum Wage is the effective minimum wage in each state. We use data for 1981 to 2010 since only Alaska had a minimum wage above the federal level before 1981. Right-to-work is a dummy variable indicating whether a state has adopted a right-to-work law prohibiting a “closed union shop” in which payment of union dues can be made a condition of employment. Collective bargaining is a seven-category classification of state laws measuring the strength of collective bargaining rights for public sector workers developed by Freeman and Valletta (1988) and extended by Kim Rueben to 1996. The categories from lowest to highest are: 0. “Collective Bargaining Prohibited” 1. “No Provision” 2. “Employer Authorized but Not Required to Bargain” 3. “Right to Present Proposals” 4. “Right to Meet and Confer” 5. “Duty to Bargain Implied” 6. “Duty to Bargain Explicit.”

### AT: Asepc---2AC

#### 2. Counter-interp! The AFF only must be topical.

Greg Daugherty 25, Editor for Investopedia, “Sectoral Bargaining: What It Is, How It Works, Pro and Con Debate,” Investopedia, 8/17/25, https://www.investopedia.com/sectoral-bargaining-6745367

Sectoral bargaining is a type of collective bargaining in which labor agreements are negotiated to cover an entire industry or a sector of a country’s economy, rather than just a single employer or workplace. Sectoral bargaining is relatively common in Europe and gaining increased attention in the United States, where it has both advocates and critics. It is also known as “multiemployer” or “broad-based” bargaining.

### AT: UBI CP

#### Sectoral bargaining is key to revitalize manufacturing actining as an innovative check. That’s da Silva Bichara.

<<<FOR REFFRENCE>>>

Despite the hold-up hypothesis, Bhuller et al. (2022) argue that firms' investment decisions may be determined by the degree of centralization of collective bargaining. Centralise bargaining processes seem to favour innovative firms by setting labour costs common to all firms, benefiting those that manage to increase productivity. On the other hand, local bargaining allows unions greater ability to negotiate wages according to the value added of firms, increasing labour costs and reducing the incentive to innovate. ‘Collective industry bargaining is expected to lead to a modernized industry with high average productivity and an egalitarian wage distribution across firms. Local bargaining should lead to a less modernized industry with a somewhat lower average productivity and with a more inegalitarian wage distribution’ (Bhuller et al., 2022: 40).

Nevertheless, this result changes if both parties behave like the McDonald and Solow (1981) ‘efficient innovation’ model and the ‘companies' strategic investment’ games models (Bond & Van Reenen, 2002), in which companies invest to maintain or gain market shares, faced with the threat of entry by new competitors and a potential loss of market power and profits (efficiency effect). These models of strategic games of company behaviour highlight the importance of the market structure in the investment decision, particularly in R&D (Menezes-Filho & Van Reenen, 2003). In these models, the effect of the unions on investment depends on its preference between employment and wages. **A risk-averse union will prefer employment to wages and, in such a situation, the effect of an increase in union power is to increase employment and, therefore, company investment. This gain in market share encourages investment, including in R&D, due to the threat of new entries.** Empirical literature has found support for this prediction (Menezes-Filho et al., 1998).

Moreover, considering that (i) innovative companies are those showing higher productivity and (ii) **collective bargaining could increase productivity and investment in new technology** (Brandl & Braakmann, 2021; Cahuc et al., 2014), by promoting voice and participation, unions can also stimulate companies to invest in TI- and firm-specific human capital (Bryson et al., 2005; Freeman & Medoff, 1984). Unions can also play an essential role in the effects of the introduction of innovative practices in companies. This effect will depend on the bargaining capacity of the unions and also on their ability to negotiate. Following the analysis taken by Bryson et al. (2005), a strong union can bargain the nature of investment and innovation in the workplace, blocking those attempts that may have the most negative effects for its members or may even make them more acceptable to both the company and its affiliates. **They can bargain, for example initiatives like job security guarantors and high wages in return for productivity-enhancing innovation** (Freeman & Medoff, 1984).

In this way, Freeman and Medoff (1984) show that the search for benefits for workers by unions also benefits companies and, therefore, stimulates their growth, investment and competitiveness. In the process of generating benefits for workers, they favour job retention, reducing search and training costs. On the contrary, they also provide incentives for employers to invest in the company and in the workers (company-specific human capital).

Bhuller et al. (2022) and Haucap and Wey (2004) show theoretically that **top-level bargaining favours investment in innovative firms by generating lower relative production costs compared to non-innovative firms;** on the contrary, individual bargaining eliminates this relative cost advantage by setting wages according to the value added of firms (as the wage differential between firms increases, the profit of the innovative firm decreases). **In other words: ‘Industry bargaining,** in contrast, **works as a tax on the least productive units and as a subsidy on the most productive.** In this case, firms have incentives to invest more in modern technologies and in scrapping the old ones at an earlier stage’ (Bhuller et al., 2022: 40).

Brandl (2022) refers to it as a cartelizing effect, where the homogenisation of wages and working conditions prevents companies from using wage reduction or working conditions as a competitive strategy. Therefore, higher level collective agreements and coordination encourage companies to increase their competitiveness through innovation or adoption of new technologies, rather than reducing labour costs. This argument matches in part with that of duopoly models. Duopoly models generally conclude that centralization of collective bargaining favours innovation by more innovative, or more competitive, firms; as opposed to individual bargaining (Basak & Mukherjee, 2018). The innovation decision of the collectively bargained firm is related to market structure. Individual bargaining introduces higher transaction costs (Willman et al., 2004), and confirms the hypothesis of Bhuller et al. (2022). On the other hand, Haucap and Wey (2004) show that the benefits of innovation are higher for a highly productive firm when bargaining is centralised versus individual; both for process innovation and for job creation and employment.

As shown by Willman et al. (2004), following transaction cost theory (Williamson, 1981), unions reduce transaction costs in two ways, by providing an agency role for the employer, enforcing and monitoring contracts and improving information flows; by reducing the transaction costs faced by employers by assisting them in their management functions.

#### Don’t roll the dice. It triggers and accelerates downside risks.

Ive Marx 24, Professor & Research Fellow, Centre for Social Policy, University of Antwerp, "Basic Income Advocates, Sober Up," University of Antwerp, Working Paper No. 24/01, January 2024, pg. 15-16, <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/16757/basic-income-advocates-sober-up>

In conclusion, what we know so far should sober up basic income advocates. There is no denying the appeal and power of a simple, radical idea like basic income. The idea that everybody, rich or poor, smart or not so gifted, thrifty or lazy, has the right to one vote was quite radical at one time. It took a long time and many a struggle but the principle of one person-one vote has not only become widely accepted, it has become an unshakable cornerstone of Western democracy. Perhaps we will see the day when in addition to equal rights before the law and equal political rights, every person has a basic economic right. Still, the idea that an identical money transfer every month or so to every citizen is the best way of realizing such a basic economic right is a different matter altogethervi.

We have been concerned here mainly with the question of whether a basic income would be a superior way of ensuring adequate protection against financial poverty. The available research allows us to think in an empirically informed way about the (partial) first-round effects of a sizeable basic income. Neither the insights we get from (quasi-)experimental research nor those from simulation modelling are exactly very encouraging.

True, we can only make informed speculations about the “day after” effects of a basic income. It requires an enormous leap of faith to assume that the effects further down the road would miraculously better. Also, we can actually make empirically informed speculations about at least some potential next-round effects. But as these dynamically interact to produce new outcomes -work patterns, wages, prices, etc - things become more uncertain. It is hard to model with any degree of scientific accuracy how a sizeable basic income would affect an economy, even under ceteris paribus conditions.

Of course ceteris paribus is very unlikely. A basic income is likely to trigger political and institutional change. It is likely to make employers and unions behave differently. Central banks and so many other relevant actors would behave differently if a basic income was in place. One can well imagine that some of the societal and economic changes that a basic income is said to remedy or buffer will themselves be reinforced by a basic income.

Efforts to automate human labour might shift into even higher gears, driven by fears that people will not want to do certain jobs any more or demand higher wages to do certain jobs. Unions and political parties representing workers may become less resistant to robotization and automation.

Deregulation of labour markets might well intensify if a substantial basic income were to be introduced. Remember that basic income advocates argue that a basic income would be good for the poor because it would allow them to acquire any additional earned income they can get at will. Presumably the logical step then is to make sure that such additional income is available even if it comes in the form of parttime work, gig and platform work. What else would be the point of having a basic income?

In short, a basic income might well precipitate exactly the many transformations it is presented as an answer to. Basic income is presented as something akin to an economic life vest protecting people against the ever rougher currents of change. Even if it is not a very high amount, the fact that it is guaranteed and unconditional will help people to keep afloat. True perhaps, but not drowning is not quite the same as enjoying an existence in human dignity, as a surfer or in any other capacity.

#### 5. UBI fuels poverty and inequality

Rachel Minogue 18, Economic Fellow. International Trade Specialist, Professional Services, International Trade Administration. BA, International Studies, Emory University MA, International Economics, Johns Hopkins University, "Five Problems with Universal Basic Income," Third Way, May 24th, 2018, <https://www.thirdway.org/memo/five-problems-with-universal-basic-income>

Many of the most ardent UBI supporters believe the policy is an answer to a world where work is vanishing. This is a popular view in Silicon Valley, where many predict widespread technological unemployment is just around the corner.4 But there is almost no evidence that work is ending. Instead, work is changing.

* The US economy employs more people today than ever, with 37 million jobs added since the introduction of Microsoft Windows in 1993 and 190,000 new jobs created per month over the last year on average.5
* As Baby Boomers retire, the US working-age population will grow more slowly than the economy as a whole. For that reason, the US is just as likely to experience a shortage of labor to fill growing jobs as it is to have a labor market oversaturated with workers.6
* Many professions are rising in demand today, including those in health care, advanced manufacturing, skilled construction, education, technology, hospitality, and business management.
* At this very moment, there are 6 million job openings across the country, more than half of which are middle-class jobs or better.7

While we may see a net gain in jobs over the coming years, disruption will still be rampant. These jobs will be in different locations, require different skills, and offer different benefits. That’s why we need policies that help workers adjust to these new realities—not surrender. Reinventing postsecondary education to create more options outside of a four-year college degree, as well as redesigning worker pay and benefits, would do far more for the next generation of workers.

Economic growth would suffer

With a foundational, albeit limited, income under UBI, some Americans may choose to work part-time instead of full-time. Others may leave the labor force for years when they would have otherwise worked. Eduardo Porter writes that, as almost one quarter of US households make less than $25,000 a year, a $10,000 check each for two parents could change their decisions on how to balance work, child care, and other obligations, resulting in less full-time participation in the labor force.8

If people transition away from full-time work, the US economy would suffer. Macroeconomic theory holds that economic growth is dependent on three factors: increases in capital, advances in technology, and growth of the labor force. UBI has the potential to directly decrease the growth of the US economy, namely GDP growth, through reductions to labor force participation. With GDP shrinking, tax revenues would fall. This would in turn mean fewer resources to help the disadvantaged or to invest in the future, resulting in lower overall prosperity.

UBI is incredibly expensive

The numbers speak for themselves: UBI is either very expensive or very stingy. The progressive version of UBI is expensive to the point of impossibility, while the conservative version is penny-pinching and punitive. Looking first at the former, consider an annual grant of $12,000 for all American adults aged 18 to 64, like Stern proposes. Stern estimates his plan would cost between $1.75 trillion and $2.5 trillion. The high end of this range seems realistic. Almost two-thirds of the population, or 200 million people, would receive a monthly UBI check for $1,000, with a cost of approximately $2.4 trillion every year, or one-eighth of GDP.9 Social Security beneficiaries currently receiving less than $1,000 a month would also get a supplement, adding an estimated $52 billion a year.10 By comparison, our entire existing social safety net costs $2.6 trillion. That includes Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Unemployment Insurance, and veterans’ benefits.11

A graph of a number of columns

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Unless these critically important programs are eliminated, a UBI program would need to be paid for with higher taxes. It’s not clear whether it’s even possible to raise enough revenue for this initiative. The federal government took in approximately $3.3 trillion in 2017, so a taxes-only approach to funding Stern’s UBI would require an unheard-of 73% increase in federal revenue.12 Even if defense spending was slashed by one-third, for example, a 52% tax increase would still be required.13 Funneling all of a tax increase into UBI would also neglect our existing programs, like Social Security, which needs financial support to remain solvent past 2034.14

Poor families could be left more vulnerable

If significant tax hikes aren’t viable, then the question remains: what gets cut in order to fund UBI? Under this scenario, UBI becomes stingy and punitive, as a vast amount of important government programs would be on the chopping block.

Murray, the conservative UBI proponent, recommends that a $13,000 annual basic income replace all social assistance programs. Consider the value of the benefits people would lose: Medicaid, Medicare, Disability Insurance, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Unemployment Insurance, SNAP, Section 8 housing vouchers, Pell Grants, the Earned Income Tax Credit, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. As Dylan Matthews writes, “$13,000 a year doesn’t mean much if you lose insurance that was paying $60,000 a year on chemotherapy.”15

Even a UBI that retains much of the existing social safety net could hit the disadvantaged harder, depending on which tax credits and government assistance programs get cut. Stern listed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and housing assistance as potential policies to end in favor of UBI. But consider one example. In Queens, New York, a single, low-income working parent with three children can receive up to $31,100 worth of benefits annually from SNAP, the EITC, and Section 8 housing vouchers alone, and for good reason.16 Replacing those benefits with a $12,000 UBI for the parent would reduce the family’s income and benefits by $19,100.

A fundamental motivation for UBI is to eliminate poverty, but the tradeoffs necessary for funding would likely cause harm to vulnerable populations. This begs the question: If the main difference between UBI and our current safety net is that UBI gives relatively more to people who don’t need help, what would make UBI worthwhile? Some proponents have suggested UBI could be restricted to certain populations in need, but that would defy the universality at the idea’s core. At this point, what they are really proposing is an expansion of the existing safety net. That’s a worthwhile conversation to have, but it’s not about a *universal* basic income.

The idea has been scarcely tested

There are a handful of past and ongoing experiments with UBI. Unfortunately, the experiments have been flawed or are too small to effectively prove that UBI could live up to some of its proponents’ claims:

* Finland’s national social insurance institute, Kela, launched a UBI trial experiment in 2017, with 2,000 Finns aged 25 to 58 receiving approximately $645 per month. A year into its implementation, the Finnish government refused to continue its funding in April 2018, choosing instead to pursue alternative social welfare projects.17
* The Alaska Permanent Fund provides an annual cash dividend to all Alaskan residents from oil reserve royalties. The grant’s amount, in recent years roughly $2,000 per person, is far too small to be a livable income and thus has minimal effects on the labor market and is a poor comparison to popular UBI proposals.18
* An experiment in Kenya launched by Give Directly in late 2017 compares different UBI methods across 120 villages. According to Business Insider, residents of 40 villages receive $270 annually for 12 years, “effectively doubling most people’s income,” while 80 villages receive the same amount for 2 years.19 While this experiment could produce more compelling evidence than prior trials, Kenya’s economy is at a very different stage of development compared to the US which limits the study’s relevance.
* Silicon Valley startup accelerator Y Combinator in 2017 began a five-year experiment in giving 1,000 people $1,000 per month and 2,000 people $50 a month, aiming to assess changes to the labor force and quality of life.20 This evaluation could yield important results given its similarities to leading proposals but is still early in the experiment.

It will be interesting to see what comes out of future studies and experiments. But policymakers should be wary of studies that simulate the upside of UBI (a monthly income) without simulating its downsides, namely sweeping benefit cuts or tax increases.

Conclusion

The motivation behind most universal basic income proposals is admirable: reduce widespread poverty and provide lifelong income security to all. But a UBI in reality would likely fall far short of eliminating poverty while imposing large economic costs and ignoring future opportunities for work. It also ignores that American life is rooted in a civic tradition of earning. Seventy-three percent of Americans believe working hard is “very important to getting ahead in life.”21 That’s the highest among advanced economies, with the United Kingdom second at 60% and Germany (49%), Japan (42%), South Korea (34%), and France (25%) far behind.22

### States CP---2AC

#### A) Preemption---NLRA preemption is strict, running afoul to clear lines of division---ensuring strike-down. That’s Rolf.

<<<FOR REFERENCE>>>

This path has some limits – it seems unlikely that without a federally-enacted framework the resulting “bargains” could be incredibly prescriptive over some employment terms without running afoul of NLRA preemption. It also seems more likely to succeed in place-based service industries where firms don’t have a credible threat to flee across state lines seeking less stringent labor standards. But this path has already shown promise with state and local wage boards, some based in statute and others politically constructed. And in many cities and states, existing laws for awarding public construction contracts help create de-facto sectoral bargaining in the commercial construction industry (an industry also notable for high levels of labor-management partnership around apprenticeship and training programs, retirement plans, and health insurance).

#### Garman and Machinist ensure it.

Charlotte Garden 19, J.D from NYU, “Beyond the Race to the Bottom: Reforming Labor Law Preemption to Allow State Experimentation,” The Cambridge Handbook of U.S. Labor Law for the Twenty-First Century, 1/1/2019, Minnesota Libraries

The Supreme Court’s labor law preemption cases are so broad that labor lawyers sometimes summarize them as standing for the proposition that states cannot regulate either any activity the Act regulates, or that it doesn’t regulate.4 The first part of that formulation – state laws covering activities regulated by the NLRA are preempted – comes from San Diego Building Trades Council v. Garmon. Garmon arose in the context of union picketing, the purpose of which was disputed. The union maintained that it was engaged in informational picketing aimed at convincing workers to join. But the employer argued the union’s true purpose was to force the employer to sign a collective bargaining agreement even though the union may not have had the support of a majority of employees – an unfair labor practice under the NLRA. The employer sought and obtained from a California court an injunction against the picketing, and also filed an election petition with the NLRB to test whether the union had majority support. But while the California courts kept the injunction in place for a period of time before ultimately awarding the employer $1,000 in damages, the Board refused to accept the election petition because the employer’s gross receipts did not meet the Board’s selfimposed jurisdictional limits.

The U.S. Supreme Court held that the state court’s intervention was improper, writing that “[w]hen an activity is arguably subject to § 7 or § 8 of the Act, the States as well as the federal courts must defer to the exclusive competence of the National Labor Relations Board if the danger of state interference with national policy is to be averted.” This meant that as a practical matter, the employer had no remedy – the NLRB would not take jurisdiction over the situation, and the state could not.

Garmon’s breadth is significant: because it reaches activity that is even “arguably” subject to regulation under the NLRA, states are precluded both from augmenting the core of labor law, and from tinkering around the edges. Further, Garmon means that states cannot increase the penalties that can be imposed on unions or employers that violate labor law – a departure from other areas of work law, including wage and hour or discrimination law. This aspect of Garmon preemption is significant because the NLRA’s circumscribed set of available remedies, which largely fail to deter employer law breaking, is one of its most significant shortcomings.5 Garmon means that states cannot pick up the slack.

The rule that the NLRA preempts state regulation of union and employer activity that is unregulated by federal law comes from Lodge 76, International Association of Machinists v. Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission, 6 another case involving a state attempt to intervene in a labor dispute. Here, the Wisconsin agency sought to regulate employees’ concerted refusal to work overtime while bargaining for a new collective agreement was ongoing. However, the Supreme Court had previously held that a similar tactic – a work slowdown during bargaining – was neither protected nor prohibited by the NLRA.7 In other words, under federal labor law, employees were free to pressure an employer during negotiations by slowing down their work, although the employer could respond by taking nondiscriminatory disciplinary action in response to the slowdown.

Again, the Court held that the state agency’s intervention was preempted by the NLRA – this time because “Congress intended that the conduct involved be unregulated,” and “controlled by the free play of economic forces.” 8 In other words, the Court concluded that employers’ and employees’ resort to unprotected economic weapons such as slowdowns should be controlled by the two sides’ leverage, rather than by law – “a zone free from all regulations, whether state or federal.” 9

#### B) Patchwork---the counterplan results in a race-to-the bottom of companies RESHORING to federal lands, preventing enforcement. That’s Rolf.

<<<For REFFRENCE>>>

Option number three is some version of sectoral bargaining. Support for this option is growing among labor leaders, but is far from universal. I doubt there is any perfect system, but from the perspective of someone who has spent his adult life and career working within the limits and contortions of the current U.S. system, this option has by far more appeal for the reasons we’ve discussed – it covers more workers, creates far-better economic outcomes, creates fewer incentives for a race-to-the-bottom, focuses conflict on periodic macro-level national or regional bargains rather than on the shop floor, and allows greater avenues for labor-management partnership.

How could this actually happen?

In a perfect world, there probably would be a 1500-page federal law scrapping most of the NLRA and instituting a broad new system of sectoral bargaining in one fell swoop, and I’m not willing to give up all hope for that in the long run. But the federal government isn’t famous for domestic policy innovations that haven’t first been prototyped by cities and states, or in specific industries. Even the Wagner framework itself can trace its roots to late 19th century railway legislation, the 1912-15 U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations, the World War I-era War Labor Board, and the 1926 Railway Labor Act.

As you point out, there are several avenues for experimentation, learning, and progress short of a comprehensive federal reform. Your three examples are all apt.

States (or in some cases home-rule cities) could experiment with bi- or tri-partite industrial standard setting. One state might create a sectoral bargaining framework for a specific industry with persistently low wages or dangerous work that lawmakers believe needs addressing. The existing union(s) or alternative worker groups that meet a threshold of legitimacy and the employer-representatives (probably a trade association) might negotiate directly, with a public representative or arbitrator empowered as a “tie-breaker,” and the resulting agreement could be binding at least as a set of minimum standards on the industry.

This path has some limits – it seems unlikely that without a federally-enacted framework the resulting “bargains” could be incredibly prescriptive over some employment terms without running afoul of NLRA preemption. It also seems more likely to succeed in place-based service industries where firms don’t have a credible threat to flee across state lines seeking less stringent labor standards. But this path has already shown promise with state and local wage boards, some based in statute and others politically constructed. And in many cities and states, existing laws for awarding public construction contracts help create de-facto sectoral bargaining in the commercial construction industry (an industry also notable for high levels of labor-management partnership around apprenticeship and training programs, retirement plans, and health insurance).

#### That zeroes solvency of both manufacturing AND monopsony. That’s Lind and King.

<<<LIND---FOR REFRENCE>>>

Notwithstanding the importance of grassroots labor activism, in mid-twentieth-century America unionization flourished chiefly as a side effect of top-down national industrial policy pursued for other means, including war and recovery from the Great Depression. Tri­partite labor-business-government collaboration during World War I and World War II made possible the massive expansion of organized labor and collective bargaining in the mid-twentieth century and the subsequent social peace and widespread prosperity. If working-class Americans are ever again to enjoy the benefits of mass membership labor organizations of some kind, it will probably not be as a re­sponse to grassroots mobilization from below, employer by employer, state by state. More likely, any revival of worker empowerment in the United States will result from a much larger and more comprehensive program of national development carried out by the federal government in the service of military strength and economic growth, a national industrial policy of which institutionalized employer-worker bargaining would be only one of several elements.

<<<KING---FOR REFFRENCE>>>

Given the obvious limitations of the American enterprise-based system, some reformers and labor leaders are considering the potential for collective bargaining at the sectoral, regional, and even national level – so-called “broad-based bargaining.” Labor market centralization is strongly correlated with higher union organization, and sectoral bargaining is the most conducive to union growth. The OECD reports that coverage by collective bargaining is only stable and high where some form of broad-based, multi-employer bargaining exists.

Broad-based bargaining improves the performance of unionized industries and firms along a number of different dimensions. It has been shown to reduce employee turnover and to establish better, and also more flexible, safety standards for particular industries. By including all employers within a given industry, it creates new incentives and collaborative forums for worker training; industries covered by sector-level agreements are more likely to invest in workforce development and devote greater resources to firm-sponsored training.

Broad-based bargaining’s benefits also spill over into the broader economy, improving both labor-market and social outcomes. It increases national employment by both reducing unemployment and increasing labor force participation, and also boosts productivity rates for covered industries. Meanwhile, it compresses wage distributions across entire industries, much as enterprise-based bargaining does within unionized firms, reducing economic inequality.

In countries with broad-based bargaining – particularly those were agreements are national in scope – unions are responsive to macroeconomic issues like wage-driven inflation and international competitiveness. They tend to strike a balance that accepts relatively lower wages but promotes healthier firms and rising productivity, which supports higher wage growth in the long run. In Germany, for instance, trade unions have agreed to set wages below marginal productivity in order to increase the competitiveness of export sectors.

### AT: Automation DA---2AC

#### 1. Cost barriers are nonexistent---automation is already everywhere

BROADCOM 24, “Artificial Intelligence Is Impacting Everything—Including Workload Automation”, August 26th, 2024, <https://hbr.org/sponsored/2024/08/artificial-intelligence-is-impacting-everything-including-workload-automation>, DOA: 9/3/25, Rslish

Automation is everywhere. The word “automation” may make you think of a factory floor with cost-efficient robotic assembly or e-commerce companies with sophisticated operations for massive fulfillment centers.

A whole other realm of automation, known as workload automation (WLA), goes mostly unseen. Retailers use WLA to track and update inventory data across physical and online stores. A brokerage may use WLA to reconcile its daily financial transactions prior to the start of market trading. For large organizations, WLA is crucial for employee payroll, customer billing, customer onboarding, employee onboarding, and so forth. The list is endless.

WLA has long been integral to core business processes, enabling businesses to operate on schedule, orchestrate complex workflows, and enhance audit and compliance with centralized controls. WLA is pivotal for scaling enterprise automation that is essential to digital business operations—what can be automated will be automated.

Enter artificial intelligence (AI) to the automation landscape.

As AI takes its place in the portfolio of critical enterprise technologies, the symbiotic nature of AI and WLA can lead to greater business results when their strengths are combined.

An Enterprise Workhorse of a Different Color

Automation tools are common in today’s enterprise. Many have emerged in recent years to meet new and improved processes, such as robotic process automation, business process automation, and workflow automation. Their descriptions are often similar to that of WLA, but their scope is limited to specific domains and use cases.

#### 4. Automation can’t replace humans---empirics prove.

Kalena Thomhave 24, Independent Journalist & Researcher, MPP from Michigan University, and a BA in political science from Louisiana state university, “Why the UAW deal may not result in more automation”, February 13th, 2024, <https://www.automotivedive.com/news/uaw-labor-agreement-manufacturing-automation-robots-ford-motor/706637/#:~:text=Robots%20are%20often%20too%20expensive%20to%20replace%20humans&text=Labor%20costs%20had%20increased%20for,for%20some%20tasks%2C%20Hearsch%20said>., DOA: 9/4/25, Rslish

Reducing bodily stress may also allow autoworkers to delay retirement and, in turn, allow automakers to pay them to assemble vehicles rather than fund their retirement benefits, at least for a few more years, Wheaton said.

Automation works best when companies use it to make work easier, not when they try to replace employees with robots, Wheaton said.

Wheaton pointed to Tesla as a cautionary tale, noting that the automaker installed too many robots at its assembly plant in Fremont, California, in 2018 and had to stop production for a week before adding new human workers, according to the Los Angeles Times.

CEO Elon Musk had previously said he wanted the factory to have so few humans that it looked like an “alien dreadnaught.” He later admitted that “humans are underrated.”

#### 6. Sectoral bargaining standardizes labor relations eliminating firms desire to undercut workers and unions.

Oren Cass 21, founder and chief economist of American Compass and holds a J.D. from Harvard Law, “A Better Bargain: Worker Power in the Labor Market”, September 2021, <https://americancompass.org/a-better-bargain-worker-power-in-the-labor-market/>, DOA: 6/9/25, Rslish

The alternative model, much more common in Europe, is called sectoral or broad-based bargaining. In this model, unions represent workers of common interest regardless of their place of employment—generally across an entire occupation, industry, or region. These unions bargain with trade groups representing all of the relevant employers, reaching agreements that apply broadly. In many respects, these agreements are closer to regulations governing industries than to contracts governing workplaces; but unlike regulations, they are chosen by the participants themselves rather than by bureaucrats. This model has several important advantages:

Worker Power. Workplaces have to be governed and terms and conditions of employment set. The question is who should play what role in that process. One option would be to leave employers in control and allow individual workers to attempt negotiations—in practice, this leaves workers with little voice in decision-making and little capacity to demand change. Another option is to rely on government to establish rules. In this case, workers can attempt to exert influence through the political process, but that influence will be greatly diluted by the myriad other issues unrelated to the workplace that policymakers must address. Workers are likely to disagree on many of those issues, precluding them from operating as an effective bloc when it comes to the economic issues on which their interests most likely align.  
Guaranteeing an environment in which workers are empowered to bargain collectively—and thus on equal footing—with employers is a much better approach. The parties most affected are the ones who will make the decisions, and they can do so with consideration of both their own immediate interests and the long-term interests of both sides in what is ultimately a symbiotic relationship. Bargains struck in this way are likely to prioritize those things which are of highest value to each side, making tradeoffs that are mutually beneficial and thus create economic value in the process. Workers will achieve better outcomes than they could individually, while employers will not perceive every concession as potentially fatal if they are all making it together.

Basis of Competition. By encompassing all competitors in negotiations, broad-based agreements take some areas of potential differentiation off the table and thus channel competitive energies in other directions. If labor relations are standardized, no one can seek to outperform everyone else by squeezing workers harder on wages or skimping on safety, potentially triggering a “race to the bottom.” Conversely, investing in productivity gains, innovation, customer retention, and so forth becomes that much more important.

#### 7. Businesses won’t kill jobs because of higher wages, they benefit from it.

Edward W. Lempinen 23, Writer and Media relations specialist with the UC Berkeley Office of Communications and Public Affairs, UC Berkeley News, “Even in small businesses, minimum wage hikes don’t cause job losses, study finds”, 03/14/23, https://news.berkeley.edu/2023/03/14/even-in-small-businesses-minimum-wage-hikes-dont-cause-job-losses-study-finds/, Accessed: 09/04/25, mcc

Restaurants, retail stores and other small **businesses**, long **thought to be vulnerable to increases in** the minimum **wage, generally do not cut jobs and** may actually **benefit** when governments raise minimum pay, according to a new study co-authored at UC Berkeley.

The prevailing wisdom among many business owners and policymakers is that when the minimum wage rises, smaller low-wage employers suffer more from higher labor costs and are more likely to cut jobs. **But** the groundbreaking new study, co-authored by Berkeley economist Michael Reich, found that small **businesses can pass the costs** on **to consumers with little negative impact.**

“**A** minimum **wage increase doesn’t kill jobs**,” said Reich, chair of UC Berkeley’s Center on Wage and Employment Dynamics (CWED). “It kills job vacancies, not jobs. The higher wage makes it easier to recruit workers and retain them. Turnover rates go down. Other research shows that those workers are likely to be a little more productive, as well.”

#### 8. Cyberattacks don’t escalate. Empirics and wargames prove they’re de-escalatory.

Dr. Brandon Valeriano et al. 25, PhD, Lecturer, School of Social & Political Sciences, University of Glasgow. Bren Chair, Military Innovation, Marine Corps University. Senior Advisor, Cyber Solarium Commission. Senior Fellow, Cato Institute; Dr. Ryan C. Maness, PhD, Director, Information Operations for Research, US Department of Defense. Assistant Professor, Department of Defense Analysis, Naval Postgraduate School; Dr. Benjamin Jensen, PhD, Professor, Marine Corps University School of Advanced Warfighting. Scholar, School of International Service, American University. Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council. Former Senior Research Director & Lead Author, US Cyberspace Solarium Commission, "Cyber War," in What Do We Know about War?, Chapter 12, 2025, pg. 221-224.

Escalation is defined as an increase in the nature or intensity of conflict. Extending escalation theory to **cyber space** would include situations in which “the target responds with **more intense** and **costly** cyber means (cyber escalation within the domain) or through **breaching** the cyber-kinetic threshold (crossdomain escalation)” (Borghard and Lonergan 2019: 123). Libicki (2016) simplifies cyber escalation into two factors: intensity (striking deeper, lasting longer) or more extensive (striking new targets), plus adds the consideration that an attack in cyber space can escalate to an attack on physical space.

Cyber escalation is then defined as a reaction with digital tools that increases intensity or aggression or that spreads the scope of conflict after an initial move in the digital domain. Theoretically the cyber domain can contain escalation because of the uncertainty introduced by cyber weapons (Buchanan 2016). There is also the aspect of civilian punishment, attacks that hit what might be deemed off-limits civilian systems, provoking escalation due to the violation in norms between two actors.

In **practice**, however, cyber escalation is **rare**. Stuxnet (2007–2010) is **often cited** as the prime example of cyber escalation yet, put in the context of the wider dispute between the West and Iran over the development of nuclear weapons, the Stuxnet attack is actually a **de-escalatory move** because the other options on the table at the time were **conventional** strikes that would have caused death and destruction.

Talmadge (2019a: 864) makes the point that technology itself is **rarely a sufficient condition** for escalation, “cast[ing] doubt on the idea of **emerging technologies** as an **independent**, primary **driver** of otherwise avoidable escalation.” Technology became the **mask** for the processes that enable escalation, rather than the **cause** of escalation itself. It is not the domain that produces escalation, but the action in the domain that produces outcomes.

We have **ample empirical evidence** that **escalation is limited in the cyber domain**. Even in its simpler form, there is **little retaliation**, let alone escalation, in the domain or even out of the domain when cyber actions are the **triggering** events. When conflicts do escalate in cyber space, we observe **limited engagement** between the parties unless there is **already** an outright war. As Valeriano, Jensen, and Maness (2018: 18) note, “even when cyber exchanges **between rivals** escalate, they remain **limited in scope** outside of ongoing military conflict. That is, rivals may use cyber operations to probe the enemy, test their resolve, and signal the risks of significant escalation.

**Data analysis** supports these positions and is developed here from established data and taken from ongoing projects to support our background investigation into cyber escalation processes (Maness, Valeriano, and Jensen 2019). Table 12.4 shows the **response patterns** between the **U**nited **S**tates and its four major adversaries (**Russia**, **Iran**, **China**, and **No**rth **Ko**rea) in the cyber domain, as well as how each country responds to a cyber operation with a **retaliatory** cyber operation. Table 12.4 utilizes the cyber operation severity score from the DCID version 1.5 that measures the impact and national security importance of each state-initiated cyber operation between the years 2000–2016 between rival states (Maness, Valeriano, and Jensen 2019). The scale is interval and ranges from 1 to 10.

Table 12.4 shows that the United States is often on the receiving end of retaliation at a higher rate than expected. However, these responses to US cyber actions do not indicate within-domain escalation. The severity levels with a response score of 2 were retaliatory to US actions that were of a higher severity level. Of the seven actions at the severity level of 4, three represent a decrease in the initial attack severity and four represent an increase by one tick in severity. The only other country that witnesses a statistically significant level of retaliation at a greater rate than expected is Iran, which is wholly due to US or Israeli operations. China’s significant negative relationship with its severity score of 2 shows that it prefers higher levels of severity when it retaliates in the cyber domain. Many of the Chinese incidents involve entanglements with the United States, which is another great power with vast cyber capabilities. This propensity to use **more severe** attacks does **not** denote escalation, however. Escalation is **rare in digital interactions** as measured by **rival** states from 2000 to 2016.

[Figure omitted]

Table 12.5 shows how responses are related to the overall cyber strategy of the initiating states. In terms of response severity by strategic objective, disruptive efforts by initiating states are usually met with **retaliatory disruptions**, further indicating that the cyber domain is, for the most part, **non-escalatory**. Espionage campaigns are also commonly met with cyber operations that either steal or signal capabilities or displeasure for the originating action, but do not lead to a **tit-for-tat** escalatory ladder, as indicated in Table 12.2. Only occasionally do we see disruptions or espionage operations escalate to the severity level of 5, with this happening only five times over the 2000–2016 period.

Results from **war games** have demonstrated the **complicated** empirical picture of the escalation landscape in cyber space (Schneider 2017). After examining war games from 2011 to 2016, Schneider finds that government officials were **hesitant** to use damaging cyber weapons. Most games only witness the use of cyber capabilities after the onset of conventional warfare, not before. For Jensen and Banks (2018), in the context of cyber options, escalation was the **exception, not the norm**.

To explore escalation when cyber options are present within the context of integrated options of national power, Jensen and Valeriano (2019) ran a series of war games on 259 participants, including members of the military, students, and policymakers. The simulation situated participants in a typical crisis that was **highly likely** to escalate given a **rivalry** situation over an **ongoing territorial dispute** when the crisis under examination was the third in a series over a five-year period.

The results **demonstrated** that escalation is not the norm. Based on a general baseline for all international conflict situations, most options fell below the 48 percent threshold. In fact, the only instance where escalation was the dominant option was when a cyber action started the crisis and the target had no cyber response options. This suggests there are implications of attacking a state with cyber options when they do not have the ability to respond within the domain. In **most** other situations, we witness **few demands for escalation** when cyber response options are on the table.

Overall, **regardless of the situation**, cyber escalation is usually **not** the dominant response. The reality is that even under dangerous conditions cyber response options can **actually moderate** crisis response patterns. Surveys demonstrate a great amount of **fear** in the cyber domain, but this **does not motivate overreaction** (Gross, Canetti, and Vashdi 2017). Figure 12.2 shows the results from a cyber campaign–directed dyads data set. What is measured in what follows is whether the combined cyber operation, which includes diplomatic, economic, and military variables extracted from ICEWS (Boschee et al. 2018), has escalatory responses from the target from all four domains recorded in the campaigns. For a cyber response to be recorded, the target responds within one year from the start date of the original cyber operation from the initiator for disruptions and degradations, and from the date the operation becomes public for espionage operations. For a diplomatic response, the time frame is one month (thirty days) after the cyber operation’s initiation or public reporting, and for economic and military responses, the time frame is three months (ninety days) after the same criteria regarding the cyber operation. For cyber escalation, the severity score must go up at least one point regarding the cyber response. No cyber responses at the same severity score are included. For conventional responses, we use the Conflict and Mediation Event Observation (CAMEO) conflict-cooperation scores to measure escalation (Schrodt 2012). The CAMEO scale ranges from −10 to 10 where the more negative score, the more conflictual and the more positive score, the more cooperative the foreign policy action. If the conflict scores from each domain are lower (more negative) from the target state in retaliation for the cyber incident, escalation in each domain is recorded.

#### 10. No Impact---AI bubble will inevitably burst

Will Lockett 9-14-25, journalist, “The AI Bubble Is About To Burst, But The Next Bubble Is Already Growing”, September 14th, 2025, <https://archive.ph/ltFDm>, DOA: 9/24/25, Rslish

Speculation rules the world. It didn’t used to. But from the 1980s through to 2008, something changed. Investors realised that they could get far more return from hype than from any kind of legitimate business. This is the information age, after all, and information is easy to manipulate and commodify. This led to the dot-com bubble, the 2008 credit crunch, the 2016–2017 cryptocurrency bubble, the late 2020–2021 cryptocurrency bubble, and the 2022 NFT bubble, with the latest fad being the AI bubble. In fact, nearly half of the world’s private investment is being funnelled into AI, and AI speculation is the main driving force behind the S&P 500’s recent growth. But, just as the others did before their catastrophic failure, the AI bubble is showing signs of imminent bursting. However, the finance and tech bros have learnt their lesson and are developing the next bandwagon to ride off into the sunset with all our money, ready for when they inevitably need to jump ship. It’s just a shame that it’s even more of a dead end than AI.

So, it’s essentially common knowledge that the AI bubble is ripe for bursting. Things like the efficient compute frontier (read more here) and the Floridi conjecture (read more here) mean that the AI models we have now are about as good as they will ever be. Even if OpenAI spent trillions of dollars increasing the size of their models tenfold, they would only be slightly better. The recent release of ChatGPT-5 is a perfect example of this. It had significantly more data, training, and cash shoved into it than its little brother ChatGPT-4, yet it is only marginally better than ChatGPT-4.

This is a huge problem! Because, as they currently stand, generative AI models aren’t actually that useful or even remotely profitable.

An MIT report found that 95% of AI pilots didn’t increase a company’s profit or productivity. For the 5% in which it did, the AI was relegated to back-room, highly constrained admin jobs, and even then, there were only marginal improvements. A METR report found that AI coding tools actually slow developers down. The inaccuracy of these models means they repeatedly make very bizarre coding bugs that are highly arduous to find and correct. Logically, it is quicker and cheaper to get a developer to code it themselves. Research has even found that for 77% of workers, AI has increased their workload and not their productivity. As it stands, generative AI is far too error-prone to deliver meaningful increases in productivity or profitability in the vast majority of use cases.

In other words, for AI models to actually deliver on the speculation driving their massive investment, they need to become far, far better, which involves spending exponentially more money.

This is another huge problem, given that OpenAI, which has by far the largest customer base of any generative AI company, is still losing money hand over fist for every one of its $200-per-month plans. In fact, it seems they would need to sell it at more like $2,000 per month to break even (read more here).

Big Tech, backed by venture capital and investment banks, has spent hundreds of billions of dollars each year on AI for the past few years. Yet the technology is reaching its limitations and can’t improve, as well as being far, far away from profitability. It is a perfect bubble, with colossal amounts of money being used to bolster completely unfounded and outright false speculation. And now, with GPT-5’s disappointment, Meta’s restructuring and downplaying of its AI division, and interest rates threatening to rise, the very investors who helped inflate this bubble are warning that it will burst. Even Goldman Sachs, which has piled tonnes of money into the AI bubble, has warned that the AI bubble will likely pop soon, and when it does, it will also take the data centre bubble down with it, causing immense damage to not just xAI, Meta, Google, Anthropic and OpenAI, but also tertiary players like Amazon, Oracle and Nvidia who provide AI infrastructure.

In other words, when this bubble bursts, it will deal unbelievable damage to every weird tech bro and toxic finance guy you know.

#### 11. No polycrisis risk.

Daniel Drezner 23. professor of international politics at the Fletcher School and is the author of Drezner’s World, 1/28/2023, "Are we headed toward a “polycrisis”? The buzzword of the moment, explained." https://www.vox.com/23572710/polycrisis-davos-history-climate-russia-ukraine-inflation

The deeper flaw in the polycrisis logic is the presumption that one systemic crisis will inexorably lead to negative feedback effects that cause other systems to tip into crisis.

If this assumption does not hold, then the whole logic of a single polycrisis falls apart. To their credit, the Cascade Institute authors acknowledge that this might not happen, but they posit: “it seems more likely that causal interactions between systemic crises will worsen, rather than diminish, the overall emergent impacts.”

At first glance, this seems like a plausible assumption to make. Remember, however, that the proponents of a polycrisis also assert that the systems under stress are highly complex, leading to unpredictable cause-and-effect relationships. If that is true, then presuming that one systemic crisis would automatically exacerbate stresses in other systems seems premature at best and skewed at worst.

Indeed, over the last year there have been at least two examples of one systemic crisis actually lessening stress on another system.

China’s increasingly centralized autocracy generated a socioeconomic disaster in the form of “zero Covid” lockdowns. Xi Jinping kept that policy in place long after it made any sense, accidentally throttling China’s economy. The timing of China’s lockdown was fortuitous, however, as stagnant Chinese demand helped prevent an inflationary spiral from getting any worse. China’s exit from zero-Covid will likely also be countercyclical, jump-starting economic growth at a time when other regions tip into recession.

Another weird, fortuitous interaction has been the one between climate change and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. As Europe aided Ukraine and resisted Russia’s blatant, illegal actions, Russia retaliated by cutting off energy exports. Many were concerned that Russia’s counter-sanctions would make this winter extremely hard and expensive for Europe.

Climate change may have provided a weird geopolitical assist to Europe, however. The warming climate is likely connected to Europe’s extremely temperate fall and winter. That, in turn, has required less electricity for heating, leaving the continent with plenty of energy reserves to last the winter. Russia’s ability to wreak havoc on the European economy has been circumscribed.

None of this is to say that systemic crises cannot exacerbate each other. Just because a polycrisis has not happened yet does not mean one is not on the horizon. Just as one buys insurance to guard against low-probability, high-impact outcomes, policymakers and elements of civil society need to guard against worst-case scenarios.

As a term of art, however, “polycrisis” distracts more than it adds. It mostly seems like a device to make people care about the Really Bad Things that climate change can do, without turning people off by warning them yet again about the hazards of climate change.

### Midterms---2AC

#### 1. Dems win inevitably.

William A. Galston 25, Senior Fellow of Governance Studies at Brookings, “What History Tells Us About the 2026 Midterm Elections,” Brookings, 8/28/25, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-history-tells-us-about-the-2026-midterm-elections/

As we have seen, the president’s party almost always loses ground in the midterm election following his victory, and the unusual circumstances that fueled the two exceptions since the 1930s do not seem to prevail today. After the 2024 election, moreover, Republicans held only 220 seats, just two more than the minimum needed for a majority. Barring unforeseeable game-changing events during the next 14 months, the probability that Republicans will lose control of the House is very high.

#### 3.OBBB thumps.

James Bickerton 25, U.S. News Reporter for Newsweek, “Republicans Issued Warning on 2026 Midterms,” Newsweek, 7/5/25, https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-issued-warning-2026-midterms-2094936

Republicans have been warned that the party's recent passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act could have dramatic repercussions in the 2026 midterm elections.

Karl Rove, a longtime GOP strategist, said on Fox News's America's Newsroom: "I think it'll have a huge impact on 2026, because, remember, as these changes, particularly the Medicaid changes come into effect, they're going to have, people are going to be losing their coverage."

#### 4. It’s way too early.

Chad Pergram 8/25, Senior Congressional Correspondent, “Midterm Elections are as Unpredictable as Ever, as 2026 Looms,” Fox News, 8/25/25, https://www.foxnews.com/politics/midterm-elections-unpredictable-ever-2026-looms]

Midterms have become increasingly challenging to decipher in recent cycles. A learned, Democratic Capitol Hill hand told me after the historic, 63-seat bloodletting by House Democrats in 2010 that the election was "un-modellable."

Midterms are usually a problem for the party of the president.

That said, Democrats only lost a few House seats in 1962 – immediately following the Cuban Missile Crisis – which nearly brought the U.S. and Soviet Union to nuclear blows.

Democrats lost a staggering 47 House seats in 1966 – the first and only midterm of late President Lyndon Johnson. But the electoral rapture barely dented the robust House majority. Democrats controlled 295 House seats before the 1966 midterms, 248 seats afterwards. Still a comfortable margin.

Very few political observers expected Democrats to lose control of the House in the legendary 1994 midterms – mainly because the party held the House for 40 consecutive years. It was nearly unthinkable that Democrats could lose the House – simply because it had not happened in decades. Democrats and other political observers excoriated the brilliant Michael Barone when he was the lone commentator to forecast that a Republican flip of the House could be in the offing come the fall of 1994.

Barone was right, as Republicans collected 54 seats.

Republicans nearly lost control of the House in the 1998 midterms – after they impeached former President Clinton. Republicans then bested the historic norms in 2002 and held the House, boosted by pro-GOP sentiment following 9/11.

Democrats managed to win back the House in 2018 – following a similar playbook they deployed in 2006 when they also captured control of the House. Democrats ran a number of moderate ex-military or "national security" Democrats – often in battleground districts. The relative unpopularity of President Donald Trump didn’t help Republicans, either.

Former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., boasted that Republicans may capture anywhere from 40-60 seats in the 2022 midterms. Republicans did win the House – but barely.

CALIFORNIA REPUBLICANS SUE TO STOP NEWSOM, DEMOCRATS FROM PUSHING REDISTRICTING PLAN

Which brings us to 2026.

The party of the president historically loses around 25 seats in their first midterm. Since President Trump is only the second commander in chief to return to office after a hiatus (late President Grover Cleveland was the first), 2026 serves as a de facto "first midterm." Trump and the Republicans lost 41 House seats in 2018 – his true first midterm. But calculating what to expect next year is nearly impossible.

Republicans now hold a 219 to 212 majority in the House with four vacancies. Three of those seats are solidly Democratic – for now. So for the sake of argument, let’s say the breakdown is 220 to 215. Democrats must only flip a net of three seats to claim the majority.

It’s not that easy.

First off, we barely understand the 2026 playing field.

In baseball, it’s 90 feet between the bases. 60 feet, 6 inches to the pitcher's mound. Major League Baseball even standardized the size of the dirt infield a couple of years ago.

As we head to the playoffs, we know the Milwaukee Brewers and Detroit Tigers are excellent. The New York Mets and New York Yankees should be really good., but they’ve stumbled. The Philadelphia Phillies are excellent – but just lost starting pitcher Zack Wheeler to a major injury. Who could surprise down the stretch? The Cincinnati Reds and Kansas City Royals are hardly out of it. Everyone understands the general variables of Major League Baseball as October nears.

That is not the case with the 2026 midterms.

Texas Republicans are now determined to redraw congressional districts to favor a GOP pickup of five seats. President Trump has endorsed similar efforts to tilt the field in favor of Republicans in GOP-strongholds like Missouri, Ohio and Indiana. California Gov. Gavin Newsom is threatening to upend the present maps in favor of Democrats in the Golden State. New York Democrats may try the same in the Empire State.

So, we don’t even know the basics. How far from the plate to the mound in the 2026 midterms? How large is the strike zone? Five balls for a walk or the standard four? Twelve players in the field or nine?

Redistricting could also hamper Republicans – forcing the party to suddenly defend a number of more competitive seats. Democrats could suddenly have more opportunities where none existed in 2024.

But we aren’t sure.

Maybe everything is status quo and Democrats only need to flip those three seats.

We also don’t know how the relative unpopularity of President Trump may impact voters. He historically defies political gravity. Plus, the Democratic brand remains utterly toxic. Party registration is down for the Democrats – big time.

That said, could Republicans reap the benefits of passing the hallmark of their legislative agenda – the One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act? Some conservatives doubt that the GOP has sufficiently sold the public on that legislation, especially during the August recess. Democrats are banking on the possibility that the legislation will backfire on the GOP in next year’s midterms. We also don’t know if President Trump not being on the ballot in 2026 is similar to the Republican midterm performance in 2018. It’s clear that not having Mr. Trump on the ballot in 2018 undercut the party at the polls.

Republicans could also face a backlash from moderates and swing voters if they are dissatisfied with the performance of the president. We certainly saw that after voters tired of the polices of former Presidents George H.W. Bush in 1990, Bill Clinton in 1994, George W. Bush in 2006 and Barack Obama in 2010.

And, we have an entire 15 months before voters head to the polls next year. There could be another foreign policy crisis involving the Middle East. Tensions with Russia over Ukraine are volatile. There are a host of potential events – ranging from health policy to the economy – which could set the table for the midterms.

#### 5. Political interference swamps the plan.

Ned Barnett 25, Opinion Editor and Writes for McClatchy and the News & Observer of Raleigh, “Potential interference is Already Clouding the 2026 Midterms | Opinion,” Belleville News-Democrat, 7/28/25, https://www.bnd.com/opinion/article311490391.html

President Donald Trump, who famously asked Georgia election officials to “find” 11,780 votes after he lost the state in 2020, is already moving to interfere with state-run elections over which he has no direct authority. His Justice Department has asked for access to election and voting data in a dozen states. It’s not clear what may come next, but fair-election advocates worry that the Trump administration may seek to purge voter rolls or set up post-election challenges.

#### 6. Trump’s anti-worker sentiment is locked in. BUT, the plan does help Dems create a “coherent message” based on previous campaign promises.

Kellen Browning 25. New York Times political reporter based in San Francisco. “Union Leaders Get Tough With Democrats as Members Drift Toward Trump.” August 9th, 2025. NYT. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/09/us/politics/democrats-labor-unions-nevada.html

Long before President Trump harnessed a working-class coalition to win last November’s election, leaders of the nation’s biggest labor unions, in public and private, were warning Democrats that those voters could defect. In the months since, their admonitions have grown only more pointed.

Their calculus is simple. Despite campaign promises to improve working people’s lives, and Mr. Trump’s appeal among the rank and file, top union officials do not view the president, whose signature policy law benefits the wealthy, as a true ally of organized labor. And if Democrats regain the ground they’ve lost with blue-collar voters, many of whom are union members, it could help leaders with their own struggles, including flagging membership and criticism that they are losing touch with everyday workers.

But it is not likely to be easy.

The shift toward Mr. Trump among blue-collar voters last year was the culmination of a trend in recent elections: Democrats gained votes in wealthy, white enclaves, while Republicans earned new support in working-class regions and among Hispanic and Black voters, raising questions about Democrats’ longstanding identity as the defender of working people.

Union leaders, who mostly endorsed Kamala Harris even as many of their members scoffed at her candidacy, now find themselves trying to strike a delicate balance, maintaining support for Democratic candidates while not alienating members who voted for Mr. Trump. The conundrum is similar to Democrats’ own struggles to understand and court their lapsed voters.

“Every time we talk politics, the first thing that comes up is, ‘The Democrats let us down,’” said Jimmy Williams, the president of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades. His 140,000 members, he said, had split nearly evenly between Ms. Harris and Mr. Trump.

Mr. Williams said that he had been asking Democratic officials how they planned to win back his members but that he hadn’t “heard a coherent message that is enough for me to feel confident that the Democratic Party truly understands the pain that working people are feeling.”

Some labor unions have taken a more combative stance in an effort to cajole the party to act with more urgency. Others remain conciliatory, pushing from within to encourage the Democratic National Committee to improve its outreach to the voters who defected to Mr. Trump. (Two union leaders left their posts at the D.N.C. in June over concerns the group had become too insular.)

The D.N.C. declined to comment.

Other union leaders suggested that the party should support and fund campaigns by candidates who are not from wealthy backgrounds. And still others wanted to see more vocal opposition to parts of Mr. Trump’s agenda deemed damaging to the working class.

Some labor leaders were intent on better understanding their membership and avoiding the same criticism that Democrats themselves face: that they are out of touch with the average American’s priorities.

Dan Osborn, the independent Senate candidate who ran unsuccessfully against a Republican incumbent in Nebraska last year, and is now running for the state’s other Senate seat, said labor leaders needed to work harder to earn their members’ buy-in on political issues.

“They need to go out to job sites, not just mail something to their home and hope that they read it and understand it,” said Mr. Osborn, who for years was the president of a food processing union in the Omaha area.

Lee Saunders, the president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, said he and other leaders were working to reach their 1.1 million members, holding more than 70 virtual and in-person town halls around the country. The union has also turned to podcasts and influencers, using TikTok filters, connecting content creators with labor policy experts and collaborating on sponsored content.

The aim is to convince members that union-organizing is important and that Mr. Trump’s policies are bad for workers.

Members are “angry at both Republicans and Democrats, and we’ve got to hear them out,” Mr. Saunders said. “Clearly, they don’t want us jumping off right away saying, ‘All Democrats are good, and all Republicans are bad.’”

Mr. Williams’s trade union has a similar effort underway. Its “Building Union Power” campaign hopes to restore the trust among members that leaders believe has faded over the years, by traveling the country to educate workers about the history of the labor movement and the gains the union has made for workers.

“Some people only hear from their union around Election Day,” Mr. Williams said. “If they’ve had a negative experience or felt ignored, we’re going to hear them out and work to make it right.”

In Las Vegas, the 60,000-member Culinary Workers Union has a different approach. The union’s legion of cooks and waiters who campaign door to door are a key pillar of the so-called Reid Machine, the highly organized operation that delivered Democratic victories in Nevada for decades (and with a name that nods to the longtime Nevada senator Harry Reid, who died in 2021).

But conflict has been building in recent years, with the union especially angry that Democrats in the State Legislature helped end mandatory daily hotel room cleanings, a Covid-era safety measure, in 2023. Last year, the union withdrew its endorsement from more than a dozen Democratic candidates over their room cleaning votes, drawing a red line through their names on an endorsement guide.

And it ran two candidates in Democratic legislative primaries, a nurse who lost her bid to oust an incumbent Democrat and a food server and union member who defeated a candidate backed by party leaders.

Even as the union campaigned for Ms. Harris last fall, Ted Pappageorge, the union’s secretary-treasurer, repeatedly warned Democrats that they were not focusing enough on affordability and were poised to lose Nevada. In an interview, he suggested the party had not received the message.

“The No. 1 issue was the economy, and nationally, Democrats were tone-deaf about that,” Mr. Pappageorge said, adding, “If the candidates are all lawyers and developers and managers, then maybe that’s part of the problem.”

He cautioned that if Democrats did not promote more candidates who understand kitchen-table issues, the union would consider backing independents, Republicans or its own members.

The Nevada Democratic Party pointed to a list of bills aimed at raising wages and lowering prices that it had supported, even as its executive director, Hilary Barrett, acknowledged, “There’s much more work to be done.”

Above all, labor leaders said they must convince their members that Republicans are not a palatable alternative.

Republicans made overtures to working-class voters last year, earning particular support from the Teamsters. Both Mr. Trump’s labor secretary pick and his “no tax on tips” proposal, now a temporary deduction signed into law, were popular with unions.

But labor leaders said most of his actions since taking office, like ending labor protections for federal employees, showed that the outreach had been disingenuous. Mr. Trump’s policy law benefits the wealthy while cutting social safety net programs like Medicaid and food assistance.