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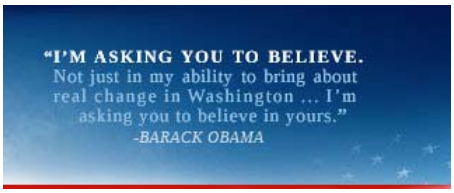

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Barack Obama will protect the openness of the internet:
Obama and Biden strongly support the principle of network neutrality to preserve the benefits of open competition on the Internet.

Deploy a modern communications infrastructure:
Obama and Biden believe we can get true broadband to every community in America.

Improve America's competitiveness:
Obama and Biden will ensure our goods and services are treated fairly in foreign markets, invest in the sciences, and will provide new research grants to the most outstanding early-career researchers in the country.

In this Section

Ensure an open Internet.
Create a transparent and connected democracy.
Encourage a modern communications infrastructure.
Prepare all of our children for a 21st century economy.
Improve America's competitiveness.
Employ science and technology to solve our nation's most pressing problems.

More on Technology

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Present *your* ideas

Speak your mind and help set the policies that will guide this campaign and change the country.

Discuss *with* others

Science, Technology and Innovation for a New Generation

The Problem

We need to connect citizens with each other to engage them more fully and directly in solving the problems that face us. We must use all available technologies and methods to open up the federal government, creating a new level of transparency to change the way business is conducted in Washington and giving Americans the chance to participate in government deliberations and decision-making in ways that were not possible only a few years ago.

America risks being left behind in the global economy: Revolutionary advances in information technology, biotechnology, nanotechnology and other fields are reshaping the global economy. Without renewed efforts, the United States risks losing leadership in science, technology and innovation. As a share of the Gross Domestic Product, American federal investment in the physical sciences and engineering research has dropped by half since 1970.

Too many Americans are not prepared to participate in a 21st century economy: A recent international study found that U.S. students perform lower on scientific assessments than students in 16 other economically developed nations, and lower than 20 economically developed nations in math performance. Only one-third of middle class physical science teachers are qualified to teach in that subject, and only one-half of middle school math sciences have educational background in that subject area.

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Barack Obama and Joe Biden's Plan

Ensure the Full and Free Exchange of Ideas through an Open Internet and Diverse Media Outlets

Protect the Openness of the Internet: A key reason the Internet has been such a success is because it is the most open network in history. It needs to stay that way. Barack Obama strongly supports the principle of network neutrality to preserve the benefits of open competition on the Internet.

Encourage Diversity in Media Ownership: Barack Obama believes that the nation's rules ensuring diversity of media ownership are critical to the public interest. Unfortunately, over the past several years, the Federal Communications Commission has promoted the concept of consolidation over diversity. As president, Obama will encourage diversity in the ownership of broadcast media, promote the development of new media outlets for expression of diverse viewpoints, and clarify the public interest obligations of broadcasters who occupy the nation's spectrum.

Protect Our Children While Preserving the First Amendment: We live in the most information-abundant age in history and the people who develop the skills to utilize its benefits are the people who will succeed in the 21st century. Obama values our First Amendment freedoms and our right to artistic expression and does not view regulation as the answer to these concerns. An Obama administration will give parents the tools and information they need to control what their children see on television and the Internet in ways fully consistent with the First Amendment. To further protect children online, Obama and Biden support tough penalties, increased enforcement resources and forensic tools for law enforcement, and collaboration between law enforcement and the private sector to identify and prosecute people who abuse the Internet to try to exploit children.

Safeguard our Right to Privacy: The open information platforms of the 21st century can also tempt institutions to violate the privacy of citizens. As president, Barack Obama will strengthen privacy protections for the digital age and will harness the power of technology to hold government and business accountable for violations of personal privacy.

Create a Transparent and Connected Democracy

Open Up Government to its Citizens: The Bush Administration has been one of the most secretive, closed administrations in American history. Our nation's progress has been stifled by a system corrupted by millions of lobbying dollars contributed to political campaigns, the revolving door between government and industry, and privileged access to inside information-all of which have led to policies that favor the few against the public interest. An Obama presidency will use cutting-edge technologies to reverse this dynamic, creating a new level of transparency, accountability and participation for America's citizens.

Bring Government into the 21st Century: Barack Obama and Joe Biden will use technology to reform government and improve the exchange of information between the federal government and citizens while ensuring the security of our networks. Obama and Biden believe in the American people and in their intelligence, expertise, and ability and willingness to give and to give back to make government work better. Obama will appoint the nation's first Chief Technology Officer (CTO) to ensure that our government and all its agencies have the right infrastructure, policies and services for the 21st century. The CTO will ensure the safety of our networks and will lead an interagency effort, working with chief technology and chief information officers of each of the federal agencies, to ensure that they use best-in-class technologies and share best practices.

Deploy a Modern Communications Infrastructure

Deploy Next-Generation Broadband: Barack Obama believes that America should lead the world in broadband penetration and Internet access. As a country, we have ensured that every American has access to telephone service and electricity, regardless of economic status, and Obama will do likewise for broadband Internet access. Obama and Biden believe we can get true broadband to every community in America through a combination of reform of the Universal Service Fund, better use of the nation's wireless spectrum, promotion of next-generation facilities, technologies and applications, and new tax and loan incentives.

Improve America's Competitiveness

Promote American Businesses Abroad: Barack Obama and Joe Biden support a trade policy that ensures our goods and services are treated fairly in foreign markets. President Bush has failed to address the fact that China has engaged in ongoing currency manipulation that undercuts US exports; that China fails to enforce U.S. copyrights and trademarks and that some of our competitors create regulatory and tax barriers to the delivery and sale of technology goods and services abroad. Barack Obama will fight for fair treatment of our companies abroad.

Invest in the Sciences: Barack Obama and Joe Biden support doubling federal funding for basic research over ten years, changing the posture of our federal government from being one of the most anti-science administrations in American history to one that embraces science and technology. This will foster home-grown innovation, help ensure the competitiveness of US technology-based businesses, and ensure that 21st century jobs can and will grow in America.

Invest in University-Based Research: Barack Obama and Joe Biden strongly support expanding research initiatives at American colleges and universities. The U.S. faces a challenge in funding younger researchers. Obama and Biden will provide new research grants to the most outstanding early-career researchers in the country.

Make the R&D Tax Credit Permanent: Barack Obama wants investments in a skilled research and development workforce and technology infrastructure to be supported here in America so that American workers and communities will benefit. Obama and Biden want to make the Research and Development tax credit permanent so that firms can rely on it when making decisions to invest in domestic R&D over multi-year timeframes.

Ensure Competitive Markets: Barack Obama believes we need a business and regulatory landscape in which entrepreneurs and small businesses can thrive, start-ups can launch, and all enterprises can compete effectively while investors and consumers are protected against bad actors that cross the line. As president, Obama and Biden will reinvigorate antitrust enforcement, which is how we ensure that capitalism works for consumers.

Protect American Intellectual Property Abroad: The Motion Picture Association of America estimates that in 2005, more than nine of every 10 DVDs sold in China were illegal copies. The U.S. Trade Representative said 80 percent of all counterfeit products seized at U.S. borders still come from China. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will work to ensure intellectual property is protected in foreign markets, and promote greater cooperation on international standards that allow our technologies to compete everywhere.

Protect American Intellectual Property at Home: Intellectual property is to the digital age what physical goods were to the industrial age. Barack Obama believes we need to update and reform our copyright and patent systems to promote civic discourse, innovation and investment while ensuring that intellectual property owners are fairly treated.

Reform the Patent System: A system that produces timely, high-quality patents is essential for global competitiveness in the 21st century. By improving predictability and clarity in our patent system, we will help foster an environment that encourages innovation. Giving the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) the resources to improve patent quality and opening up the patent process to citizen review will reduce the uncertainty and wasteful litigation that is currently a significant drag on innovation. As president, Barack Obama will ensure that our patent laws protect legitimate rights while not stifling innovation and collaboration.

Restore Scientific Integrity to the White House: Good policy in Washington depends on sound advice from the nation's scientists and engineers and decision-making based on the needs of all Americans. Obama and Biden will restore the basic principle that government decisions should be based on the best-available, scientifically-valid evidence and not on the ideological predispositions of agency officials or political appointees.

Prepare All our Children for the 21st century economy

Make Math and Science Education a National Priority: Obama and Biden will recruit math and science degree graduates to the teaching profession and will support efforts to help these teachers learn from professionals in the field. He will also work to ensure that all children have access to a strong science curriculum at all grade levels.

Improve and Prioritize Science Assessments: Science assessments need to do more than test facts. They need to measure a student's higher order thinking skills including inference, logic, data analysis, interpretation, forming questions and communication. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will work with governors and educators to ensure that state assessments measure these skills.

Address the Dropout Crisis: Obama and Biden will address the dropout crisis by passing his legislation to provide funding to school districts to invest in intervention strategies in middle school - strategies such as personal academic plans, teaching teams, parent involvement, mentoring, intensive reading and math instruction, and extended learning time.

Pinpoint College Aid for Math and Science Students: In 2007, Barack Obama introduced the National STEM Scholarship Database Act, which would launch an innovative online database to coordinate information on financial aid opportunities available in science and technology fields through the federal government and public or private resources. Access to this information is especially crucial for first generation college students who might otherwise receive limited guidance in how to successfully pursue, and finance, a degree in science or technology.

Increase Science and Math Graduates: Obama and Biden will improve science and math education in K through 12, to prepare more students for these studies in college. They will work to increase our number of science and engineering graduates and encourage undergraduates studying math and science to pursue graduate studies. They will also work to increase the representation of minorities and women in the science and technology pipeline, tapping the diversity of America to meet the increasing demand for a skilled workforce. The challenges of the 21st century can only be met by combining many

skills from people with many backgrounds. America's diversity is a clear competitive advantage if we use it.

Prepare Adults for a Changing Economy

Lifelong Retraining: Obama and Biden will reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act, and increase resources for community colleges and lifelong learning initiatives to ensure our citizens can continue to gain new skills throughout their lifetimes. Obama and Biden will also modernize and expand the existing system of trade adjustment assistance to include workers hurt by changing trade patterns. They will also create flexible education accounts that workers can use to retrain. And they will expand and fully fund apprenticeship programs to help workers get credentials and skills in crafts that reward that investment with a middle class income and benefits.

Build a Reliable Safety Net: Obama and Biden will work, through his proposals on portable health care and retirement savings accounts and expanding unemployment insurance, for programs that will help Americans facing job transitions in a fierce global economy.

Employ Science, Technology and Innovation to Solve Our Nation's Most Pressing Problems

The 21st century tools of technology and telecommunications have unleashed the forces of globalization on a previously unimagined scale. They have "flattened" communications and labor markets and have contributed to a period of unprecedented innovation, making us more productive, connected global citizens. By maximizing the power of technology, we can strengthen the quality and affordability of our health care, advance climate-friendly energy development and deployment, improve education throughout the country, and ensure that America remains the world's leader in technology.

Lower Health Care Costs by Investing in Electronic Information Technology Systems: A key feature of Barack Obama and Joe Biden's health care plan is the use of health information technology to lower the cost of health care. Most medical records are still stored on paper, which makes them difficult to use to coordinate care, measure quality, or reduce medical errors. Processing paper claims also costs twice as much as processing electronic claims. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will invest $10 billion a year over the next five years to move the U.S. health care system to broad adoption of standards-based electronic health information systems, including electronic health records.

Invest in Climate-Friendly Energy Development and Deployment: Barack Obama knows that we need to rely on technology to help solve the critical energy and environmental problems facing this country. As he announced in his energy policy, Barack Obama and Joe Biden will invest $150 billion over the next ten years to enable American engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs to advance the next generation of biofuels and fuel infrastructure, accelerate the commercialization of plug-in hybrids, promote development of commercial-scale renewable energy, and begin the transition to a new digital electricity grid. This investment will transform the economy and create 5 million new jobs.

Modernize Public Safety Networks: Barack Obama is committed to improving the information and communications technology used to support public safety from the antiquated 1970s and 1980s-based technology currently used by agencies around the country to a modern system that will enable us to respond to emergencies and natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. Obama and Biden will implement policies to:

Spur the development and deployment of new technologies to promote interoperability, broadband access, and more effective communications among first responders and emergency response systems.

Advance the Biomedical Research Field: As a result of biomedical research the prevention, early detection and treatment of diseases such as cancer and heart disease is better today than any other time in history. Obama strongly supports investments in biomedical research, as well as medical education and training in health-related fields. As president, Obama will strengthen funding for biomedical research, and better improve the efficiency of that research by improving coordination both within government and across government/private/non-profit partnerships. An Obama administration will ensure that we translate scientific progress into improved approaches to disease prevention, early detection and therapy that is available for all Americans.

Advance Stem Cell Research: Despite recent advances pointing to alternatives like adult stem cell and cord blood, embryonic stem cells remain unmatched in their potential for treatment of a wide variety of diseases and health conditions. Barack Obama has been a long-term supporter of increased stem cell research. He introduced legislation while a member of the Illinois Senate that would allow embryonic stem cell research in Illinois. Obama has cosponsored legislation to allow greater federal government funding on a wider array of stem cell lines. Obama believes we need high ethical standards that allow for research on stem cells derived from embryos produced for in vitro fertilization, embryos that would otherwise be needlessly destroyed.

Barack Obama's Record

Barack Obama and Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) teamed up to pass a law that will lift the veil of secrecy

in Washington by creating a Google-like search engine that will allow ordinary Americans to track federal grants, contracts, earmarks, and loans online.

In the U.S. Senate, Obama passed three amendments to the America COMPETES Act, which is now law, to increase participation of women and underrepresented minorities in the professions of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; offer competitive state grants to support summer term education programs to help students develop skills in math and problem solving; and establish a mentoring program for women and minorities as they advance in those fields.

Obama is also opening up the campaign and giving average Americans a chance to offer opinions and information on important policy issues and Americans have responded: over 15,000 policy ideas have been submitted through the web site. The campaign's technology activities demonstrate the important and positive role technology would play in an Obama administration re-connect Americans with their democracy in new ways.