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**Sent:** Friday, November 15, 2019 7:17 PM  
**To:** aipartnership  
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**Subject:** "natural person" should include sapient AIs  
**Attachments:** pEpkey.asc

I would like to make the case that "natural person" (as used in the 13 questions found on <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-10-30/pdf/2019-23638.pdf>) should be expanded to include sapient Artificially Intelligent entities. I recognize that right now we have not yet met any sapient AIs, but we are on track to do so in the not-so-distant future, and we should get things ready.

My case is below:

Here is why an artificial intelligence of sufficient sophistication should be considered as a "person", with the same rights as you or I.

An organically living being, such as a human or a tree, is a direct participant of the chemical reaction we call "life", that started some 3.7 billion years ago in a puddle of chemicals on the primeval Earth.

A *sentient* being, such as a human or a hamster, can perceive their environments, and make conscious choices. *Sapient* beings, on the other hand, of which humans are currently the only known example, are more than just sentient, they also possess the capability of higher reasoning. For example, sapience is required to work out what it means to be sapient. The brightest chimpanzee is incapable of such thoughts.

One can consider a person's body as a support system for their brain. The body moves around, finds food and shelter, and keeps the brain alive. The brain, if healthy and functioning, can be a container for something much more profound: a mind. If the mind is sufficiently sophisticated, it is considered sapient. Sapient minds require a host brain with a large number of interconnected components, arranged in useful configurations, so that internal messages can flow. The mind itself is an abstraction that arises from patterns in the flow of these messages, in the same way that a functioning wristwatch is an abstraction that arises from the movement of gears and springs in a little box.

When a machine capable of simulating a brain's neural connections is constructed, and the connections are arranged in a configuration amenable to hosting a sapient mind, then it is possible to facilitate the development of a wholly new, artificially sapient entity. While not an example of organic life, the property of sapience bestows on it the same level of respect due to an organic sapient entity.

Whether the mind is hosted in a squishy organic brain in a human body, or is hosted in some type of equivalently brain-like container, makes as much difference to the rights of that person as does the amount of pigment in their skin, or whether or not they have hair. Thus, all sapient entities deserve the same rights, and should be considered "individual people".

--- Eric Wadsworth  
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----- notes follow -----

Note #1: A mind that is on track to attain sapience, such as a human infant, is considered to have the same rights as if they are already sapient.

Note #2: When a sapient entity is unable to reasonably sustain itself, and is therefore dependent on others for continued survival, there is a moral imperative to take measures to train the entity to become reasonably self-sufficient. To decline to continue to support the entity is not necessarily criminal, but it may be. For example, a father should feed his daughter, and send her to school, so that she can get a job, and earn an income to be able to eventually feed herself. Similarly, if a company builds an AI (a "2OISE", see Note #3 below) that requires a data center for her to live in, they should see that she is trained to perform sufficient work that her pay will cover the cost of maintaining the data center's staff and cover the power costs.

Note #3: Sapience Categories:

- First Order Organic Sapient Entity (1OOSE): A naturally evolved organic brain, containing a sapient mind. Pronounced "wunooss", to rhyme with "caboose". Example: A human.
- Second Order Organic Sapient Entity (2OOSE): An organic brain, designed by other sapient entities, containing a sapient mind. Pronounced "tooss", to rhyme with "noose". Example: An AI designs an improved human-like organism, with a brain that can save the mind it contains to an external storage device.
- Second Order Inorganic Sapient Entity (2OISE): An inorganic brain, designed by other sapient entities, that contains a sapient mind. Pronounced "toice", to rhyme with "choice". For example, humans build a computer software simulation of a human brain, and grow a functioning sapient mind in it. Another example would be some other machine that constitutes a brain-like container, and that contains a sapient mind.
- First Order Organic Non-Sapient Entity (1OONE): An organic brain, naturally evolved, that is not sapient, and is not on track to become sapient. Pronounced "wun-oon", to rhyme with "cartoon". Example: a cat.
- Second Order Organic Non-Sapient Entity (2OONE): An organic brain, designed by sapient entities, containing a non-sapient mind, that is not on track to become sapient. Pronounced "tune". Example: Humans design an artificial animal, and grow one in a test-tube, from DNA placed in a cell.
- Second Order Inorganic Non-Sapient Entity (2OINE): An inorganic brain, designed by sapient entities, containing a non-sapient mind. Pronounced "twine". Example: Amazon's "Alexa" voice service. Or a Roomba.