

I'm Andrew Yang, and I'm running for President as a Democrat in 2020 because I fear for the future of our country.

Eight years ago, I had just sold my education company and married my wife, Evelyn. The country was struggling through the aftermath of the financial crisis, so I made it my mission to bring jobs back to the communities that were hit hardest. I saw firsthand how many of our children didn't see economic opportunity at home and were moving away to the same cities. That's why I founded Venture for America (VFA), an organization dedicated to rejuvenating local economies. By helping entrepreneurs create jobs in cities like Baltimore, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, we could create strong economies throughout the country and give children a reason to stay.

In its first year, VFA trained 40 Fellows; by 2017, more than 500 VFA Fellows and alumni had launched dozens of companies and helped create thousands of jobs across the country. The Obama White House even named me a Champion of Change in 2012 and a Presidential Ambassador for Global Entrepreneurship in 2015.

Despite the success I saw with VFA, as I worked in these cities, I came to a terrible realization: automation is destroying jobs, and entire regions are being left behind. For years, I believed new business formation was the answer—if we could train a new generation of entrepreneurs and create the right jobs in the right places, we could stop the downward spiral of growing income inequality, poverty, unemployment, and hopelessness.

I'm proud of the work I did at VFA. But during my time there, it became clear to me that job creation will not outpace the massive impending job loss due to automation. I was pouring water into a bathtub with a giant hole ripped in the bottom.

So I went to Washington, and I visited Congressional leaders. I presented them with the hard facts. 78% of Americans are living paycheck to paycheck, 40% cannot afford an unexpected \$400 bill, and so many live one medical emergency away from bankruptcy. A wave of automation is coming that will displace even more American jobs. I asked, "What will our government do?" I was met with two ineffective answers: we need to study it further, and we must invest in job retraining programs. The truth is that we've already studied it extensively and know that up to 30% of jobs are at risk of automation, and government-run retraining programs have a success rate of between 0 and 15%. Washington was not going to help.

I'm not a career politician—I'm a job creator who understands the economy. It's clear to me, and to many of the nation's best job creators, that we need to make an unprecedented change, and we need to make it now. But the establishment isn't willing to take the necessary, bold steps. As president, my first priority will be to implement the big solutions America needs to get back on track. To start, I'd enact the Freedom Dividend: \$1,000 a month, no strings attached, for every American 18 and older, paid for by a new tax on the companies benefiting most from automation. Companies like Amazon are paying \$0 in taxes; it's no wonder our economy doesn't work for us when the biggest winners aren't paying their fair share.

I'm the father of two young boys. I know the country my sons will grow up in is going to be very different from the one I grew up in, and I want to look back at my life knowing I did everything in my power to create the kind of future our children deserve—one with an America of opportunity, freedom, and equality. We need to rewrite the rules of the 21st century economy to work for us, the American people, with solutions powerful enough to actually improve our lives.

A crisis is underway—we have to work together to stop it, or we risk losing the heart of our country. The stakes have never been higher. Once I understood the magnitude of this problem, and that even our most forward-thinking politicians were not going to take the steps necessary to stem the tide, I had no choice but to act. That's why I'm running for president.

I urge you to join me. No one else is going to build a better world for us. We're going to have to do it ourselves. Together.

-Andrew Yang