

Palzewicz campaign: Will technology replace people in the future?

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Brookfield, WI - We live in an age of technology, with automation and artificial intelligence no longer being things of science fiction, but the reality of today's life. Robotic surgery has forever changed healthcare, and assembly lines in factories no longer require workers. The massive change requires us to look at what work will be in the years and decades ahead. Democrat Tom Palzewicz, running for the Fifth Congressional District seat, believes America needs to plan now for the future and make the necessary adjustments.

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the mid-19th Century, America has been transformed from a largely agrarian society into an industrial power and then into a technological leader as the world economy has become global. Where do people fit into the new equation? What will work look like? Will there be any need for people? More importantly, for Palzewicz, will the ever-expanding divide between rich and poor and the elimination of the middle class spell the end of the American dream?

"We need to start thinking about what work really means, and what's the value that people play in society?" Palzewicz asks. "In America, people have always been our greatest asset, people from all countries and cultures. We are the great melting pot of the world. As automation takes more and more jobs away, we need to think about workers and what becomes of them. As we move forward, we need to look at what work will look like and examine the value of work."

Most people agree that if you do not work, you don't eat. It's a familiar phrase. If there is no job, or automation replaces a vast majority of the workforce, we lessen the opportunity to earn a living wage considerably.

“I had gone through periods in my life when it was difficult to make ends meet, as have so many others,” said Palzewicz. “It was a challenge sometimes to keep a roof over your head or even keep fed. I had periods when health insurance wasn’t available to me, and I didn’t necessarily have the money to pay out-of-pocket. I was going to school, and the potential was there, but the reality was I didn’t have the employment that would offer me the opportunity to own a home and raise a family. My wife, Terri, and I had challenges.

“We need to look seriously at universal basic income. Healthcare, food and shelter are your starting points. With the advent of automation, jobs will disappear and incomes with that. We can agree that people need to earn their keep.”

Where people will fit into the system is the key question to be answered.

“The question then becomes, as a society, what do we consider to be the value of a person?”, Palzewicz asks. “Who gets the benefit of automation and what’s going to be the disparity between capital and labor. That is the ultimate question. At this point, workers will build automation machines that will put them out of work.”

Palzewicz sees the need to restructure education and workforce training to meet the new economic challenges ahead.