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Statement to the U.S. Senate AI Insight Forum on Innovation

Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.

October 24, 2023

Advanced AI presents both dangerous pitfalls and tremendous potential.

A recent study put some possible numbers behind that duality, predicting that 300 million full-time jobs could be replaced by artificial intelligence. But it also suggested that instead of substituting jobs, AI could *complement* or *create* jobs, increase global GDP by seven percent, and catalyze a major productivity boom.¹ Whether these potential gains will be manifest across the domains of education, healthcare, agriculture, and equitably shared—improving the lives of the many rather than the fortunes of the few—is entirely up to us.

We are, in one instance, on the precipice of transformative developments that may be enabled and accelerated by artificial intelligence: a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prevent cancers for more people, decarbonize our economy in the face of climate change, and address seemingly intractable social problems. These same tools and systems, however, are putting those promised opportunities further out of reach by exacting a constellation of harms on us today. We need to set a better course.

Let’s be clear: in too many cases, the uses of AI systems are not advancing American values. They heighten discrimination and produce unequal outcomes. They threaten both individual and national security. They have displaced workers, spread misinformation and libel, led to wrongful incarceration of mothers and fathers, denied mortgage loans to those seeking the American dream, and threatened elections at shocking speeds. These risks and harms may get even worse in the future. But we know they’re already affecting us today.

Until Congress issues clear guidance, the American public will not know or agree on the rules of

¹<https://www.gspublishing.com/content/research/en/reports/2023/03/27/d64e052b-0f6e-45d7-967b-d7be35fabd16.html>

the road. That means everyone from system designers, engineers, researchers, and business leaders to ordinary citizens, many of whom are unaware of how they are affected by AI, lack a clear set of expectations.

Without Congress' explicit guidance and lucid leadership, small businesses are cautious, industry is confused, and academic and private sector researchers don't know where to focus their work. Perhaps most important, the public does not know what they can demand of these systems and how their rights are affected. That means that right now, consumers are using unsafe products. Workers are facing precarity. Our systems are biased, our data gets manipulated without our consent, and researchers are slow to innovate. This status quo is bad for pretty much everyone.

Government inaction is contributing to an environment of confusion and low confidence. The lack of regulation is actually handcuffing innovation.

But many Members of Congress have not been sitting idle over the last few years. And neither has the Biden-Harris Administration and federal agencies. When I served in the White House, I helped shape the "Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights," which I know has served as a resource for Members as well as organizations across the political spectrum.²

Taken together, we have some useful tools for AI governance already on the books that agencies are lifting up and deploying. And in the great remaining gaps, consensus is both necessary and possible.

Some in industry would have us believe that broad social benefit and public safety must be sacrificed at the altar of innovation. The truth is, regulation often *spurs* true innovation—innovation that leverages scientific research and technological development for the betterment of society.

Smart leveraging of the Clean Air Act, for example, encouraged the expansion of the manufacture and use of catalytic converters in automobiles that significantly lowered vehicle exhaust pollution.³ The Clean Water Act pushed industry to innovate to develop our modern wastewater treatments.⁴ Federal Aviation Administration regulations got us planes that dramatically reduced noise pollution.⁵

The governance guardrails that would inspire true innovation today don't have to be partisan. In fact, there's broad, emerging agreement on this issue. It is a consensus I see coming together

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/ai-bill-of-rights/>

³ <https://www.epa.gov/transportation-air-pollution-and-climate-change/history-reducing-air-pollution-transportation>

⁴ <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/TE/TE10079>

⁵ https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/policy_guidance/noise/history

not only on Capitol Hill, as demonstrated by the work of several Members, but also in civil society and industry as well.

Seven points of burgeoning consensus stand out:

- We agree AI systems should be safe and effective for everyone.
- We agree we need data privacy protections.
- We agree you should be notified, at a minimum, when AI systems are being used.
- We agree you should have the freedom to opt out of these systems.
- We agree you should be protected from all forms of discrimination by AI.
- We agree AI systems should work for our national security, not against it.
- We agree we should set the international standards for AI, not let those standards be set for us.

In short, we agree on a lot. During my time in leadership at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, after extensive multisector consultation, we found this similar consensus. We may disagree on a specific policy lever—but I am encouraged by our unity on the underlying principles.

And because we have specific examples for how each of these principles can be operationalized, now is the time to put that consensus to work. We need a forward-looking framework—one that combines clarification of existing laws and regulations with creative new approaches—to develop guardrails for advanced AI centered around the public good.

I'm optimistic because just last year we passed another kind of bipartisan framework for equitable scientific innovation and deployment, the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) Act. ARPA-H shows us how effective it can be when government has put down guardrails in a domain and, therefore, can stimulate equitable innovation. ARPA-H is advancing technology and equity at scale by working in partnership with both academia and industry to create a new choice architecture and value chain for science. That's a lesson we can draw on as we develop our own forward-looking framework for responsible AI development.

If we do this right, we'll not only be the country that builds the AI technologies that change the world, but those same technologies will actually embody, champion, and advance democratic values.

So now is not the time to pause. Now is the time for Congress to act.

Let's pass legislation that protects and sets terms of use for our data. Let's advance laws that ensure accountability and transparency, by authorizing or funding risk assessment tools and auditing frameworks. Let's require basic consumer protections and a duty of care. Let's pass legislation that enables equal opportunity for all and prohibits unjust practices and outcomes like algorithmic discrimination. Let's set up a more even playing field for innovation, so the future is not dominated by the same large players, and new companies can emerge.

The United States is poised to be *the* world leader on AI. We can refuse a false choice between innovation and social benefit. We can choose instead to have workplaces that respect and inspire American workers, products that embody our principles, ensure our freedoms, and protect our rights, and companies that make the United States synonymous with the responsible and equitable use of AI tools and systems.

But it's up to the people in this room to set us up for the values-driven innovation we need.