

AI Insight Forum: National Security

Statement of Brian Schimpf Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Anduril Industries

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Leader Schumer, Senators Heinrich, Rounds, and Young, and other distinguished Senators, thank you for the opportunity to participate in today's AI Insight Forum. As the CEO of Anduril Industries, I am honored to represent Anduril and the members of our team.

We appreciate your focus on the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and on defense innovation more broadly. Anduril was founded in 2017 to deliver software-defined technology solutions that utilize AI, autonomy, robotics, and machine learning to the United States military and to allied and partner militaries. These key emerging technologies of the commercial technology industry are forcing a shift in the way wars are initiated, waged, resolved, and deterred. When developed and deployed properly, they can make warfare more proportional, more precise, and less indiscriminate than it has ever been before.

You had the chance earlier today to discuss the risks associated with AI across technology sectors and how to mitigate them. Managing these risks is incredibly important, but we should not lose sight of the enormous upside potential of this technology, particularly for national security purposes. Artificial Intelligence and autonomy make weapons systems far more accurate and precise, increase our understanding of what is happening on the battlefield, and enhance the efficiency and reliability with which warfighters are able to make life and death decisions.

Notably, this national security discussion is not happening in a vacuum. Today, Russia is using AI-enabled systems against Ukraine. And each day on both sides of the Pacific, the norms of military AI are being crafted into computer code. The Chinese Communist Party is seeking to become the world AI leader by 2030, which means that as we speak, Beijing is aggressively building its own AI-powered autonomous systems and robotics in all domains and developing AI algorithms to plan and execute military operations. Determining the moral, legal, and ethical standards of AI use on the 21st century battlefield is too important to leave to our adversaries. We must build the critical AI capabilities that our warfighters need for defense and deterrence while simultaneously defining the international rules of the road, which must be grounded in American democratic values.

Make no mistake: today's most pressing national challenges cannot be solved without AI-enabled systems and autonomy at scale. These systems will help to keep our service members safe and empower them to make better decisions at the speed of modern warfare.

As you consider future policy frameworks, I would encourage you to consider three main points that will strengthen our national security with AI tools:

- Enable greater adoption of AI-enabled technology and begin fielding it at scale,
- Focus policy making and regulation on how AI-enabled military systems are employed rather than how they are developed, and
- Ensure a wide array of operational end users and defense technology leaders have a seat at the table when shaping policy on the use of AI by the Department of Defense (DoD).

First, it is critical that our military services **accelerate adoption of AI-enabled technology and field it at scale**. Fielding AI-enabled technology is the only way to learn how best to employ it, and the United States military can and should lead the way in demonstrating responsible military use of AI and autonomous systems. Risks and opportunities will inevitably arise during fielding and experimentation. And mitigating risks and increasing predictability in the use of these weapons systems is only possible through continuous testing and iteration.

This is not a call for fielding unproven systems, however. The rigorous process of testing, evaluation, verification, and validation in the DoD still applies to AI software just as it does to any other traditional weapons system. This is how the DoD builds predictability into the systems it employs and establishes guardrails on how systems will or will not operate. And here, Congress and Department of Defense deserve credit for leading the way on regulations and policies that have for decades ensured reliable and safe usage of autonomous weapons that are in use right now, such as shipboard defensive systems.

The DoD's existing, rigorous test and evaluation regimen provides us with predictable weapons systems, and this builds the trust and certainty that we need when people's lives are on the line. Today, we already have a number of robust policy frameworks in place when it comes to AI-enabled defense systems. We have long had anti-radiation weapons that seek out enemy systems emitting certain signals, for example, and we have enabled these weapons to strike autonomously under certain scenarios outlined by battlefield commanders. Additionally, we have defensive autonomous systems that keep our troops safe by detecting and destroying enemy missiles and drones. And we have dramatically reduced the number of civilian casualties through the use of "smart weapons" enabled by advanced technology.

By fielding AI systems at scale today, our warfighters will learn how to operate these systems, train rigorously on them, and understand how to employ these tools effectively and responsibly when they are needed most.

Second, when considering policy frameworks around the DoD's use of AI-enabled systems, Congress should **focus on how these systems are employed**, rather than how they are developed. This is how we have regulated the employment of technology in warfare for centuries, and it is also how we have outlawed indiscriminate means of warfare. These frameworks will increase the accountability of those responsible for employing AI technologies, not dilute it.

AI-enabled systems are here to stay, both in the commercial world and on the battlefield. Technological advancements will continue to be developed, both by the United States and our allies and by our adversaries. Our adversaries will not be slowing down nor heeding calls to pause. And while trying to regulate what technology advancements can and cannot be made is challenging, and can frequently stifle innovation, focusing our policies and regulations around the employment of these advancements is doable, especially when it comes to defense applications.

Unlike commercial technologies, defense systems are used by a relatively small number of highly-trained individuals, guided by a strict chain of command and operating in defined environments with rules of engagement. Here too, the Department and Congress have shown leadership and should continue to build policy frameworks that establish processes and standards for the use of AI-enabled systems in combat, frameworks that delineate who will be accountable for their employment.

Finally, as Congress oversees the use of AI-enabled systems, we must **ensure that end users, the test and evaluation community, and the defense technology industry are in the room with policy leaders when crafting policies and regulations.** Policy frameworks are good at regulating the use and impact of a particular technology, but effective policy must involve leaders who understand the technology itself and the users who will employ it. Establishing processes and standards informed by those closest to the problem set and most familiar with the employment, capabilities and limitations of a particular technology is the best way to ensure predictability and build trust that a system is performing the way we expect it would in combat. Empowering a wide community of technology leaders and end users to inform policy will drive forward a set of principles about who will be accountable for these systems when they are used including commanders, contractors, and operators employing the system itself.

We appreciate Congress's thoughtful approach and attention to these critical issues. It takes commitment and leadership to mobilize large-scale efforts like these, and to resource, organize, and oversee the transformation of our military into an AI-enabled and more effective fighting force to meet today's threat.

Thank you.