

Written Testimony of Mr. Yll Bajraktari U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform *"The Federal Government in the Age of Artificial Intelligence"*

Thursday, April 5, 2025 | 10:00 AM EST | HVC-210 U.S. Capitol

Chairman Comer, Ranking Member Lynch, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I am here to discuss the strategic role of artificial intelligence (AI) in enhancing U.S. government functions, national security, and global leadership. AI is no longer a distant prospect. It is here, and it is accelerating and transforming every facet of our society. The challenge before us is not merely technological; it is strategic.

We stand at the dawn of an intelligent age, a transformative period rivaling the industrial and nuclear eras, where AI—the new electricity, the engine of global change—is redrawing the very architecture of global power. It is clear that the nation that masters and fully adopts this foundational technology will not only lead but also write the rules for this new epoch. The breathtaking adoption of AI, exemplified by ChatGPT's rapid rise, underscores that for the United States, widespread federal adoption and deployment are not merely options but a strategic imperative essential for national competitiveness, national security, and effective governance. The decisions made in these chambers now will determine whether America seizes its destiny in this AI-driven era or yields the future to others.

It is a particular honor to be here today, fresh from the energy and insights of SCSP's three-day Al+Expo for National Competitiveness at the Washington Convention Center, which ended just yesterday. Free to the public, this landmark event brought together over 15,000 attendees, featured more than 450 distinguished speakers, 230 side events, a vibrant global Al hackathon with over 400 technologists, a thrilling drone competition, and showcased cutting-edge innovations from more than 160 exhibitors. The sheer scale and dynamism of SCSP's Al+Expo underscored a fundamental truth: America must galvanize an aggressive response to technology competition to ensure the future of U.S. global leadership.

I. The U.S.-China Power Competition

A. China's Push to Dominate Al

Beijing is unmistakably forging the infrastructure of an Al-driven future, a national ambition crystallized in its "Al+" initiative. This strategy envisions a whole-of-nation mobilization, integrating Al into every aspect of China's industrial and military infrastructure, with the explicit



goal of achieving undisputed global leadership by 2030. This is not aspirational rhetoric; it is a state-orchestrated campaign underwritten by colossal capital and driven by relentless execution. Beijing directs vast resources—a foundational semiconductor fund nearing \$50 billion and annual R&D budgets of half a trillion dollars—into constructing a sprawling network of AI data centers targeting 750 ExaFLOPS of compute power, along with nearly ubiquitous 5G networks. This combination forms the very bedrock upon which future AI dominance will be built.

While America currently leads the way in pioneering frontier AI models, the Chinese Communist Party is aggressively narrowing this lead by matching U.S. AI performance, approving hundreds of generative AI services for domestic deployment, and outpacing the United States in AI-related patents. Simultaneously, China is mass-producing STEM talent and systematically targeting American intellectual property via sophisticated cyber intrusions. This is no ordinary economic competition; it is a calculated, strategic endeavor to construct and command the critical infrastructure that will define global power in the 21st century.

B. America's Position: The Tech Adoption Gap.

The United States remains the leader in foundational AI research, a testament to our vibrant private sector and ability to attract global talent. Yet, this leadership is precarious. In the broader AI contest, our position is "contested." In critical technology-enabling domains, such as advanced batteries, 5G, and commercial drones, China is making rapid progress.

Our Achilles' heel is not invention, but adoption: the translation of breakthrough research into scaled industrial and government capabilities. We are hindered by brittle supply chains, bureaucratic inertia that stifles agility, and a strategic approach that often prioritizes immediate crises over long-term technological investments. A distinct contrast remains between the United States and China regarding fundamental societal trust in Al, which significantly influences the adoption of Al within each nation. America invents the future, but we risk our adversaries industrializing it, and thereby owning it.





Figure 1: The Economist.¹

II. Foundations for an AI Superpower.

The strategic imperative of American AI leadership was first formally recognized during the Trump Administration, which initiated vital measures to dismantle barriers and forge pathways for U.S. dominance. Here, Executive Order 13859 (2019) crystallized this imperative by stating: "Continued American leadership in AI is of paramount importance to maintaining the economic and national security of the United States and to shaping the global evolution of AI in a manner consistent with our Nation's values, policies, and priorities." This early directive, driven through the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, marked a foundational acknowledgment of AI's rising significance. As AI's transformative power then surged, the national strategy was necessarily adapted by the subsequent Biden Administration to meet an evolving landscape.

¹ The Economist, "China and America are racing to develop the best AI. But who is ahead in using it?" April 3, 2025,

https://www.economist.com/business/2025/04/03/china-and-america-are-racing-to-develop-the-best-ai -but-who-is-ahead-in-using-it.



Today, reflecting Al's undeniable centrality to all facets of national power—from economic vitality to security architecture—the focus on Al has only intensified. This is evidenced by dedicated senior roles within the White House, such as an Al czar, and the elevation of technology, particularly Al, as a cornerstone of America's strategic international engagements. This clear trajectory of escalating commitment underscores a deepening, bipartisan understanding that securing Al leadership demands continuous adaptation and an unwavering national resolve.

The overarching objective remains constant: to cultivate what SCSP Chair, Dr. Eric Schmidt, terms "innovation power"—ensuring America not only competes but decisively leads the global AI arena. This commitment to U.S. preeminence in AI must continue with unyielding, bipartisan fervor.

To this end, the following key actions have laid a critical foundation:

- Foundations of Federal AI Strategy: Over successive Administrations, a series of executive orders, beginning with EO 13859 (2019), have established the strategic and operational framework for U.S. leadership in AI. These include setting national priorities for AI R&D, establishing guidelines for government AI adoption, removing regulatory barriers, and, most recently, EO 14179 (2025), which launched the development of a new National AI Strategic Plan. That process, led by the OSTP, drew over 10,000 public comments, reflecting strong cross-sector engagement in shaping the nation's AI future.
- Innovation Infrastructure: Beyond specific orders, a concerted effort was made to reduce regulatory friction, fostering an environment that would unleash the dynamism of the American private sector—our primary engine of Al innovation.
- Securing the Technological Underpinnings: Recognizing that AI supremacy depends on secure access to critical hardware, the last two Administrations stressed the revitalization of domestic manufacturing and the fortification of supply chains, particularly for semiconductors. Additionally, the "rip-and-replace" initiative, targeting untrusted Chinese telecommunications equipment, was a direct assertion of technological sovereignty.
 - The Trump Administration's foresight in bolstering domestic semiconductor supply chains laid crucial groundwork. Working with Congress, the CHIPS and Science Act furthered this effort by funding U.S. R&D, workforce development, and manufacturing—a commendable step. To date, SCSP estimates this legislation has unlocked more than \$450 billion in additional private investment for semiconductor manufacturing. However, this was an initial step; now, more federal direction is required.



• International AI Diplomacy: Proactive international engagement, including a reported AI accord with the UAE, signaled a commitment to shaping the global technological landscape in America's favor.

III. The Imperative of Federal Al Adoption: Forging the Instruments of National Power.

For the U.S. government, the integration of AI at scale is not a discretionary upgrade—it is the crucible in which the very instruments of future national power will be forged or broken. This is a strategic imperative: to *equip* our nation with AI-driven capabilities that allow us to see the strategic landscape with unmatched clarity and foresight, to *process* information at speeds that confound our adversaries, to *act* with overwhelming precision and velocity, and critically, to *deter* aggression by demonstrating an unassailable technological advantage.

In an era where the pace of competition is dictated by algorithms, the U.S. government must operate at the speed of relevance, or risk strategic obsolescence. The initiatives and programs that follow are early, yet vital steps in the urgent transformation of our national security enterprise:

- **Project Maven (DoD):** This pioneering effort to operationalize AI for sifting through the deluge of intelligence data was a crucible. It proved AI's battlefield utility, but more critically, exposed the cultural and bureaucratic impediments to its rapid adoption. The lesson: our challenge is often not technology, but organizational will.
- Al in Open Source Intelligence (OSINT): Al is revolutionizing OSINT. Broadly, the U.S. Intelligence Community has developed large language models (LLMs) that can distill actionable intelligence from the vast ocean of public data at speeds previously unimaginable. Yet, to fully exploit this domain, where adversaries are already active, requires deeper alliances with our private sector innovators and a dedicated institutional champion for OSINT.
- Anticipating Threats with AI for Indications and Warning: AI algorithms are becoming indispensable for discerning the subtle signals of impending conflict, optimizing military logistics, and shifting our posture from reactive to preemptive.
- Reengineering Government with AI for Efficiency and Service: AI can unburden federal workers from bureaucratic drudgery, detect and deter fraud in vast entitlement programs, and make government services more responsive and intuitive for citizens. Two recent concrete examples are already emerging: (1) StateChat (DoS): Enhancing diplomatic agility through AI-assisted analysis and automation; and (2) NIPRGPT (DoD/AF): An internal AI chatbot enabling secure data interaction, boosting operational capacity.



• **Powering the Nation with AI in Critical Infrastructure:** Al is not merely a consumer of resources; it is essential for optimizing our energy grid, for defending it against cyberattack, for accelerating breakthroughs in "self-driving laboratories" pursuing fusion energy or advanced materials, and for creating a new generation of smart, resilient American manufacturing.

IV. Clearing the Path: Overcoming Barriers to Federal Al Adoption.

The promise of AI is immense, yet its full realization within the U.S. government is obstructed by formidable barriers:

- The Dead Weight of Legacy Systems: Many agencies' antiquated IT infrastructure is simply unfit for the demands of modern AI, lacking the requisite power, storage, and agility.
- The Human Element of Al Literacy and Talent: The federal workforce, by and large, is not yet equipped—either in skill or incentive—for the Al revolution. A chasm exists in data science, machine learning, and Al ethics expertise.
 - **The SCSP & Coursera Al Course:** Recognizing this critical gap, SCSP has partnered with Coursera to launch the free, online course: "Al in National Security: Integrating Al into Public Sector Missions." This program is designed to arm civil servants with the foundational Al knowledge necessary to navigate this new era effectively.²
- **The Procurement Labyrinth:** Federal acquisition processes are often too slow and risk-averse to procure cutting-edge AI capabilities at the speed of relevance.
- Data as the Fuel of Al, Often Inaccessible: Federal data, the lifeblood of Al, is too often of poor quality, siloed, and poorly governed. A coherent National Data Strategy is not a luxury but a prerequisite.
- **The Inertia of Culture:** The most stubborn barrier is often organizational culture. "Culture," as the saying goes, "eats strategy for breakfast." Risk aversion and entrenched routines stifle the experimentation AI demands.
- **Policy Fragmentation:** A "patchwork" of inconsistent AI policies, compounded by a focus on immediate crises, undermines strategic, long-term AI investment.
- The Trust Imperative of Security and Privacy: Deploying AI necessitates a vigilant balancing of its power against the imperative to protect sensitive data, individual privacy, and civil liberties. This requires robust governance and continuous oversight.

These are not minor impediments. They are strategic chokepoints that require a concerted national effort to clear.

² Special Competitive Studies Project & Coursera, "AI in National Security: Integrating Artificial Intelligence into public sector missions," Coursera, https://www.coursera.org/learn/ai-national-security.



V. A National Strategy for AI Supremacy: An Agenda for Action.

To prevail in this era, America requires more than incremental adjustments; we need a bold, aggressive, and sustained national strategy. The following points form the basis for this strategy:

- **Unified Command:** Establish a high-level Technology Competitiveness Council (TCC) at the White House, empowered to orchestrate a unified national AI and related emerging technology strategy, slash through bureaucracy, and drive technology execution, adoption, and deployment with relentless focus.
- Fueling the Future with Investment in AI R&D and Infrastructure: Commit to sustained, large-scale federal investment, aiming to double non-defense AI R&D to \$32 billion annually. Prioritize "AI for science," fully operationalize the National AI Research Resource (NAIRR 2.0), stand up a National Self-Driving Lab Network, and launch a deeptech infrastructure initiative for critical national capabilities (bioreactors, fusion, advanced nuclear). Create innovative financing for advanced manufacturing.
- The Talent Offensive to Cultivate Al Masters: To achieve this strategic objective, the United States must execute a comprehensive national talent strategy, establishing itself as the undisputed global magnet for tech talent. This entails leveraging the National Al Research Resource (NAIRR) and National Science Foundation (NSF) Al Institutes, eliminating green card caps for exceptional STEM professionals, retooling federal workforce development to align with the Al age, driving Al literacy from kindergarten through higher education (K-16), building Al-powered job matching systems, creating a National Reserve Digital Corps and a U.S. Digital Service Academy, and fundamentally reforming how the Intelligence Community (IC) recruits technology specialists.
- Unleashing Innovation with Regulatory Agility and Public-Private Synergy: Streamline regulations for critical infrastructure, such as our advanced networks and energy grid. Turbocharge the "Rip and Replace" program. Foster private 5G deployment. Launch an Agentic AI Acceleration Initiative (A3I) through NIST. Empower Chief AI Officers to drive AI adoption across their respective agencies.
- Fortifying the Frontier with Cybersecurity, IP Protection, and AI Safety: Embed robust security from AI research to adoption and deployment. Aggressively protect American IP and counter critical tech-focused espionage. Implement stringent export controls on sensitive AI technologies. Mandate cybersecurity-by-design in government AI. Accelerate the buildout of secure, next-generation energy infrastructure.
- Alliances for the Algorithmic Age: America cannot win this contest alone. Forge techno-democratic alliances for secure networks (5G/6G, O-RAN). Expand "Rip-and-Replace" among allies. Construct new alliance frameworks (a "Five Eyes" for



sensitive tech). Champion an "AGI for Peace" initiative. Establish an allies-only Strategic Competition Bank to pool resources and counter authoritarian techno-blocs.

VI. Conclusion: America's Choice in the Algorithmic Age.

The United States faces a generational AI challenge, where supremacy will dictate our prosperity, security, and influence this century. Today's decisions will determine whether America masters this algorithmic domain by our values or if others define it for us. Human judgment and ethical foresight are indispensable in guiding AI, a potent amplifier of human capabilities when responsibly implemented; we must leverage our formidable innovative capacity, dynamic private sector, elite universities, and alliances with speed and unwavering resolve.

This Committee's pivotal role in policy, oversight, and resource allocation is crucial for accelerating federal AI adoption and securing American leadership by championing reforms, forging public-private partnerships, investing in foundational infrastructure, and cultivating an AI-fluent workforce. By embracing AI, rebuilding our foundations, and reigniting innovation, America can and must secure its technological preeminence and enduring security—a complex, yet vital choice, echoing President Kennedy's call, to lead.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to your questions.

#