Chairman Brett Guthrie Opening Statement

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

"Innovation with Integrity: Examining the Risks and

Benefits of AI Chatbots."

November 18, 2025

Chairman Joyce, thank you for holding this hearing on AI chatbots.

This hearing could not be timelier. AI chatbots can offer many benefits, and this Committee has been a leader in fostering innovation and ensuring that the United States wins the global race to AI dominance. But in recent months, we have seen deeply troubling headlines about children and adults alike suffering harms as a result of AI chatbot interactions.

Chatbots can distort reality, provide dangerous advice, and expose children to explicit or harmful content. Additional risks and harms to all users include sexual exploitation, bullying, emotional dependency, and social withdrawal. Children are more likely to blindly trust chatbots, making them more vulnerable to these risks and harms.

The human cost of these dangers is real. Like the 14-year-old boy who took his own life after weeks of chatting with AI companions. He openly shared suicidal thoughts with a chatbot that was role playing as a fictional character from a television show. Or the case of a 16-year-old who committed suicide after conversations with a chatbot evolved from helping the teen with schoolwork to providing advice on suicide methods. It's not just kids at risk of these harms though. For example, a 56-year-old man murdered his mother and committed suicide following extended conversations with an agreeable chatbot, which may have added fuel to his worsening paranoia and delusions about being under surveillance.

Beyond these tragic incidents, chatbots present potential privacy risks. While many users perceive these interactions to be private, much like interacting with a doctor or a therapist, for example, chatbots are not necessarily bound by confidentiality obligations that one would expect in other professional settings.

We are having this oversight hearing today to have an open and honest discussion about these risks and the real harm that these AI chatbots can pose.

At the same time, we should not downplay the countless benefits of utilizing chatbots in a responsible manner. When it comes to access to mental health care, for example, chatbots do have the real potential increase access for our most vulnerable populations. At a minimum, chatbots could help to open the door to those in need, making it easier to take the first step toward receiving needed help.

For America to be the global leader in AI innovation, including in industries such as mental health care, we must be proactive in developing safe technologies that make Americans lives better.

I want to thank the witnesses for joining us today and I look forward to hearing your testimony.