

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
Of
Representative Darren Soto
Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce

Hearing on “Building Blockchains: Exploring Web3 And Other Applications For Distributed Ledger Technologies.”

June 7, 2023

As a co-chair of the Congressional Blockchain Caucus, I am pleased that we are addressing critical issues around use cases of blockchain technology, as well as the national security implications of keeping Web3 innovation in America.

In Central Florida, blockchain technology poses an exciting and innovative opportunity to help our diverse community. Blockchain technology can help our local producers and retailers track produce shipments and quickly trace contamination or food borne illness. Digital assets allow constituents to send remittances to loved ones in a secure and cost-effective manner. Travel agents in Orlando could seamlessly accept payments from international clients.

The internet as we know it, commonly referred to as Web 2, is a testament to the power of American ingenuity and innovation. Because our country implemented innovation-friendly policy choices, America became a global digital leader. Even as we work on issues such as data collection and privacy regulations, we approach these issues through the lens of our democratic values.

It is critical that America remains a digital leader, and to do so we must promote innovation and research into applications of blockchain technology. That is why I have supported efforts to coordinate federal use of blockchain technology. I also worked to include language in the budget and the NDAA to require agencies to examine the usefulness of blockchain technologies to carry out certain functions.

This language includes data management and a study on blockchain technology for Veterans’ Electronic Health Records, research and development recognizing the importance and need of blockchain technologies for defense purposes in the Department of Defense, and research into the uses of blockchain in the energy sector with funding for research into blockchain deployment in electric grid modernization and power efficiency through the Department of Energy.

In the Food & Drug Administration, I’ve worked to the potential of Blockchain Food Traceability, specifically, how blockchain technology can be utilized to accurately trace food and mitigate the risks associated with food contaminated outbreaks and to develop effective strategies for controls.