

Statement of Chairman Brett Guthrie
CMT Subcommittee Hearing Titled “AI in Manufacturing: Securing American Leadership
in Manufacturing and the Next Generation of Technologies”
February 12, 2025

I’ll echo the Chairman, it’s great to have so many new Members in the room, and thank you to our witnesses for being here.

Manufacturing is the backbone of the American economy, driving job creation, supporting countless working-class families, and providing the foundation for towns and communities to thrive.

I’ve been around manufacturing my whole life — when I was young, the factory that my father worked in was shut down. I watched men cry around our kitchen table with my dad, as they figured out how to provide for their families.

This taught me a truth I will never forget — people in positions of authority make decisions that affect employees, families, and communities.

The closure of this plant led my parents to open an auto manufacturing company in Bowling Green, Kentucky. I worked alongside my father, my brothers, and some of the men who were left unemployed by the closure of that local factory where I had grown up. At a young age, this showed me just how important these jobs are to American families and how much our nation relies on the manufacturing industry.

And while the U.S. has long been a global leader in manufacturing, recently, that leadership has been neglected. Adversaries, like China, are challenging our competitiveness and threatening our supply chains. We

must act decisively to safeguard our industrial strengths before these risks become reality.

Manufacturers are increasingly harnessing the use of Artificial Intelligence, or AI, to enhance innovation in manufacturing and increase productivity, optimize process management, and improve safety. The use cases and benefits are numerous, and the potential gains are exponential.

Deploying AI on the floors of manufacturing facilities can bring a competitive edge back to American manufacturing.

By reducing the amount of time spent on repetitive, monotonous, and routine tasks, workers can focus on the parts of their jobs that require a greater degree of problem solving and judgment, which require fundamentally human skills. Rather than displacing employees, AI empowers workers to focus on skilled tasks requiring critical thinking and analysis.

While transitions in the workforce are never easy, changing technologies have historically created new jobs that never existed today. These periods have always illustrated America's greatest competitive advantage: our skilled and resilient workforce.

Beyond the factory floor, AI can mitigate risks and help to secure American supply chains. The importance of supply chain security in the face of competitive threats from China cannot be understated. Through dynamic, real-time responses to disruptions, AI can help us mitigate risks and stabilize potential threats in times of uncertainty. A strong manufacturing base and secure supply chains will help to protect all sectors of our economy.

To harness AI's full potential, we will cultivate an environment that fosters innovation, ensuring manufacturers can continue to develop and deploy AI solutions across their operations.

By utilizing AI, the United States can return to its rich history of dominant manufacturing and reestablish our global leadership. In Congress, we must work with industry leaders and workers to spark this next, great American manufacturing revolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield the balance of my time to the subcommittee Vice Chairman, the gentleman from Idaho, Mr. Fulcher.