



'We don't want California to set the rules for AI across the country,' Trump adviser says

Trump adviser Sriram Krishnan framed the AI race as “an existential race with China.”

Sriram Krishnan, senior adviser to President Donald Trump on artificial intelligence, speaks at the POLITICO AI & Tech Summit on Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025.

By **ANTHONY ADRAGNA** and **MOHAR CHATTERJEE**

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A top White House adviser said the Trump administration doesn't want the future of artificial intelligence to be shaped by California — the powerful state whose AI laws could act as a brake to Washington's plans to accelerate the technology.

“We don’t want California to set the rules for AI across the country,” Sriram Krishnan, senior adviser to President Donald Trump on artificial intelligence, said at the POLITICO AI & Tech Summit.

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He was wading into an argument evolving between states and Washington Republicans, who have been seeking ways to put a lid on what they see as overly restrictive state laws.

Krishnan framed the AI race as “an existential race with China,” and said Trump’s policy was meant to permanently shift power to the U.S.

He advocated for the government leaving the private sector largely alone as it experiments with the powerful technology, quoting President Donald Trump’s AI and crypto czar David Sacks in saying: “Let them cook.”

Krishnan helped author the AI Action Plan that Trump rolled out in July.

Trump was, in particular, critical of [copyright enforcement efforts and state-level AI regulations](#) when he launched the plan. That’s driven a wedge between Trump and some [members of his populist base](#) who distrust tech companies. Nevertheless, in terms of keeping the U.S. ahead of its adversaries in the AI race, “there are definitely some things the government alone can do,” Krishnan said at the POLITICO summit.

Congress has insisted it wants to write rules that shape the rapidly evolving sector. Senate Commerce Chair Ted Cruz (R-Texas) has floated the idea of a regulatory “sandbox” that AI companies can use to apply for waivers to federal rules, while House AI de facto leader, Rep. Jay Oberbolte (R-Calif.), is plotting his own legislative push.

Asked about potential job loss from AI, Krishnan said: “Everything that this administration does is going to put the American worker at the heart,” Krishnan said.

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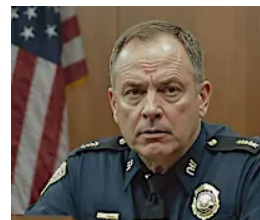


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