Ranking Member Haley Stevens (D-MI)
of the Subcommittee on Research and Technology

Joint Subcommittee Hearing:
Subcommittee on Investigations & Oversight
Subcommittee on Research & Technology

Balancing Knowledge and Governance: Foundations for Effective Risk Management of Artificial Intelligence

October 18, 2023

Thank you to Chairman Obernolte and Ranking Member Foushee for holding this hearing jointly with Chairman Collins and myself, and welcome to our distinguished panel of witnesses.

I have long worked with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to promote trustworthy AI. I have helped pass legislation targeting deepfakes and worked to include trustworthy AI provisions in the CHIPS and Science Act. My Privacy Enhancing Technology Research Act, which passed through this Committee just a few months ago, will support privacy-enhanced datasets and tools for training AI systems.

Today's hearing will follow up on a hearing we held in the Research and Technology Subcommittee last September to discuss AI risks broadly. It is remarkable how rapidly AI technology has advanced just in the last year. Its potential benefits are boundless. Unfortunately, so too are its risks – not just the hypothetical but very much the here and now.

Fortunately, we have seen a swift response by President Biden and our federal agencies to these risks and threats. The Biden Administration released its Framework for an AI Bill of Rights last year and multiple Executive Orders to address AI risks. I was especially pleased to see the National Institute of Standards and Technology released the AI risk management Framework in January, an important step in AI safety that was developed by the 2020 National AI Initiative Act, a Science Committee product. This document is already helping organizations understand and mitigate the risks associated with these technologies, and I am excited to see more major AI companies adopt this as a baseline for AI risk management.

However, we are still in the early days of developing a meaningful governance framework for trustworthy AI. There is a lot of hard work ahead of us to be able to adequately define and measure the risks associated with AI systems. As we learned during our hearing last year, context is critical in AI risk management. Financial AI systems will have different risks than generative AI chatbots. We will need to develop technical standards to mitigate risks across

sectors and use cases. Testing and evaluation of AI systems will also be critical to enable governance. After all, it's very hard to regulate what you can't measure.

I look forward to an update on NIST's work to develop technical standards and AI risk profiles for different sectors and use cases. I am particularly interested in understanding NIST's plans for promoting the adoption of the risk management framework across the public and private sectors.

Another major challenge I hope that we address in this hearing is that of the AI risk management workforce. Federal agencies and regulators who are seeking to address AI-related challenges lack a workforce capable of understanding and responding to AI risks. Most private sector organizations deploying AI systems also lack such expertise. As we focus on development of the AI workforce broadly, we must not ignore this critical segment of the workforce and the particular skills they will require.

I'm looking forward to discussing today what more Congress can do to ensure the United States leads the world in trustworthy artificial intelligence.

Thank you and I yield back.