

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 5, 2026

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Sean Cairncross
Director
Office of the National Cyber Director
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Michael Kratsios
Director
Office of Science and Technology Policy
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Susan Wiles
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretaries Bessent and Lutnick, Directors Cairncross and Vought, and Ms. Wiles:

We write to seek information regarding the reported involvement and influence of industry in watering down the Administration's voluntary and secretive artificial intelligence (AI) regulatory framework, as well as the specifics of the testing and evaluation process established as part of that framework. We are concerned that the Trump Administration is accommodating the interests of Big Tech CEOs rather than addressing the safety and security risks posed by increasingly sophisticated AI systems. The Administration must stop putting industry profits over the interests of the American people.

The AI industry is developing and deploying AI systems capable of enabling sophisticated cyberattacks against our financial institutions and critical infrastructure, among other serious national security risks.¹ Yet the Trump Administration has repeatedly succumbed to pressure from industry and declined to put real safeguards in place.² On the very first day of his term,

¹ New York Times, "Anthropic's new A.I. Model Sets Off Global Alarms," Paul Mozur and Adam Satariano, April 22, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/22/technology/anthropics-mythos-ai.html>.

² Politico Magazine, "The Company Trump Can't Ignore," Sophia Cai and Cheyenne Haslett, September 20, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2026/09/20/anthropic-white-house-ai-01085212>; The Washington Post, "Pressure from Silicon Valley helped block Trump's expected order on AI," Cat Zakrzewski, Ian Duncan, Ellen Nakashima, et al., May 22, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/05/22/last-minute-lobbying-by-tech-industry-officials-led-trump-cancel-ai-order/>; Forbes, "Zuckerberg, Musk, and Huang Reportedly Convinced Trump To Block AI Regulator," Siladitya Ray, September 17, 2026, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/siladityaray/2026/09/17/zuckerberg-musk-and-jensen-reportedly-convinced-trump-to-block-ai-regulator/>.

President Trump revoked an executive order issued by President Biden that established federal standards for evaluating AI system safety and required developers to report information about model development, including safety practices, on an ongoing basis to help ensure companies are prioritizing safety throughout the development process.³ The White House characterized the executive order as a “barrier[] to American AI innovation” in its formal revocation,⁴ parroting claims made by campaign donors in the AI industry and venture capital.⁵

As public concern over AI capabilities mounted this past spring in the wake of newly capable models, the Administration, following industry pressure, reportedly dramatically weakened a new planned federal framework to regulate AI. A draft framework prepared by the Office of the National Cyber Director (ONCD) in May 2026 would have imposed a mandatory 60-day government evaluation process for frontier AI systems prior to limited release to select government agencies and private sector users and an additional 75-day access period for these select users prior to broader public release, with the government retaining the ability to block deployment for systems posing unacceptable risks.⁶ When executives from Google, Anthropic, and OpenAI were shown the draft framework, however, they reportedly “responded negatively,” viewing the proposal as “too prescriptive in regulating model development, release timing and customer eligibility,” with OpenAI explicitly complaining that the framework was “not a light-touch voluntary coordination mechanism.”⁷ In the wake of this industry opposition, the Trump Administration reportedly changed the mandatory framework to a voluntary one which applied to a more limited set of advanced models.⁸ Executives from OpenAI and Microsoft then publicly praised ONCD Director Cairncross as a “capable leader” who is “committed to getting the balance right.”⁹

Later, after Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and xAI CEO Elon Musk reportedly expressed concerns to President Trump that even a voluntary evaluation process would slow down the pace of AI development, the Administration further watered down the framework from a 90-day testing window to 30-day window, which became Executive Order 14409.¹⁰ At a moment that calls for independent, transparent, and enforceable safeguards, the American people have been

³ Reuters, “Trump revokes Biden executive order on addressing AI risks,” David Shepardson, January 21, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/trump-revokes-biden-executive-order-addressing-ai-risks-2025-01-21/>; Executive Order 14110, “Safe Secure and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence,” October 30, 2023, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/11/01/2023-24283/safe-secure-and-trustworthy-development-and-use-of-artificial-intelligence>.

⁴ The White House, “Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence,” January 23, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/removing-barriers-to-american-leadership-in-artificial-intelligence/>.

⁵ Time, “Republicans’ Vow to Repeal Biden’s AI Executive Order Has Some Experts Worried,” Harry Booth, January 19, 2026, <https://time.com/6996927/republicans-repeal-biden-ai-executive-order/>; ProPublica, “Tech Billionaire Marc Andreessen Bet Big on Trump. It’s Paying Off for Silicon Valley,” Jake Pearson, November 5, 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-cfpb-marc-andreessen-silicon-valley>; The Lever, “AI Regulation Was Coming. Then Trump Killed It,” Freddy Brewster, September 24, 2026, <https://www.levernews.com/ai-regulation-was-coming-then-trump-killed-it/>.

⁶ Politico Magazine, “The Company Trump Can’t Ignore,” Sophia Cai and Cheyenne Haslett, September 20, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2026/09/20/anthropic-white-house-ai-01085212>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

left with an entirely voluntary, industry-designed oversight process, in which the implementation guidelines, safety tests, and decision criteria are hidden from the public.

Most recently, Zuckerberg reportedly played a “central role in shaping” the White House Accord on Super Intelligence, a one-page, voluntary commitment to increased internal and external safety controls signed by executives at the leading frontier AI companies.¹¹ Zuckerberg reportedly “circulated a draft” set of principles, while Huang worked to garner support from executives at other companies.¹² Described by President Trump as “morally binding,”¹³ the agreement – and accompanying photo op¹⁴ – is yet another example of the Administration’s cozy relationship with and deference to industry executives, allowing the companies to adopt their preferred approach of industry self-policing instead of being governed under real, enforceable safeguards.

The Administration’s choice to allow industry to dictate the rules of the road on AI safety regulation follows President Trump’s repeated efforts to preempt state laws that establish safety restrictions and other consumer protections for AI systems¹⁵ – preemption efforts that OpenAI has lobbied in favor of.¹⁶ The Federal Trade Commission under President Trump has dismantled or vacated numerous existing investigations and enforcement orders protecting consumers from unfair, harmful, and deceptive uses of AI.¹⁷ And while President Trump cites competition with China as reason to oppose meaningful oversight of the AI industry,¹⁸ the Administration has continued to allow the sale of advanced chips to China.¹⁹ This decision came after direct lobbying from NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang,²⁰ despite bipartisan concern that giving China

¹⁰ *Id.*; The Decoder, “Trump pulls AI safety order after last-minute calls from Musk, Zuckerberg, and Sacks,” Maximilian Schreiner, May 22, 2026, <https://the-decoder.com/trump-pulls-ai-safety-order-after-last-minute-calls-from-musk-zuckerberg-and-sacks/>; Executive Order 14409, “Promoting Advanced Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Security,” June 2, 2026, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/06/promoting-advanced-artificial-intelligence-innovation-and-security/>.

¹¹ Semafor, “How Zuckerberg shaped Trump’s AI industry pledge,” Ashley Gold, September 30, 2026, <https://www.semafor.com/article/09/30/2026/how-zuckerberg-shaped-trumps-ai-industry-pledge>.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ New York Times, “At White House, Trump Asks A.I. Titans to Police Themselves,” Katie Rogers and Cecilia Kang, September 29, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/09/29/us/politics/ai-trump-meta-microsoft-openai.html>.

¹⁴ New York Times, “How Seating at Trump’s A.I. Lunch Reveals Who Has the President’s Ear,” Cecilia Kang, September 29, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/09/29/us/politics/trump-ai-luncheon-guests-ceos.html>.

¹⁵ The White House, “Ensuring A National Policy Framework for Artificial Intelligence,” December 11, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/12/eliminating-state-law-obstruction-of-national-artificial-intelligence-policy/>.

¹⁶ Bloomberg Law, “OpenAI’s Preemption Request Highlights State Laws’ Downsides,” Oliver Roberts, March 31, 2025, <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/openais-preemption-request-highlights-state-laws-downsides>.

¹⁷ The White House, Winning the Race: America’s AI Action Plan,” July 2025, pp. 3-4, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Americas-AI-Action-Plan.pdf>; Reuters, “The FTC enters new chapter in its approach to artificial intelligence and enforcement,” Margaret Krawiec, Todd Kelly, and Chelsea Cooper, February 4, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/ftc-enters-new-chapter-its-approach-artificial-intelligence-enforcement--pracin-2026-02-04/>.

¹⁸ The Hill, “Trump downplays AI warnings, citing competition with China,” Elliott Davis, September 13, 2026, <https://thehill.com/policy/technology/6086739-trump-downplays-ai-risks/>.

¹⁹ New York Times, “How Nvidia’s Jensen Huang Persuaded Trump to Sell A.I. Chips to China,” Tripp Mickle, July 17, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/17/technology/nvidia-trump-ai-chips-china.html>.

²⁰ *Id.*

access to advanced U.S. chips would put our national security at risk.²¹ Most recently, President Trump invited Jensen Huang, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, Elon Musk, Amazon Executive Chairman Jeff Bezos, Google CEO Sundar Pichai, and other tech executives to a state dinner for President Xi Jinping,²² in yet another example of the extraordinary influence and access afforded Big Tech CEOs under the current Trump Administration.

Given the risks that increasingly capable frontier models pose to our national security and Americans' public safety, the American people deserve strong guardrails set by their democratically elected officials, not a toothless framework shaped in secret by a handful of executives at self-interested trillion-dollar companies. To address our concerns and inform our legislative responsibilities on this matter, we request answers to the following questions no later than October 19, 2026:

1. Please provide details of all in-person engagements between representatives of private-sector firms and members of the Trump Administration concerning Executive Order 14409, including earlier draft iterations of the order as of early May, May 18, and May 21 as referenced in recent reporting,²³ along with any other prior iterations.²⁴ Please include dates, participants, and summaries of discussions.
2. Please provide copies or other records of all communications between representatives of private-sector firms and members of the Trump Administration concerning Executive Order 14409, including earlier draft iterations of the order as of early May, May 18, and May 21 as referenced in recent reporting,²⁵ along with any other prior iterations.²⁶ Please include dates, participants, and summaries of discussions. Please provide copies of all draft and final versions of Executive Order 14409, including earlier draft iterations of the order as of early May, May 18, and May 21,²⁷ along with redlines specifying the substance and date of each material change.
3. Please provide a copy of the reported 31-item questionnaire given to industry firms by the ONCD²⁸ along with a list of all firms to which the questionnaire was sent and copies of their responses.
4. Were non-industry stakeholders, such as independent evaluators, civil society organizations, consumer advocates, critical infrastructure operators, and academic experts consulted as part of the process of determining the scope of EO 14409 or the classified benchmarking and evaluation process established by the directive? If so, please provide

²¹ United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, "Senator Warren Statement on Trump Administration's Removing Export Controls on AI Chips to UAE," press release, July 10, 2026, <https://www.banking.senate.gov/newsroom/minority/senator-warren-statement-on-trump-administrations-removing-export-controls-on-ai-chips-to-uae>.

²² Bloomberg Government, "Bezos, Musk, Pichai to Join AI Titans at Trump-Xi State Dinner," Cristiano Lima-Strong, September 18, 2026, <https://news.bgov.com/bloomberg-government-news/bezos-musk-pichai-to-join-ai-titans-at-trump-xi-state-dinner>.

²³ Politico Magazine, "The Company Trump Can't Ignore," Sophia Cai and Cheyenne Haslett, September 20, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2026/09/20/anthropic-white-house-ai-01085212>.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ *Id.*

copies of all communications with and feedback from such stakeholders regarding EO 14409 and earlier draft iterations.

5. Please provide a full description of the pre-deployment testing process established under the White House's framework to evaluate frontier AI systems, including:
 - a. The criteria for designating covered frontier models;
 - b. The capabilities and risk domains being evaluated;
 - c. The benchmarks and evaluations on which the covered models are being evaluated;

What actions, if any, are taken if a model fails an evaluation or is deemed to pose an unacceptable level of risk.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator