

**Chairman Peters Opening Statement As Prepared for Delivery
Full Committee Hearing: Artificial Intelligence in Government
May 16, 2023**

Today's hearing is the second in a series that I plan to convene on artificial intelligence. At our first hearing in March, we discussed the transformative potential of AI, as well as the possible risks these technologies can pose.

Today, we'll be discussing how AI has the potential to help government better serve the American people, such as by improving the ways agencies deliver services, and what pitfalls we need to be aware of as government increasingly adopts AI tools.

The federal government is already using AI in an effort to provide more efficient services, assess potential security threats, and automate routine tasks to enhance the federal workforce.

Earlier this month, the White House announced new efforts to invest in American leadership to develop AI technologies and promote the responsible use of AI within the federal government. Later this summer, the Office of Management and Budget is expected to release new guidance on federal government use of AI, implementing legislation this Committee advanced in 2020 and was later signed into law in government funding legislation.

U.S. leadership in the development and use of AI systems, by both the private sector and government, is essential for our global economic competitiveness. We should work to ensure that government can adopt and deploy these tools to help improve American lives, but as we do so, we must ensure we are also prepared to address the potential risks and harms AI systems can present.

The potential for bias in AI applications can have serious consequences for federal government use.

A recent study found that an algorithm used by the IRS to determine who should be audited was erroneously more likely to recommend Black taxpayers than white taxpayers, and the government wasn't prepared with the data or training necessary to recognize this biased outcome.

As we heard in our last hearing, AI algorithms often lack transparency and accountability for how they arrive at certain outcomes. Even the engineers who design them do not always understand how they reach certain conclusions.

In government applications, this can present serious risks to Americans who may unknowingly be interacting with an AI, and who may struggle to get answers about why an AI system made a certain determination.

For example, at least a dozen states deployed algorithms to decide eligibility for disability benefits, which resulted in denying thousands of recipients this critical assistance that helped

them live independently, and left them with little opportunity to understand why the decision was made or how they could appeal it.

The enormous amounts of data that can be collected as a result of using AI systems also presents concerns about privacy. Existing privacy laws did not envision these types of applications.

As agencies use more AI tools, they will need to ensure they are securing and appropriately using any data inputs to avoid accidental disclosures or unintended uses that harm Americans' civil rights and civil liberties.

Finally, we must ensure our federal workforce is ready to procure and oversee the use of AI systems to ensure they are benefitting Americans. Last Congress, I authored legislation that was signed into law requiring officials charged with procuring AI tools to be trained in both their capabilities to improve agency missions, and their potential risks, to ensure responsible use.

Last week, I introduced bipartisan legislation to build on that effort by requiring federal agency supervisors and managers to receive similar training.

I'm looking forward to today's discussion, and to continuing to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will help encourage American development of AI, and ensure its being used appropriately.

During today's hearing, we'll be discussing some of those strategies, including the need to conduct inventories of current federal government AI applications, requiring ongoing audits to ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of AI systems, and considering responsible standards that need to be met as the federal government continues to acquire additional AI tools.

I'm grateful to our expert witnesses for joining us to help tackle this rapidly evolving issue.