

**NOMINATION OF MICHAEL KRATSIOS,
NOMINEE TO BE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY; AND MARK MEADOR,
NOMINEE TO BE A COMMISSIONER,
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————
FEBRUARY 25, 2025
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



Available online: <http://www.govinfo.gov>

—————
U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

TED CRUZ, Texas, *Chairman*

JOHN THUNE, South Dakota	MARIA CANTWELL, Washington, <i>Ranking</i>
ROGER WICKER, Mississippi	AMY KLOBUCHAR, Minnesota
DEB FISCHER, Nebraska	BRIAN SCHATZ, Hawaii
JERRY MORAN, Kansas	EDWARD MARKEY, Massachusetts
DAN SULLIVAN, Alaska	GARY PETERS, Michigan
MARSHA BLACKBURN, Tennessee	TAMMY BALDWIN, Wisconsin
TODD YOUNG, Indiana	TAMMY DUCKWORTH, Illinois
TED BUDD, North Carolina	JACKY ROSEN, Nevada
ERIC SCHMITT, Missouri	BEN RAY LUJAN, New Mexico
JOHN CURTIS, <i>Utah</i>	JOHN HICKENLOOPER, Colorado
BERNIE MORENO, Ohio	JOHN FETTERMAN, Pennsylvania
TIM SHEEHY, <i>Montana</i>	ANDY KIM, New Jersey
SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, West Virginia	LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, <i>Delaware</i>
CYNTHIA LUMMIS, Wyoming	

BRAD GRANTZ, *Republican Staff Director*

NICOLE CHRISTUS, *Republican Deputy Staff Director*

LIAM MCKENNA, *General Counsel*

LILA HARPER HELMS, *Staff Director*

MELISSA PORTER, *Deputy Staff Director*

JONATHAN HALE, *General Counsel*

CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on February 25, 2025	1
Statement of Senator Cruz	1
Letter to Hon. John Thune and Hon. Ted Cruz from the undersigned right-of-center groups and individuals: Chris Koopman, Executive Director, Abundance Institute; Brian Chau, Executive Director, Alliance for the Future; Nick Solheim, Chief Executive Officer, American Moment; Jon Schweppe, Policy Director, American Principles Project; Grover Norquist, President, Americans for Tax Reform; Aiden Buzzetti, President, Bull Moose Project; Bill Drexel, Fellow, Center for New American Security; Nathan Leamer, Executive Director, Digital First Project; James Erwin, Director, Digital Liberty; Neil Chilson, Fmr. Chief Technologist, Federal Trade Commission; Zach Graves, Executive Director, Foundation for American Innovation; Michael Toscano, Executive Director, Institute for Family Studies; Nate Fischer, CEO, New Founding; Tom Hebert, Director, Open Competition Center; and Dan Savickas, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, Taxpayers Protection Alliance	87
Letter to Hon. John Thune, Hon. Chuck Schumer, Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from the undersigned founders, investors, executives, and technologists: Zak Kukoff, Chair, Tech Practice, Lewis-Burke Associates; Joshua Steinman, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Michael Gibson, Co-Founder, 1517 Fund; Zak Slayback, Partner, 1517 Fund; Anitha Vadavatha, Founder, AB Plus Ventures; Shivdev Rao, CEO, Abridge AI INC; Bala Chandrasekaran, Partner, Alt Capital; Jack Altman, Managing Partner, Alt Capital; Patrick Blumenthal, Founder, Anomaly Fund; Jordan Bramble, CEO, Antares; Jack Clark, Co-Founder and Head of Policy, Anthropic; Nathaniel Blake Scholl, Founder/ CEO, Boom Supersonic; Brandon Yan, Treasury Manager, Elastic; Blake Pierson, Co-Founder & CEO, Fathom; Dylan Field, CEO, Figma; Nick Allen, President, Frontier Foundation; Teresa Carlson, President, General Catalyst Institute; Stuart Buck, Executive Director, Good Science Project; Christopher Power, CEO and Founder, Hadrian; Joseph Malchow, General Partner, Hanover; Peter Chandler, Executive Director, Internet Works; Austin Bishop, CEO, New American Industrial Alliance; Richard Fuisz, CEO, Nonfiction Labs; Jacob DeWitte, CEO, Oklo; Camilo Acosta, Managing Director, Perceptive Ventures; Garry Tan, Y Combinator, President and CEO; Christopher Grieco, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, Rain; Charles Lindsay, Artist, SETI Institute; Ron Conway, Founder and Managing Partner, SV Angel; Austin Bishop, General Partner, Tamarack Global; Kempton White, Founder & CEO, The Emissions Capture Company Group Limited; Brandon Palumbo, Director of Policy & Government Relations, Travel Technology Association; Andrew Antar, Founder, Tune.FM; Ash Shrivastav, Managing Partner, Uma Ventures; Laurent Crenshaw, President, Visionary Strategic Advisors; Jennifer Pahlka, Author, Recoding America; Fmr. US Deputy CTO; Delian Asparouhov, Co-Founder and President, Varda Space Industries; Partner, Founders Fund	89
Letter dated January 23, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Paul Stimers, Executive Director, Quantum Industry Coalition	91
Letter dated January 24, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Farnam Jahanian, President, Henry L. Hillman President's Chair, Carnegie Mellon University	92

	Page
Statement of Senator Cruz—Continued	
Letter dated January 27, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz from Savas C. Tsivicos, National President, Order of AHEPA	93
Letter dated January 27, 2025 to Hon. John Thune, Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Celia Merzbacher, Executive Director, Quantum Economic Development Consortium, SRI International	94
Letter dated January 27, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from the undersigned associations and groups: Morgan Reed, President, ACT The App Association; Meredith Attwell Baker, President and CEO, CTIA; Susan Miller, President and CEO, ATIS Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions; Zach Graves, Executive Director, Foundation for American Innovation; Brian Darmody, Chief Strategy Officer, AURP Association of University Research Parks; Christian Dawson, Executive Director, Internet Infrastructure Coalition; Victoria Espinel, CEO, Business Software Alliance; The Honorable Chip Pickering, CEO, INCOMPAS; The Honorable Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness; Jason Oxman, President and CEO, Information Technology Industry Council; Coach Kathy Kemper, Founder and CEO, Institute for Education; Matt Schruers, President and CEO, Computer & Communications Industry Association; Paul Sanberg, President, National Academy of Inventors; Gary Shapiro, CEO and Vice Chair, Consumer Technology Association; Bobby Franklin, CEO, National Venture Capital Association; Julius Krein, Chair of Board of Directors, New American Industrial Alliance; John Neuffer, President and CEO, Semiconductor Industry Association; Linda Moore, President and CEO, TechNet; Elizabeth A. Hyman, CEO, XR Association	96
Letter dated January 28, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President & CEO, Council on Competitiveness	99
Letter dated January 29, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Morgan Reed, President, ACT The App Association	100
Letter dated February 7, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Barbara R. Snyder, President, Association of American Universities	101
Letter dated February 7, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz from Aiden Buzzetti, President, The Bull Moose Project; Terry Schilling, President, American Principles Project; Julius Krein, Editor, The Journal of American Affairs; Josh Hammer, Senior Counsel, Article III Project; Oren Cass, Founder & Chief Economist, American Compass; Nathan Leamer, Executive Director, Digital First Project; Clare Morell, Fellow, Ethics and Public Policy Center; Ryan Williams, President, Claremont Institute; Rachel Bovard, Vice President of Programs, Conservative Partnership Institute; Ryan Walker, Executive Vice President, Heritage Action for America; and Nick Solheim, CEO, American Moment	107
Letter dated February 18, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Lisa Ellman, Executive Director, Commercial Drone Alliance	106
Letter dated February 19, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from James Grimsley, Regional Innovation Officer, Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub	107
Letter dated February 21, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Gregory S. Walden, Counsel, Small UAV Coalition	109
Letter dated February 24, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Christopher A. Mohr, President, Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)	111
Letter dated February 24, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Mark Becker, President, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities	113
Letter dated February 24, 2025 to Hon. Ted Cruz and Hon. Maria Cantwell from Jonathan Spalter, President and Chief Executive Officer, USTelecom—The Broadband Association	114
Statement of Senator Cantwell	3
Statement of Senator Blunt Rochester	33
Statement of Senator Fischer	35
Statement of Senator Baldwin	36
Statement of Senator Curtis	38
Statement of Senator Luján	40

V

	Page
Statement of Senator Hickenlooper	42
Statement of Senator Young	44
Statement of Senator Blackburn	48
Statement of Senator Markey	50
Analysis published October 2, 2024 entitled, “Differences in misinforma- tion sharing can lead to politically asymmetric sanctions” by Mohsen Mosleh1, Qi Yang, Tauhid Zaman, Gordon Pennycook & David G. Rand	52
Statement of Senator Schmitt	71
Statement of Senator Klobuchar	73
Statement of Senator Moreno	75
Statement of Senator Kim	77
Statement of Senator Peters	79
Statement of Senator Rosen	82
Statement of Senator Duckworth	84

WITNESSES

Hon. Bill Hagerty, U.S. Senator from Tennessee	5
Hon. Mike Lee, U.S. Senator from Utah	6
Michael Kratsios, Nominee to be Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy	7
Prepared statement	8
Biographical information	9
Mark Meador, Nominee to be a Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission	19
Prepared statement	21
Biographical information	22

APPENDIX

Response to written questions submitted to Michael Kratsios by:	
Hon. John Thune	117
Hon. Jerry Moran	117
Hon. Dan Sullivan	121
Hon. Tim Sheehy	122
Hon. Maria Cantwell	123
Hon. Amy Klobuchar	125
Hon. Brian Schatz	125
Hon. Edward Markey	127
Hon. Gary Peters	130
Hon. Ben Ray Lujan	130
Hon. John Hickenlooper	131
Hon. Lisa Blunt Rochester	132
Response to written questions submitted to Mark Meador by:	
Hon. John Thune	133
Hon. Jerry Moran	134
Hon. Dan Sullivan	138
Hon. John Curtis	138
Hon. Maria Cantwell	139
Hon. Amy Klobuchar	141
Hon. Brian Schatz	141
Hon. Edward Markey	142
Hon. John Hickenlooper	145
Hon. Lisa Blunt Rochester	146

**NOMINATION OF MICHAEL KRATSIOS,
NOMINEE TO BE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY;
AND MARK MEADOR, NOMINEE TO BE A
COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL TRADE
COMMISSION**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Ted Cruz, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Cruz [presiding], Fischer, Blackburn, Young, Schmitt, Curtis, Moreno, Hagerty, Lee, Klobuchar, Markey, Peters, Baldwin, Duckworth, Rosen, Luján, Hickenlooper, Kim, and Blunt Rochester.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TED CRUZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TEXAS**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation will come to order.

I want to congratulate each of the nominees here today, Michael Kratsios who has been nominated to lead the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Mark Meador who has been nominated to the Federal Trade Commission.

Congress has charged both the OSTP and the FTC with duties that affect the lives of millions of Americans. OSTP advises the President on Federal science and technology policy. Michael Kratsios has a distinguished track record of ensuring America leads globally in emerging technologies.

His previous tenure as U.S. Chief Technology Officer at OSTP during the first Trump Administration was marked by efforts to advance artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and 5G technology. The story of the 21st century will be written by whichever nation can innovate the fastest.

This generation space race is unfolding with technologies invisible to the naked eye where the winners and the losers will be separated by mere nanometers. What was once science fiction is now crucial to maintaining the United States's position as the world's leading economy.

Technologies like this new chip I hold in the palm of my hand, the Majorana 1 quantum chip, are unlocking a new era of computing that will transform industries from health care to energy, solving problems that today's computers simply cannot.

And I will note, by the way, Microsoft tells me this chip is worth \$1 billion, so I very much hope I do not drop it because my current employer is judgment proof and \$36 trillion in debt.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. This breakthrough is led by an American company and harnesses a new kind of matter to solve problems faster than ever before. I would like to thank Senator Blackburn, who is advancing a reauthorization of quantum computing research programs, for her leadership on this.

Advancements in quantum computing, AI, and cybersecurity will drive innovation, protect the nation, and create new industries. Now, let me say a few words about the FTC, which protects American consumers from unfair and deceptive business practices and anti-competitive behavior.

Mark Meador is well prepared to serve as a Commissioner and he should be confirmed. I look forward to hearing that he would pursue the FTC's mission with impartiality and with respect for the rule of law.

As a former Director of the Office of Policy Planning at the FTC, I have a deep respect for the dedicated professionals within the agency. I saw firsthand how principled leadership and a shared commitment to statutory limits can benefit free enterprise and economic opportunity. But I worry that today's FTC is a far cry from the agency I once knew.

For 4 years under Lina Khan, the FTC prioritized activism over enforcement, disregarded statutory limits, and weaponized its authority in defiance of Congressional intent. Consider a few troubling examples.

The FTC has abused its enforcement powers to target political opponents of the Biden Administration. It has attempted to impose competition rulemakings across entire industries, exceeding its legal mandate.

It has destroyed documents, obstructing both Congressional oversight and potential litigation. It has collaborated with European regulators to apply foreign laws that put American tech companies at a competitive disadvantage. It has sought to regulate artificial intelligence in a way that could chill free speech.

And it has attempted to impose sweeping data privacy and security mandates without Congressional approval. Each of these actions represents a departure from the FTC's historical role as a nonpartisan enforcer of consumer protection and competition law.

Former Commissioner Christine Wilson's resignation underscored this crisis, and she cited former Chairwoman Khan's disregard for legal precedent and due process as key factors in her decision to step down.

I think that Chairman Andrew Ferguson will restore the FTC's integrity and its focus. I hope that Mr. Meador can assist in that effort given his deep understanding of competition law, regulatory process, and consumer protection. The FTC must enforce laws as Congress designed, not engage in ideological experiments.

I look forward to hearing from both of today's nominees, learning about their perspectives, and understanding how they plan to advance the goals of their respective institutions. I will now turn to Ranking Member Cantwell for her opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARIA CANTWELL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WASHINGTON**

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for being a champion of Washington innovation. I love it. I usually—that is usually my job, and so love that we have the dual role here of cheerleading—

The CHAIRMAN. You want to hold the billion-dollar chip?

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

The CHAIRMAN. If she drops it, it is not my fault.

[Laughter.]

Senator CANTWELL. I think we will hold it together because—because Mr. Chairman, collaboration, I believe, is the next phase of innovation. And we can talk about that with Mr. Kratsios—when we get to his segmentation.

But I really do believe that the state of Washington is leading in innovation in many, many ways, and so we are very proud of that. We would like to start, and obviously we are going to hear from our colleagues, but I will try to be short with my opening remarks.

Mr. Meador for the Federal Trade Commission, as you just mentioned. The Federal Trade Commission has a very big responsibility on antitrust enforcement, including the five years that you spent at the FTC.

And I think you know that it is not just another regulatory agency. It is a front-line defender of very complex consumer marketplace issues. I read in your testimony that you really do believe it's about competition in the marketplace. I do too. I do too.

I don't think we can talk enough around here about competition. And competition gets you great innovation, just like we just saw, and it also gets you the opportunity to help us grow our economy and lift more people into the middle class.

But obviously, markets sometimes have anti-competitive practices and unfair or deceptive practices. And the FTC, I believe, is a critically important organization. Things like the COPPA Rule that protects children's privacy. I saw my colleague here, but I think he stepped out.

And its actions to block anticompetitive mergers resulting in high consumer prices like the Kroger, Albertsons merger which is a very big issue in the Pacific Northwest for farmers and consumers. And the litigation against PBMs, my colleague Chuck Grassley and I just reintroduced legislation on this. So, with consumers facing increased prices for everything like food, prescription drugs, gasoline, I do believe it is the FTC's authority to examine business practices and make sure that there is not an artificial inflation of prices and holding businesses accountable when they do harm consumers or competitors. So, the statistics are alarming.

The FTC data shows that in 2023, consumers reported losing \$10.4 billion to fraud with a median loss of \$500. This is money

consumers don't have to spend on groceries or rent. And so, I just can't even believe—one day at the airport overheard a constituent talking about how her aunt had become exploited by an AI trick where she thought Kevin Costner was going to come to visit her, and she had shelled out tens of thousands of dollars too.

Again, and when I brought this up to Facebook, Meta, they basically said, oh yes, that is the biggest thing going on now. I mean, with AI, you are just going to where that you know people have money.

So why basically say your software is broke on your computer and you need to send me \$100 to fix it when you can basically promise somebody that Kevin Costner is going to come to SeaTac and visit you, and you will pay them tens of thousands of dollars.

So, we definitely need an FTC to be the policeman on the beat and continue to make sure that these pressures facing consumers are addressed. So, look forward to your conversation. Turning to the second nominee, Mr. Kratsios—thank you for wanting to serve again in a capacity I think that you know very well.

The CHIPS and Science Act passed by strong bipartisan support from this committee, recognizes America's scientific enterprise, the foundation of the future. But obviously, there are many things that we need to do to continue to test-bed next generation technologies.

I am a very big believer in that the private sector is the main engine of our innovation and capital markets, and that the United States, even being outsized by some countries, still is not really an issue if, in fact, we educate, and skill the talent, and can innovate faster than they can.

So, this notion of testbeds and hubs and laboratory research I will be asking you about in the Q&A part of the—of our questions. These opportunities for us to play our part on the broader R&D issues is something I believe that the Office of Science and Technology is so critical to do.

As President Trump's nominee, you will be the Chief Scientist advising during this period of remarkable technology change, and I think that that is why the United States must keep a very fast innovation pace ahead of our competitors.

Since you are no stranger, I know you will know more about how to work those levers, but I do need to hear from you today that you will be forceful on the investments that we would like to see in innovation.

I know that the Trump Administration has said that they plan to slash the budget of the National Science Foundation by two-thirds, while implementing sweeping layoffs. I think these are questions that we will need to know the answer to. In my state, University of Washington, obviously a big R&D institution, feels like it is continuing to help us uncover those important issues that benefit all sectors and increase America's competitive advantages.

So, I hope that, as my colleague brought up quantum, that we will be able to continue the National Quantum Initiative started under you and your Administration. I was just looking up the quote that you gave when \$625 million was awarded to various innovative hubs related to quantum out of the DOE budget.

So glad to see that you were very enthusiastic about the Federal Government playing a role on broad quantum R&D policies. But no

doubt, we are in a global race. I know America is up to it. Look forward to asking you how we continue to make these investments together—together and collaborate on actually getting the science implemented. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell. Now, I would like to recognize my friend and colleague from the great state of Tennessee, Senator Hagerty, to introduce Mr. Kratsios. Senator Hagerty, welcome to the Commerce Committee.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cantwell. I want to thank you both for hosting this important confirmation hearing today. It is my great privilege today to introduce my friend, Michael Kratsios, who is President Trump's nominee to be the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

The OSTP Director advises the President on key industries of the future, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, 5G, advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, and more. Indeed, Michael and I worked closely together on 5G and our telecommunications infrastructure when I served in my previous role as U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

Now, more than ever, emerging technologies present us with immense opportunities to maintain America's global dominance. At such a critical time, we can't afford to make policy errors in Washington. That is exactly why we need a leader of Michael's caliber serving in this vital role.

While AI has rapidly ascended to become one of America's most important policy priorities, Michael had the foresight to see this technology's potential nearly a decade ago, and he has been working tirelessly on the issue ever since.

His impressive record of public service in the field of science and technology policy include his past service as Chief Technology Officer of the United States, as well as the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.

In these roles and others, Michael has coordinated public-private partnerships and served as the architect of national strategies on AI and quantum technologies. After leaving public service, he served as Managing Director of Scale AI, helping it become one of the most valuable and well-respected privately held AI companies in the world.

Michael's research outside of the Government provided the first quantifiable evidence of how banned Chinese technologies were still being procured by State and local Governments across the country. He also brought to light the significant risks posed by PRC manufactured ship to shore cranes in American ports.

America must remain the world leader in scientific and technological innovation. Our national security, our liberty, and our prosperity depend on it. Michael understands this mission, and that is why I wholeheartedly support his nomination. I want to thank my colleagues here today for giving Michael your deepest consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Haggerty. And now I would like to recognize my dearest friend in the Senate, the great Senator

from the great state of Utah, Senator Mike Lee, to introduce his former staffer, Mr. Meador. Senator Lee, welcome back to the Commerce Committee.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE LEE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH**

Senator LEE. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Cruz, and Ranking Member Cantwell, and other members of the Committee. It really is a great honor and pleasure to be back in front of the Commerce Committee today to introduce my friend, a former valued member of my team, Mark Meador, who has been nominated by President Trump to serve on the Federal Trade Commission.

I offer my wholehearted support for Mark for whom I have great regard. It is also great to have him here with his family, his wife Adrienne, and their six children, as well as Mark's parents. And I will note parenthetically here that his oldest daughter, Constance, already has my pledged support when she runs for President in 2048. She is smart as a whip.

Senator CANTWELL. Where is she? Let's see the future President. Right there. OK.

[Laughter.]

Senator LEE. She is terrific. If confirmed, Mark will, I believe, honorably serve the American people as a member of the Federal Trade Commission. I say this for a number of reasons.

First, he is an exceptionally talented lawyer. He is a trusted advocate and a true leader in the field of antitrust law. His career has been defined by his ability to navigate some of the most complex questions in antitrust law and consumer protection matters.

From his time on my staff here in the Senate to the time that he spent at the Federal Trade Commission as a lawyer there, and also as a lawyer in DOJ's Antitrust Division, Mark has served at the forefront of key consumer protection and antitrust issues. His vast wealth of experience, with enforcement and policy in both public service and in private practice as well, has positioned him to be uniquely qualified for this new role.

Shortly after Mark first joined my staff in 2015, I became immediately impressed by his temperament, his judgment, and his expertise. He always approached issues based on the facts, and based on the law, and with really sound judgment. Now, Mark actually had two stents working in my office, and during these many years I relied on his sound understanding of antitrust law.

But also I found Mark to be somebody on whom I could rely for advice on pretty much anything and he consistently gave good advice. It is one of the reasons why, if confirmed as a member of the Federal Trade Commission, he is going to be a consensus builder. He will be someone around whom ideas can coalesce and opinions can form.

His leadership was felt in the more than 20 subcommittee hearings for which he helped me prepare, involving some of the most significant antitrust topics, from mergers to anti-competitive conduct. His leadership and insight were invaluable. Mark has a proven track record and extensive experience in the practice of antitrust law, both inside and outside of Government.

Not only does he have experience working for the FTC and DOJ, and also in the U.S. Senate, but he has got remarkable success in private practice. His success in private practice can be attributed to his rare ability to advise his clients not only on antitrust compliance and litigation, but also on policy dimensions of offensive and defensive antitrust strategies.

And I would add here that it has been a tremendous benefit to him and his clients the fact that he served as a lawyer, both at DOJ and at FTC working on antitrust matters. His steady demeanor and temperament, coupled with the ability to blend legal experience with strategic policy insight, make him exceptionally qualified to serve as the next FTC Commissioner.

Mark will ensure that the antitrust and consumer protection laws are enforced in a fair and principled manner. I have every confidence in Mark, and I am proud to be here in support of his nomination. I urge every member of this committee to vote in favor of Mark's nomination. I look forward to voting for him on the Senate floor. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lee. And you too are welcome to stick around, but you can also head on to other business if your schedule so demands. With that, I recognize Mr. Kratsios for your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL KRATSIOS, NOMINEE TO BE
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Mr. KRATSIOS. Thank you, Senator Hagerty, for your generous introduction. And thank you, Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and other members of this esteemed committee for inviting me to appear before you today.

Let me also give my thanks to my family, some of whom are in attendance, to my parents, John and Maria, my sister, Katie, my brother-in-law, Mark, and my beautiful wife, Alyssa. Thank you. I could not have come this far without your love and encouragement. It is the honor of my lifetime to sit before this committee as President Donald J. Trump's nominee for Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

In his second inaugural address, the President promised that his Administration will work to usher in the golden age of America. I believe in that promise and will dedicate myself to fulfilling it. In the last Trump Administration, as a fourth Chief Technology Officer of the United States and an Associate Director of OSTP, I led national initiatives on artificial intelligence and quantum information science.

I promulgated budget priorities that led to the Federal Government doubling research and development spending in those areas. I drafted non-regulatory guidance for emerging technologies to give the public trust in how these technologies are developed and used. I saw firsthand how the actions that we took at OSTP could enable new industries to take hold and to deliver benefits to the American people.

For a century, the United States has stood at the forefront of science and technology. We split the atom for war and for peace. We put man on the moon and brought him back again. And with the transistor and integrated circuit, we steered the globe into the

digital age. Thanks to these breakthroughs, Americans have enjoyed unprecedented economic prosperity.

We must preserve that inheritance to share with future generations and to ensure that the tools and the technologies that give shape to our world always help people live productive, meaningful lives. In recent years, other countries have sought to supplant the United States and claim science and technology leadership for themselves.

In particular, China has emerged as both our preeminent geopolitical rival and our most formidable technological and scientific competitor. Central to this competition is a new frontier of scientific discovery that lies before us. The shape of future global order will be defined by whomever leads across AI, quantum, nuclear, and other critical and emerging technologies. Chinese progress in nuclear fusion, quantum technologies, and autonomous systems all press home the urgency of the work ahead.

As President Trump has said, as our global competitors race to exploit these technologies, it is a national security imperative for the United States to achieve and maintain unquestioned and unchallenged global technological dominance.

The Office of Science and Technology Policy will be critical to this effort in advising the President and coordinating the national initiatives needed to rise to the challenge and deliver to the American people. I am committed to American leadership in emerging technologies, and to ensuring that all Americans benefit from scientific and technological breakthroughs.

As Director, I will build a deep bench of policy experts to ensure that the President and the White House have the necessary technical advice to meet the challenges of our moment. If we are to lead the world in science and technology for the next century, to continue to provide for the American citizenry, to enhance our national security, to imprint the future with American character and improve the welfare of all mankind, the only way to do so will be to double down on what has made our history of innovation so great, the uniquely American free market approach to scientific discovery, which harnesses the combined strength of Government, industry, and academia.

With your support, this Administration will usher in a golden age of American innovation. Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement and biographical information of Mr. Kratsios follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J.K. KRATSIOS, NOMINEE FOR DIRECTOR,
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Thank you, Sen. Hagerty, for your generous introduction, and thank you, Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and the other members of this esteemed committee for inviting me to appear before you today.

Let me also give my thanks to my family, some of whom are in attendance. To my parents, John and Maria, my sister Kaity, my brother-in-law Mark, and my beautiful wife, Alissa—thank you. I could not have come this far without your love and encouragement.

It is the honor of my lifetime to sit before this committee as President Donald J. Trump's nominee for Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy. In his second inaugural address, the President promised that his administration will

work to usher in the Golden Age of America. I believe in that promise, and will dedicate myself to fulfilling it.

In the last Trump Administration, as the fourth Chief Technology Officer of the United States, and an Associate Director of OSTP, I led national initiatives on artificial intelligence and quantum information science. I promulgated budget priorities that led to the Federal Government doubling research and development spending in those areas. I drafted non-regulatory guidance for emerging technologies to give the public trust in how these technologies are developed and used. I saw firsthand how the actions that we took at OSTP could enable new industries to take hold, and to deliver benefits to the American people.

For a century, the United States has stood at the forefront of science and technology. We split the atom, for war and for peace. We put a man on the moon and brought him back again. And with the transistor and the integrated circuit, we steered the globe into the digital age.

Thanks to these breakthroughs, Americans have enjoyed unprecedented economic prosperity. We must preserve that inheritance to share with future generations, and to ensure that the tools and technologies that give shape to our world always help people to live productive, meaningful lives.

In recent years, other countries have sought to supplant the United States and claim science and technology leadership for themselves. In particular, China has emerged as both our preeminent geopolitical rival and our most formidable technological and scientific competitor.

Central to this competition is the new frontier of scientific discovery that lies before us. The shape of future global order will be defined by whomever leads across AI, quantum, nuclear, and other critical and emerging technologies. Chinese progress in nuclear fusion, quantum technologies, and autonomous systems all press home the urgency of the work ahead.

As President Trump has said, “as our global competitors race to exploit these technologies, it is a national security imperative for the United States to achieve and maintain unquestioned and unchallenged global technological dominance.”

The Office of Science and Technology Policy will be critical to this effort, in advising the President and coordinating the national initiatives needed to rise to the challenge and deliver for the American people. I am committed to American leadership in emerging technologies, and to ensuring that all Americans benefit from scientific and technological advances. As Director, I will build a deep bench of policy experts to ensure that the President and the White House have the necessary technical advice to meet the challenges of our moment.

If we are to lead the world in science and technology for the next century, to continue to provide for the American citizenry, to enhance our national security, to imprint the future with American character and improve the welfare of all mankind, the only way to do so will be to double down on what has made our history of innovation great: the uniquely American free-market approach to scientific discovery, which harnesses the combined strengths of government, industry, and academia.

With your support, this administration will usher in a Golden Age of American Innovation. Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used): Michael John Kotsakas Kratsios.

2. Position to which nominated: Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

3. Date of Nomination: January 22, 2025.

4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

Residence: Information not released to the public.

Office: Information not provided.

5. Date and Place of Birth: 11/7/1986; Salisbury, Maryland.

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) or domestic partner, and the names and ages of your children (including step-children and children by a previous marriage).

Alissa Stephanie Davies, Public Policy Manager, Coinbase.

7. List all college and graduate schools attended, whether or not you were granted a degree by the institution. Provide the name of the institution, the dates attended, the degree received, and the date of the degree.

AB in Politics, Princeton University, 2004–2008

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, including the job title, name of employer, and inclusive dates of employment, and highlight all management-level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

Analyst, Barclays Investment Bank, 2009–2010
 Analyst, Lyford Group International, 2010
 Associate, Clarium Capital Management, 2010–2011
Chief Compliance Officer, Clarium Capital Management, 2011–2014
Chief Compliance Officer, Thiel Capital, 2012–2014
Chief Compliance Officer, Thiel Macro, 2012–2014
Chief Financial Officer, Clarium Capital Management, 2014–2015
Principal and Chief of Staff, Thiel Capital, 2014–2017
Deputy Assistant to the President & Deputy U.S. Chief Technology Officer, The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2017–2019
Chief Technology Officer of the United States and Associate Director, The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2019–2021
Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (Acting), United States Department of Defense, 2020–2021
Managing Director, Scale AI, 2021–2025

9. Attach a copy of your résumé.
 See attachment 1.

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above after 18 years of age. None.

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution.

Trustee, Foundation for Student Communication Inc. (Business Today), 2007–2017, 2021–2025
 Chief Compliance Officer, Clarium Capital Management, 2011–2014
 Chief Compliance Officer, Thiel Capital, 2012–2014
 Chief Compliance Officer, Thiel Macro, 2012–2014
 Board of Directors, International Model United Nations Association, 2013–2016
 Chief Financial Officer, Clarium Capital Management, 2014–2015
 Consultant, HySpecIQ, 2021
 Managing Director, Scale AI, 2021–2025
 Manager, Board of Managers, Improbable U.S. Defense & National Security, 2022
 Member, Strategic Research Advisory Board, University of Oklahoma, 2023–2024
 Member of the Board, Foundation for American Innovation, 2023–2025
 Senior Advisor, Dunes Point Capital, 2024–2025
 Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence, 2024–2025

12. List all memberships you have had after 18 years of age or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization (You do not have to list your religious affiliation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

Member, American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, 2018 to present
 Member, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 2021 to present
 Member, 5 Hertford Street, 2024 to present

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt.

Yes. I was appointed Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy U.S. Chief Technology Officer by President Donald J. Trump in 2017. I was nominated by President Donald J. Trump and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as Chief Technology Officer of the United States and Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in 2019. I was named Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering by President Donald J. Trump in 2020. I was appointed Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and nominated to serve as the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy by President Donald J. Trump in 2025.

No, I have no outstanding campaign debt.

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities. None.

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

Blake Masters for Senate, 2021, \$5,800

Citizens for Will Scharf, 2022, \$2,650

Blake Masters for Congress, 2023, \$6,600

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

National Merit Scholarship Recipient

American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association Educational Foundation Scholarship Recipient

Hellenic Studies Senior Thesis Prize (Princeton University)

Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Award for Excellence

Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Medal of Saint Paul

17. List all books, articles, columns, letters to the editor, Internet blog postings, or other publications you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication when available.

China Poses Security Threat at American Ports, *Newsweek*. September 11, 2023
<https://www.newsweek.com/china-poses-security-threat-american-ports-opinion-1825423>

End The STA: Stop Helping China Steal, *American Conservative*. August 22, 2023

<https://www.theamericanconservative.com/end-the-sta-stop-helping-china-steal>

U.S. State and Local Governments Still Buy Banned Chinese Tech, *Foreign Affairs*. November 1, 2022

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/11/01/china-technology-huawei-zta-banned-us/>

The Trump Administration Is Investing \$1 Billion in Research Institutes to Advance Industries of the Future, WhiteHouse.gov. August 26, 2020. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/articles/trump-administration-investing-1-billion-research-institutes-advance-industries-future/>

Artificial Intelligence Can Serve Democracy, *Wall Street Journal*. May 27, 2020
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/artificial-intelligence-can-serve-democracy-11590618319>

Connecting Americans to Coronavirus Information Online, WhiteHouse.gov. April 15, 2020

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/articles/connecting-americans-coronavirus-information-online/>

AI That Reflects American Values, *Bloomberg*. January 7, 2020

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2020-01-07/ai-that-reflects-american-values>

How America Achieved ‘Quantum Supremacy’, *Fortune*. October 23, 2019
<https://fortune.com/2019/10/23/google-sycamore-quantum-computer-supremacy/>

We used to fly from New York to Paris in 3 hours. Let’s do that again., *The Washington Post*. June 25, 2019

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-should-lead-the-way-back-to-supersonic-flight/2019/06/24/f1b884e2-96b7-11e9-916d-9c61607d8190_story.html

High Speed Broadband Is Fostering a New Era of Innovation for Rural America, *Agri-Pulse*. February 14, 2019

<https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/11905-opinion-high-speed-broadband-is-fostering-a-new-era-of-innovation-for-rural-america>

Why the U.S. Needs a Strategy for AI, *WIRED*. Feb. 2, 2019
<https://www.wired.com/story/a-national-strategy-for-ai>

The future of American aviation is all about drones, CNN. June 6, 2018

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/06/opinions/trump-administration-drone-technology-kratsios/index.html>

America Will Win the Global Race to 5G, WhiteHouse.gov. October 25, 2018

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/articles/america-will-win-global-race-5g/>

Donald Trump Embraces the Drone Age, *The Wall Street Journal*. October 25, 2017

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/donald-trump-embraces-the-drone-age-1508947220>

Economics and Voting in the Third Hellenic Republic: An Aggregate and Individual-Level Analysis of the Greek Electorate, 1985–2007. April 8, 2008. Princeton University Senior Thesis.

https://issuu.com/mkratsios/docs/economics_and_voting

18. List all speeches, panel discussions, and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint) that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the speech or presentation when available.

Speeches

May 1, 2017	27th National Science Bowl (Department of Energy)
June 5, 2017	United States of America Mathematical Olympiad Awards Dinner
September 27, 2017	<i>G7 Industry and Information and Communication Technologies Ministerial Meeting</i>
November 2, 2017	Drone Integration Pilot Program Launch (Department of Transportation)
November 13, 2017	Virtuous Circle Summit (Internet Association)*
December 13, 2017	Department of Health and Human Services Innovation Day
January 9, 2018	Administration’s Approach to Innovation and Tech Policy (CES)*
February 20, 2018	<i>New Work Summit</i> (New York Times)*
March 14, 2018	<i>ARPA-E Energy Innovation Summit</i>
March 29, 2018	<i>Center for Democracy & Technology Annual Dinner</i>
April 10, 2018	U.S. Chamber of Commerce Tecglobal 2018
April 19, 2018	Unleashing American Innovation Launch Event (Department of Commerce)
May 9, 2018	U.S. Air Force—National Science Foundation Collaboration Announcement Event
May 10, 2018	<i>White House AI for American Industry Summit</i>
June 5, 2018	EmTech Next (MIT Tech Review)*
July 10, 2018	AI Summit: Investing in Innovation and Tomorrow’s Workforce (Business Software Alliance)*
August 21, 2018	<i>FedTalks</i>
August 28, 2018	<i>University of Mississippi Technology Summit</i>
September 9, 2018	<i>Tech Olympus Summit</i> *
September 21, 2018	<i>Reboot 2018</i> (Lincoln Network)*
September 24, 2018	White House Quantum Information Sciences Summit
September 28, 2018	White House 5G Summit

Speeches

October 2, 2018	<i>Commercial UAV Expo*</i>
November 8, 2018	<i>Technology 202 Live: View from the White House Technology Team (Washington Post Techonomy)*</i>
November 11, 2018	<i>Global Entrepreneurship Summit Launch Event</i>
November 15, 2018	<i>Business Roundtable CEO Innovation Summit*</i>
December 6, 2018	NSF Expeditions in Computing Event
January 19, 2019	<i>State of the Net</i>
January 29, 2019	Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute Tech Talk
February 27, 2019	<i>The White House: Accelerating America's Leadership in Artificial Intelligence (Center for New American Security)</i>
February 28, 2019	Preparing for the G20 (US Chamber of Commerce)*
March 1, 2019	<i>DARPA AI Colloquium</i>
March 7, 2019	<i>Safeguarding the Crown Jewels of U.S. Innovation (SXSW)*</i>
March 12, 2019	<i>Consumer Technology Association Innovation Policy Day (SXSW)</i>
March 19, 2019	The AI Agenda (The Economist)*
March 27, 2019	<i>Blueprint York</i>
April 9, 2019	Domestic Drone Safety and Security Series*
April 18, 2019 2nd	Annual Choctaw Nation Emerging Aviation Conference
April 30, 2019	2019 Digital Patriots Dinner
May 21, 2019	<i>OECD Ministerial Council Meeting</i>
September 10, 2019	<i>Center for Data Innovation Forum on AI</i>
September 17, 2019	<i>Samsung Solve for Tomorrow STEM Contest's 10th Year Launch</i>
November 4, 2019	<i>Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence's (HAI) 2019 Fall Conference on Ethics, Policy and Governance*</i>
November 7, 2019	<i>Web Summit</i>
January 8, 2020	<i>US Approach to AI, CES*</i>
January 9, 2020	<i>Conversation with WIRED, CES*</i>
February 10, 2020	<i>Hudson Institute: America's Global Tech Leadership: A Conversation with U.S. CTO Michael Kratsios*</i>
August 12, 2020	<i>U.S. Tech Leadership in an Era of Competition*</i>
August 18, 2020	<i>DARPA Electronics Resurgence Initiative 2.0*</i>
October 16, 2020	<i>SACC-USA Executive Forum 2020*</i>
March 2, 2021	<i>Innovative Greeks*</i>
May 18, 2021	<i>Tools of the Trade: Enabling Public Purpose in Science and Technology Policy*</i>
September 16, 2021	<i>Key Technology Focus Areas: Where's Our Advantage and How Do We Capture It?*</i>
October 1, 2020	<i>POLITICO AI Summit Interview*</i>
November 10, 2021	<i>Accelerate AI adoption & Importance of AI Models Update on Emerging Tech Horizons*</i>
March 23, 2023	<i>Harnessing the power of AI*</i>
September 27, 2023	<i>POLITICO AI and Tech Summit*</i>
October 24, 2023	<i>FII7 Priority Summit*</i>
November 9, 2023	<i>Understanding AI: AlixTalks with Simon Freakley, Michael Kratsios and Amna Nawaz</i>
March 6, 2024	<i>DeepFest*</i>
April 11, 2024	<i>Advancing America's Leadership in AI*</i>
April 25, 2024	<i>RAISE Summit</i>
June 14, 2024	<i>The Ultimate Disrupter: AI's Impact on Geopolitics & Global Governance*</i>
September 6, 2024	<i>Role of Business: Policy Implications of Industry Leadership in AI*</i>
September 17, 2024	<i>POLITICO AI & Tech Summit*</i>
October 18, 2024	<i>Oxford Generative AI Summit 2024*</i>

* Armchair conversation (Q&A)

19. List all public statements you have made during the past ten years, including statements in news articles and radio and podcasts and television appearances, which are on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated, including dates. Include a link to each statement when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the statement when available.

In addition to those covered in question 18:

July 17, 2017	Construction begins on international mega-science experiment to understand neutrinos (<i>Fermilab</i>)
October 25, 2017	Trump administration to allow quick and dramatic expansion of drone use (<i>Washington Post</i>)
April 19, 2018	The Trump administration is bullish on tech transfer (<i>Fedscoop</i>)

May 18, 2018	White House announces creation of Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence (<i>Fedscoop</i>)
December 16, 2018	Trump signs National Quantum Initiative into law (<i>Fedscoop</i>)
February 10, 2020	Trump Wants to Double Spending on AI, Quantum Computing (<i>WSJ</i>)
February 26, 2020	White House's top techie explains how AI initiative will help Seattle tech community (<i>Geekwire</i>)
March 23, 2020	White House Announces New Partnership to Unleash U.S. Supercomputing Resources to Fight COVID-19 (<i>The White House</i>)
July 21, 2020	NSF establishes 3 new institutes to address critical challenges in quantum information science (<i>NSF</i>)
August 10, 2020	DOD Developing Small, Unmanned Aerial System for Warfighters (<i>Department of Defense</i>)
September 30, 2020	U.S. Chief Technology Officer Michael Kratsios Eyes Greece as Technology Hub (<i>Greek Reporter</i>)
August 14, 2020	White House Aims To Boost Funding For AI And Quantum Tech By 30 percent In 2021 (<i>Fortune</i>)
August 26, 2020	White House Announces \$1 Billion Plan to Create AI, Quantum Institutes (<i>WSJ</i>)
October 5, 2020	What, exactly, is a U.S. CTO? (<i>Fedscoop</i>)
October 8, 2020	DOD Announces \$600 Million for 5G Experimentation and Testing at Five Installations (<i>Department of Defense</i>)
October 30, 2020	U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao Announces Successful Completion of Drone Pilot Program, Announces New Program Called BEYOND (<i>Department of Transportation</i>)
December 2, 2020	Australia and U.S. unveil joint hypersonic program (<i>ADM</i>)
December 3, 2020	White House pushes civilian agencies to use trustworthy AI in new executive order (<i>Fedscoop</i>)
January 5, 2021	DOD's Inaugural Foray Into 5G Experimentation on Track (<i>Department of Defense</i>)
January 12, 2021	National AI Initiative Office launched by White House (<i>Fedscoop</i>)
May 27, 2021	Scale AI Hires Former U.S. CTO Michael Kratsios as Head of Strategy (<i>WSJ</i>)
October 26, 2022	Hundreds of state, local government entities vulnerable to Chinese espionage: report (<i>Fox News</i>)
October 19, 2023	U.S. must act 'very carefully' to ensure China doesn't steal our AI strategy: Michael Kratsios (<i>Fox Business</i>)
November 6, 2023	Newsradio (<i>BBC</i>)
August 6, 2024	You Might be Right (<i>podcast</i>)

20. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the full name of an "alias" or "handle", including the complete URL and username with hyperlinks, you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

Facebook: Michael Kratsios [dormant]

Instagram: mkratsios [active] <https://www.instagram.com/mkratsios/>

LinkedIn: Michael Kratsios [active]

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelkratsios>

Snapchat: scgreek [deleted]

Tumblr: mkratsios [deleted]

Twitter: michaelkratsios [active] <https://twitter.com/michaelkratsios>

Twitter: USCTO45 [dormant/archived]: <http://twitter.com/USCTO45>

21. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date, committee, and subject matter of each testimony.

July 17, 2019. Confirmation Hearing for Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2019/7/committee-announces-nominations-hearing>

January 15, 2020. Hearing on Industries of the Future. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/B7184908-E657-441C-967A-871D8A80B0F0>

October 18, 2023. Hearing on Balancing Knowledge and Governance: Foundations for Effective Risk Management of Artificial Intelligence. Joint Oversight

& Investigations and Research & Technology Subcommittee of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. <https://republicans-science.house.gov/cache/files/7/1/711d0748-8914-45e2-ab30-2b1ae3e4753f/BF3123DB9859C190F2A8F72344BAC68B.mr.-kratsios-testimony.pdf>

22. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency/commission/corporation to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

In the previous Trump Administration, I had the honor of serving as the fourth Chief Technology Officer of the United States and the Associate Director of OSTP for Technology, where I was confirmed by unanimous consent by the U.S. Senate. In this capacity, I led national technology policy initiatives on critical emerging technologies, including the bipartisan National AI Initiative and National Quantum Initiative Acts. I played a key role in establishing the National AI Initiative Office and the National Quantum Coordination Office at OSTP, drafting the Administration's research and development (R&D) budget priorities, and securing a historic doubling of Federal AI and quantum research funding. Additionally, I spearheaded the creation of a billion-dollar program to establish a network of AI and quantum research institutes nationwide, and developed pioneering regulatory principles for AI governance. On the global stage, I led U.S. technology efforts at the G7, G20, and OECD, where I helped shape the world's first intergovernmental AI policy guidelines.

Having spent four years leading OSTP's technology efforts, I deeply understand the office's role within the Executive Office of the President and how to effectively support the President's science and technology agenda. I also served as the acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, where I oversaw the Department of Defense's \$60 billion R&D budget—the largest R&D budget for a single organization globally. I managed the DoD's laboratory enterprise, supervising all research, engineering, development, and prototyping at the Pentagon. I understand the importance of science and technology to our national security and how to work across the interagency to successfully coordinate national S&T policy.

For the past four years, I have worked as the Managing Director of Scale AI, one of the largest privately held AI companies in the world. Given the central role that artificial intelligence will play in the coming decade, and with much of the innovation driven by the private sector, I believe my background uniquely qualifies me to bridge the gap between government and industry in this critical technology area. Additionally, I have served as a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI, where I've further deepened my understanding of the intersection between AI, policy, and the Nation. Maintaining American leadership in AI and other emerging technologies will require the U.S. to leverage the totality of its S&T enterprise, fostering collaboration among industry, academia, and government.

I am driven by the belief that embracing technological innovation and developing new technologies rooted in American values is key to securing a stronger future for our country. I wish to serve in this role to continue advancing these goals and help ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of science and technology for the benefit of all Americans.

23. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency/commission/corporation has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

As Director of OSTP, I would be responsible for ensuring that the office's resources are managed effectively and in alignment with its mission and strategic priorities. This includes overseeing that all management processes, financial controls, and reporting procedures meet established laws and regulations. It is critical that we maintain transparency and accountability in all aspects of OSTP's operations, ensuring that taxpayer resources are used efficiently to advance our national science and technology agenda. During my previous tenure at OSTP, I led the technology policy team, managing the development and dissemination of numerous reports, executive orders, presidential memoranda, and initiatives across a wide range of fields—from artificial intelligence and quantum computing to STEM education and rural broadband. In doing so, I worked closely with cross-functional teams to ensure that our work was executed on time and within budget, meeting the highest standards of quality and compliance.

In addition to my work at OSTP, I have substantial experience managing large, fast-growing organizations. As Managing Director of Scale AI, I was part of a team that helped grow the company to nearly \$14 billion valuation, while significantly in-

creasing the workforce to support this rapid expansion in under four years. My role required overseeing complex operational and strategic decisions, managing large budgets, and ensuring that the company's operations were aligned with our long-term goals. This experience has given me a strong understanding of how to scale an organization while maintaining efficiency, financial integrity, and accountability.

Earlier in my career, I served as Principal and Chief of Staff at Thiel Capital, where I worked across various affiliated entities, including venture capital funds, hedge funds, and a philanthropic organization. In this capacity, I provided strategic support and ensured that projects were executed efficiently and effectively. Additionally, as Chief Financial Officer and Chief Compliance Officer of Clarium Capital Management, a global macro hedge fund, I oversaw all operations, financial reporting, and compliance functions.

24. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department/agency/commission/corporation, and why?

The first challenge facing OSTP today is ensuring American leadership in the development and deployment of critical and emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence and quantum information science—to strengthen our economic and national security. In an era of geopolitical competition increasingly centered on technology rather than just military power, it's essential that the United States maintain technological superiority and that these technologies are developed in alignment with American values. Achieving this will require proactive policies to maximize the effectiveness of the Federal government's role in America's research and development (R&D) ecosystem, in partnership with academia and industry. OSTP plays a crucial role in identifying key Federal R&D investment priorities and improving the coordination of these investments across the government. We must think creatively about how the Federal government can help catalyze the American S&T enterprise, pairing R&D with necessary investments in infrastructure, workforce development, and technology governance to ensure these innovations serve national interests.

The second challenge is ensuring that all Americans benefit from the scientific and technological advances we make in developing these emerging technologies. This requires sound Federal policies to facilitate technology transfer from federally funded research to the commercial sector, and to ensure that such research is disseminated widely across both academic and industry spheres. As OSTP's authorizing statute outlines, it is the government's responsibility to "facilitate the close coupling of institutional scientific research with the commercial application of the useful findings of science." By promoting stronger collaboration between the government and the private sector, we can turn the discoveries from Federal labs into technologies that benefit all Americans—and the world. In certain areas, a deregulatory agenda will be necessary to eliminate barriers that stifle innovation, enabling the brightest minds in our Nation to thrive. This approach will also foster the testing and evaluation of new technologies, which, along with responsible oversight, will build public trust and accelerate technology adoption. As technology increasingly permeates every facet of our lives, we must engage a broader set of stakeholders to ensure the benefits of scientific and technological achievements are felt by all Americans.

Finally, a strong OSTP is critical for informing the President's economic and national security policies through independent, expert judgment. To be effective, OSTP must be staffed with a team of highly skilled professionals capable of providing well-researched scientific and technical analysis. This team must work closely with other White House entities, such as the National Economic Council and the National Security Council, to develop integrated, cross-cutting policies. Additionally, effective staffing of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC)—which coordinates Federal science and technology policy across the interagency—will allow OSTP to leverage expertise across the government and drive innovative solutions that serve both national security and economic strategy. Building OSTP's capacity to foster strong interagency collaboration and providing necessary expertise to the NSTC will be vital in advancing the President's agenda and leading efforts to address critical technology challenges.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts, such as a 401(k) or pension plan.

Thiel Capital: As approved by OSTP Ethics Counsel and OGE, I will continue to participate in my former employer's 401(k) plan. The former employer no longer makes contributions to this plan.

Scale AI: My employment at Scale AI ended on January 17, 2024. As approved by OSTP Ethics Counsel and OGE, I will continue to participate in my former employer's 401(k) plan and HSA. The former employer no longer makes contributions to this plan or HSA.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association, or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain. No.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

I hold equity and options in Scale AI, bitcoin, and ethereum. I will divest of these assets if confirmed, per my ethics agreement. I will follow all recusal obligations as described in my ethics agreement.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

I worked for Scale AI from March 2021 until January 17, 2024. I am no longer an employee and will divest of all of my Scale assets, per my ethics agreement. I will follow all recusal obligations as described in my Ethics Agreement.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

I served as a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at Stanford University and a Board Member of the Foundation for American Innovation, as well as on an advisory board at the University of Oklahoma. I will follow all recusal obligations as described in my Ethics Agreement.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy. None.

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, an Inspector General, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:

- a. Provide the name of the court, agency, association, committee, or group;
- b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;
- c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;
- d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.

No.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, municipal, or foreign government entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain.

I am named as a defendant in a putative class action filed on December 10, 2024 against a former employer by individuals alleging California labor law claims related to their status as independent contractors.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain. No.

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination.

Not applicable.

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency/commission/corporation complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your de-

partment/agency/commission/corporation endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority? Yes.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency/commission/corporation does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistleblowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures? Yes.

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee? Yes.

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so? Yes.

ATTACHMENT 1

Michael J.K. Kratsios

EXPERIENCE

Scale AI San Francisco & Washington D.C.
2021 - 2025

Managing Director

- Executive at \$14bn ventured-back AI company, supporting frontier large language model builders and developing AI solutions for global institutions & governments
- Led Scale's business strategy and global affairs. Oversaw enterprise and public sector business, international expansion, and strategic engagements with governments and policymakers

Executive Office of the President of the United States, The White House Washington, D.C.
2017 - 2021

Chief Technology Officer of the United States

- Served as principal technology policy advisor to the President of the United States
- Reoriented U.S. national technology policy towards an explicit primary focus on ensuring continued American leadership in emerging technologies
- Served as Cabinet-level representative of the United States in international fora, including the G7, G20, and OECD
- Led team of policy advisors driving U.S. policy and priorities on a range of technology issues, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, telecommunications, rural broadband, unmanned aerial systems, autonomous vehicles, entrepreneurship, the digital economy, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and STEM education
- Architected the United States' first National Strategies on Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Information Science
- Oversaw implementation of bipartisan National AI Initiative and National Quantum Initiative Acts
- Established America's first National AI and National Quantum Research Institutes with \$1bn plus in funding
- Issued the world's first AI regulatory guidance; led international effort to establish the Global Partnership on AI
- Launched the American Broadband Initiative, awarding \$2bn in grants to support rural connectivity
- Co-founded COVID-19 HPC Consortium, the largest public-private computing partnership ever created
- Unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate

United States Department of Defense Washington, D.C.
2020 - 2021

Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (Acting)

- Served as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense for technology, supervising all defense research and engineering, technology development, transition, prototyping, experimentation, and developmental testing activities
- Led ten-thousand-person organization that included DARPA, the Missile Defense Agency, the Defense Innovation Unit, the Space Development Agency, and the DoD laboratory enterprise
- Managed an over \$60bn budget, the largest R&D budget for a single organization in the world
- Oversaw the DoD's 5G portfolio; launched world's largest full-scale 5G test at military installations across the U.S.
- Served as third highest ranking official at the Pentagon

Thiel Capital San Francisco, CA
2014 - 2017

Principal & Chief of Staff, Thiel Capital

- Oversaw investment subsidiaries and all initiatives involving Mr. Thiel, investing in and advising tech companies

Chief Financial Officer and Chief Compliance Officer, Clarium Capital Management 2010 - 2015

- Managed operations, financial reporting, & regulatory compliance of \$1bn SEC-registered global macro hedge fund

Barclays New York, NY
Analyst, Investment Banking Division Summer 2007 & 2008 - 2009

EDUCATION

Princeton University (A.B. in Politics, *magna cum laude*, 2008) Princeton, NJ

Tsinghua University, School of Economics and Management (Visiting Scholar, 2010) Beijing, China

OTHER

Clearance: Top Secret / Sensitive Compartmented Information

Affiliations: Distinguished Fellow at Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI and at the Council on Competitiveness

Other: Recipient of Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Medal (highest honorary award conferred by DoD), Fortune 40 Under 40, fluent in modern Greek, marathon runner & Boston Marathon qualifier, published in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *WIRED*, *Bloomberg*, *Newsweek*, & *Fortune*

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Kratsios. Mr. Meador.

**STATEMENT OF MARK MEADOR, NOMINEE TO BE A
COMMISSIONER, FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION**

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Senate Commerce Committee. It was a pleasure meeting with several of you and your staff over the past weeks, and it is an honor to be with you all today.

I am humbled by the trust and confidence President Trump has placed in me to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission and to help implement his agenda to improve the lives of American families. Thank you for this opportunity to serve our country.

Thank you also, Senator Lee, for your very kind introduction, your unfailing support and friendship, and the opportunity to serve as your antitrust counselor, not once, but twice. Your example of leadership has provided a model of public service that I will strive to emulate in my entire career.

Before offering some brief remarks, I would like to recognize several people who have joined me here today. First and foremost is my best friend, confidant, and devoted wife, Adrienne, who has joined me along with our six children, Constance, who is 13, Ross, who is 12, Ambrose, who is 10, Veronica, who is 8, Silas, who is 6, and John, who is 3.

Many people have heard me say—by the way, I am impressed that I remembered all of those. That is my—that was my goal for the day.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MEADOR. Yes. That makes it easier, actually. Many people have heard me say that working in the Senate was the best job I ever had. But truth be told, even if I am confirmed to this position, carrying and providing for the seven people seated behind me will always be my best and most important job.

Last, but far from least, I am also joined today by my parents, Brad and Elise Meador, to whom I owe more than time permits me to recount. After my faith in Christ, the greatest gift my parents gave me was a childhood marked by unconditional love and a dedication to others. After growing up the son of a nomadic Army officer, my dad prioritized stability for our family.

He turned down other jobs to continue his career with the United States Postal Service, and always made sure there was time to teach me to golf or accompany me on camping trips. My mom was always there for us when we got home from school, even while working part time to make ends meet, and yet somehow also found time to open a soup kitchen at our church.

Thank you both for teaching me the value of service, and how to be a loving and present father, and husband for my own family. These examples of hard work and sacrifice were deeply formative for me and solidified my decision to embark on a career of public service.

As many of you know, I have worked as a Federal antitrust enforcer and policy advisor, including at the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division and here in the Senate. And if I am fortunate

enough to be confirmed to this position, I will be returning home to where I began my career, the Federal Trade Commission.

To do so would be the honor of a lifetime. The FTC plays a critical role in protecting American consumers. Its twin missions, to stop unfair methods of competition and to protect consumers, have arguably never been more important. President Trump is correct that America is facing an affordability crisis.

Our free market system is the bedrock of the American economy, and yet many Americans feel that it is no longer working for them or to their benefit. They value hard work and free enterprise, but at times feel that honest competition has been replaced by concentrated economic powers that take them for granted. A truly free market, however, requires the availability of meaningful choices for consumers.

This includes the benefit of vibrant competition that leads to lower prices and higher quality. It also means acknowledging that Americans are not just consumers, they are mothers and fathers, neighbors and friends. Protecting competition in all of our markets is essential to ensuring that America's free market economy operates as our servant, not our master.

At the same time that American families are struggling to make ends meet, fraudulent and deceptive practices threaten not just their wealth, but the well-being of their children and loved ones. Unscrupulous actors seek to profit off our children by exploiting their privacy, innocence, and vulnerability.

Chairman Cruz put it especially well when he remarked that today's families face a challenge previous generations could not imagine, a rapidly changing digital environment targeting our kids. Parents struggle to navigate the maze of putatively free services and social media sites that impose hidden but growing costs on their children's mental health and safety.

One of the FTC's most important missions in the years to come will be using its consumer protection authority to safeguard families from those seeking to take advantage of the most vulnerable.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the FTC's precious enforcement resources are focused on the cases most needed to protect consumers and move the law in the right direction, not wasted on pet projects that risk making bad law or distract from addressing real threats to American consumers.

FTC enforcement decisions should be based on the facts and the law, and the law should be vigorously and fairly enforced. America needs an FTC that is focused on law enforcement, provides clear guidance, and ensures the public's trust in the agency, and FTC staff need leaders who work alongside them, not just over them.

The challenges facing our economy are great, but so is our resolve. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson and my fellow Commissioners to help American consumers by fighting to protect the competitive process that keeps markets free and the families that give value to our freedom. Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement and biographical information of Mr. Meador follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK R. MEADOR, NOMINEE TO BE COMMISSIONER,
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Thank you, Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Senate Commerce Committee. It was a pleasure meeting with several of you and your staff over the past weeks, and it is in an honor to be with you all today.

I am humbled by the trust and confidence President Trump has placed in me to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission, and to help implement his agenda to improve the lives of American families. Thank you for this opportunity to serve our country.

Thank you also, Senator Lee, for your very kind introduction, your unfailing support and friendship, and the opportunity to serve as your antitrust counselor not once, but twice. Your example of leadership has provided a model of public service that I will strive to emulate my entire career.

Before offering some brief remarks, I would like to recognize several people who have joined me here today.

First and foremost is my best friend, confidant, and devoted wife, Adrienne, who has joined me along with our six children: Constance, 13; Ross, 12; Ambrose, 10; Veronica, 8; Silas, 6; and John, 3. Many people have heard me say that working in the senate was the best job I ever had. But truth be told, even if I am confirmed to this position, caring and providing for the seven people seated behind me will always be my best and most important job.

Last, but far from least, I am also joined today by my parents, Brad and Elyce Meador, to whom I owe more than time permits me to recount. After my faith in Christ, the greatest gift my parents gave me was a childhood marked by unconditional love and a dedication to others.

After growing up the son of a nomadic Army officer, my dad prioritized stability for our family. He turned down other jobs to continue his career with the United States Postal Service, and always made sure there was time to teach me to golf or accompany me on camping trips. My mom was always there for us when we got home from school, even while working part-time to make ends meet, and yet somehow also found time to open a soup kitchen at our church. Thank you, both, for teaching me the value of service and how to be a loving and present father and husband for my own family.

These examples of hard work and sacrifice were deeply formative for me, and solidified my decision to embark on a career of public service.

As many of you here know, I have worked as a Federal antitrust enforcer and policy advisor, including at the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division and here in the Senate. And if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed to this position, I will be returning home to where I began my career: the Federal Trade Commission. To do so would be the honor of a lifetime.

The FTC plays a critical role in protecting American consumers. Its twin missions—to stop unfair methods of competition, and to protect consumers—have arguably never been more important.

President Trump is correct that America is facing an affordability crisis.

Our free-market system is the bedrock of the American economy, and yet many Americans feel that it is no longer working for them or to their benefit. They value hard work and free enterprise, but at times feel that honest competition has been replaced by concentrated economic powers that take them for granted.

A truly free market, however, requires the availability of meaningful choices for consumers. This includes the benefit of vibrant competition that leads to lower prices and higher quality. It also means acknowledging that Americans are not *just* consumers—they are mothers and fathers, neighbors and friends. Protecting competition in all of our markets is essential to ensuring that America's free market economy operates as our servant, not our master.

At the same time that American families are struggling to make ends meet, fraudulent and deceptive practices threaten not just their wealth but the well-being of their children and loved ones. Unscrupulous actors seek to profit off our children by exploiting their privacy, innocence, and vulnerability.

Chairman Cruz put it especially well when he remarked that, "today's families face a challenge previous generations could not imagine: a rapidly changing digital environment targeting our kids." Parents struggle to navigate the maze of putatively "free" services and social media sites that impose hidden, but growing costs on their children's mental health and safety. One of the FTC's most important missions in the years to come will be using its consumer protection authority to safeguard families from those seeking to take advantage of the most vulnerable.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the FTC's precious enforcement resources are focused on the cases most needed to protect consumers and move the law in the

right direction, not wasted on pet projects that risk making bad law or distract from addressing real threats to American consumers. FTC enforcement decisions should be based on the facts and the law, and the law should be enforced vigorously and fairly.

America needs an FTC that is focused on law enforcement, provides clear guidance, and ensures the public's trust in the agency. And FTC staff need leaders who work alongside them, not just over them.

The challenges facing our economy are great, but so is our resolve. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson and my fellow commissioners to help American consumers by fighting to protect the competitive process that keeps markets free and the families that give value to our freedom.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Name (Include any former names or nicknames used): Mark Ross Meador.
2. Position to which nominated: Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission.
3. Date of Nomination: January 20, 2025.
4. Address (List current place of residence and office addresses):

Residence: Information not released to the public.

Office: Kressin Meador Powers LLC, 400 7th Street NW, Unit 300, Washington, DC 20004.

5. Date and Place of Birth: March 16, 1985; Bloomington, Indiana.

6. Provide the name, position, and place of employment for your spouse (if married) or domestic partner, and the names and ages of your children (including step-children and children by a previous marriage).

Spouse: Adrienne Lee Meador, Teacher, St. Nicholas Academic Community.

7. List all college and graduate schools attended, whether or not you were granted a degree by the institution. Provide the name of the institution, the dates attended, the degree received, and the date of the degree.

University of Houston Law Center, 2008–2011, J.D. awarded May 2011

University of Chicago, 2003–2007, A.B., Philosophy, awarded June 2007.

8. List all post-undergraduate employment, including the job title, name of employer, and inclusive dates of employment, and highlight all management-level jobs held and any non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which you are nominated.

Visiting Fellow, The Heritage Foundation Tech Policy Center, October 2023 to present*

Partner, Kressin Meador Powers LLC, July 2023 to present*

Deputy Chief Counsel for Antitrust & Competition Policy, Senator Mike Lee, United States Senate, January 2022 to June 2023*

Counsel Detailee, United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy & Consumer Rights, July 2020 to December 2021*

Trial Attorney, United States Department of Justice, Antitrust Division, Transportation, Energy & Agriculture Section, August 2019 to December 2021*

Associate, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, August 2016 to July 2019*

Associate, Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP, July 2016 to August 2016*

Counsel Detailee, United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy & Consumer Rights, August 2015 to July 2016*

Attorney, Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Competition, Health Care Division, October 2011 to July 2016*

Legal Editorial Assistant, Jones McClure Publishing, January 2011 to June 2011

Law Clerk, Office of the Attorney General of Texas, Antitrust Section, June 2010 to November 2010*

Intern, Liberty Legal Institute (now First Liberty Institute), June 2009 to July 2009

Intern, The Trinity Forum, May 2008 to August 2008

Legal Assistant, Kass & Moses, P.C., August 2005 to January 2008

* denotes management-level jobs and non-managerial jobs that relate to the position for which I have been nominated.

9. Attach a copy of your résumé.

See Attachment A.

10. List any advisory, consultative, honorary, or other part-time service or positions with Federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above after 18 years of age. None.

11. List all positions held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business, enterprise, educational, or other institution.

Partner, Kressin Meador Powers LLC

Visiting Fellow, The Heritage Foundation Tech Policy Center

12. List all memberships you have had after 18 years of age or currently hold with any civic, social, charitable, educational, political, professional, fraternal, benevolent or religiously affiliated organization, private club, or other membership organization (You do not have to list your religious affiliation or membership in a religious house of worship or institution). Include dates of membership and any positions you have held with any organization. Please note whether any such club or organization restricts membership on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

Texas Bar, Member, 2011 to present (inactive since 2017)

District of Columbia Bar, Member, 2017 to present

Supreme Court of the United States, Bar Member, 2023 to present

U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Bar Member, 2024 to present

American Bar Association, Antitrust Law Section, Member, 2011–2019, 2023 to present

- Vice-Chair, U.S. Comments & Policy Committee, 2023 to 2024
- The Federalist Society, Member, 2008 to present
- Executive Committee Member, Corporations, Securities & Antitrust Practice Group, 2022 to 2024
- Vice President, UHLC Student Chapter, 2009–2010
- American Compass, Member, 2024 to present
- Trail Life USA, Troop VA–1188, Adult Leader, 2023 to present
- Fauquier Amateur Radio Association, Member, 2021 to present
- American Radio Relay League, Member, 2023 to present
- Fan Fairness Coalition, President, 2023 to 2024
- John Sherman Foundation, Board Member, 2024 to 2024
- Boy Scouts of America, Cub Scout Pack 1188, Adult Leader, 2019 to 2023
- Elite Shooting Sports, Member, 2017 to 2023
- National Rifle Association, Member, 2017 to 2022
- Houston Business & Tax Law Journal, Member, 2009–2011
- Editor-in-Chief, 2010–2011
- UHLC Advocates for Life, Founder and President, 2010–2011
- The Edmund Burke Society, Member, 2004 to present
- Secretary, Winter Quarter 2006

None of these organizations discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Trail Life USA is a Christian organization for boys; I am not familiar with any formal membership restrictions. None of the other organizations restrict membership on the basis of sex or religion.

13. Have you ever been a candidate for and/or held a public office (elected, non-elected, or appointed)? If so, indicate whether any campaign has any outstanding debt, the amount, and whether you are personally liable for that debt. No.

14. List all memberships and offices held with and services rendered to, whether compensated or not, any political party or election committee within the past ten years. If you have held a paid position or served in a formal or official advisory position (whether compensated or not) in a political campaign within the past ten years, identify the particulars of the campaign, including the candidate, year of the campaign, and your title and responsibilities. None.

15. Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$200 or more for the past ten years.

Trump 47 Committee—\$516.43 (October 9, 2024)

16. List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievements.

Blackstone Fellow, Alliance Defending Freedom
 Dean's Scholar, University of Houston Law Center
 Fellow, The John Jay Institute
 Honors Fellow, Intercollegiate Studies Institute
 Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America

17. List all books, articles, columns, letters to the editor, Internet blog postings, or other publications you have authored, individually or with others. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the publication when available.

Mark Meador & Annie Chestnut Tutor, *Don't Let Empty Objections Stop the Kids Online Safety Act*, THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION (Aug. 6, 2024), <https://www.heritage.org/big-tech/commentary/dont-let-empty-objections-stop-the-kids-online-safety-act>.

Mark Meador, *Ticketmaster's 'Legally Permissible' Abuse of Monopoly Power Won't Fly*, SPORTICO (July 18, 2024), <https://www.sportico.com/law/analysis/2024/ticketmasters-abuse-of-monopoly-power-wont-fly-1234789894/>.

Mark Meador, *Not Enforcing the Robinson-Patman Act is Lawless and Likely Harms Consumers*, FEDSOC BLOG (Jul. 9, 2024), <https://fedsoc.org/commentary/fedsoc-blog/not-enforcing-the-robinson-patman-act-is-lawless-and-likely-harms-consumers>.

Mark Meador & Joel Thayer, *Why the TikTok bill is constitutional*, THE HILL (Mar. 27, 2024, 3:00 PM), <https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/4536696-why-the-tiktok-bill-is-constitutional/>.

Mark Meador, *MEADOR: Break Up Live Nation Ticketmaster To Protect Fans*, DAILY CALLER (Jan. 26, 2024, 10:59 AM), <https://dailycaller.com/2024/01/26/meador-live-action-ticketmaster-antitrust/>.

International Comparative Legal Guide to: Vertical Agreements and Dominant Firms 2018, Chapter 20: USA, available at https://www.acc.com/sites/default/files/resources/vl/membersonly/Article/1488171_1.pdf.

International Comparative Legal Guide to: Vertical Agreements and Dominant Firms 2017, Chapter 19: USA, available at https://www.acc.com/sites/default/files/resources/vl/membersonly/Article/1461931_1.pdf.

Mark R. Meador, *Squeezing the Middleman: Ending Underhanded Dealing in the Pharmacy Benefit Management Industry Through Regulation*, 21 ANN. HEALTH LAW 77 (2011), available at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1875249.

18. List all speeches, panel discussions, and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint) that you have given on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Include a link to each publication when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the speech or presentation when available.

Panelist at Heritage Foundation panel: *Defending Digital Boundaries: The Conservative Case for Online Protection* (Sept. 24, 2024) <https://www.heritage.org/big-tech/event/defending-digital-boundaries-the-conservative-case-online-protection>.

Panelist at Project Sphere panel: *How Does A.I. Affect Education?*, <https://www.projectsphere.org/episode/how-does-a-i-affect-education/>.

Panelist at Project Sphere panel: *How Should We Address the Challenges Around A.I.?*, <https://www.projectsphere.org/episode/how-should-we-address-the-challenges-around-a-i/>.

Panelist at Project Sphere panel: *Should We Be Optimistic About Technology? Online Access and Connectivity*, <https://www.projectsphere.org/episode/should-we-be-optimistic-about-technology-online-access-and-connectivity/>.

Presenter, American Moment Foundations of American Statecraft Course, Navigating Antitrust Law: Insights from Policy and Practice (April and October 2024).

Panelist at DOJ–FTC Joint Workshop: Evolving Approaches to Mergers Between Rivals from the 2010 HMG to the Draft Merger Guidelines (Sept. 5, 2023), <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/events/2023/09/2023-draft-merger-guidelines-workshop>.

Panelist at ABA Antitrust Law Section Fall Forum panel: Legislative Reform—Competition Policy as Staple Gun (Nov. 17, 2022).

Panelist at Competition Policy International panel: Challenges in Merger Enforcement—Where Next? (Nov. 16, 2022) <https://www.competitionpolicyinternational.com/challenges-in-merger-enforcement-where-next-recording>.

Panelist at Bipartisan Policy Center panel: Big Tech and M&A: Killer Acquisitions and Kill Zones? (Oct. 31, 2022), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCD2sdhLUi0>.

Panelist at ABA Antitrust Law Section Legislation Committee panel: Update on the State Antitrust Enforcement Venue Act (July 11, 2022).

Keynote Address at the GW Regulatory Studies Center and Information Technology and Innovation Foundation Conference: Dynamic Competition and Public Policy (April 14, 2022), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zX9E5O-a_Zw&t=31705s.

Panelist at the George Mason Law Review and Global Antitrust Institute 25 Years of Antitrust Symposium: Proposals to Change the Antitrust Laws (Feb. 25, 2022), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHDarN3hQyI>.

Panelist at ABA Antitrust Law Section Legislation Committee panel: Antitrust Legislation in Congress in 2016—A Preview (Feb. 17, 2016).

19. List all public statements you have made during the past ten years, including statements in news articles and radio and podcasts and television appearances, which are on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated, including dates. Include a link to each statement when possible. If a link is not available, provide a digital copy of the statement when available.

I have done my best to identify all public statements I have made over the past ten years, including statements in news articles and radio and podcasts and television appearances, which are on topics relevant to the position for which I have been nominated, including through a review of personal files and searches of publicly available electronic databases. Despite my best efforts, there may be other materials I have been unable to identify, find, or remember. I have located the following:

Merger Monthly: HSR Form's Additional Information Requirements Further Institutionalize New Era of Merger Scrutiny, THE CAPITOL FORUM, Oct. 14, 2024, (digital copy provided).

Antitrust Case Against Visa Debit Lights the Way for Probe of Firm's Dominance in Credit Cards, Industry Experts, Lawyers Say, THE CAPITOL FORUM, Sept. 26, 2024 (digital copy provided).

The FOX News Rundown, FOX News Radio (Sep. 9, 2024), <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/house-probe-of-afghanistan-exit-details-catastrophic/id1303660358?i=1000668857119> (discussing Live Nation-Ticketmaster).

Moment of Truth: Google's Worst Day Is Here (ft. Mark Meador), American Moment (Aug. 12, 2024), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqm4EAVyiAM>.

The Dynamist: Did Google Monopolize Ad-Tech? w/Mark Meador, The Foundation for American Innovation (August 8, 2023), <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/episode-30-did-google-monopolize-ad-tech-w-mark-meador/id1528920211>.

Matthew Perlman, *4 Takeaways From Landmark Google Search Ruling*, LAW360, Aug. 6, 2024, <https://www.law360.com/articles/1867101/4-takeaways-from-landmark-google-search-ruling>.

Stefania Palma and James Fontanella-Khan, *JD Vance and Kamala Harris scramble U.S. dealmakers' election strategies*, FINANCIAL TIMES, July 24, 2024, <https://www.ft.com/content/6be260f4-daeb-441c-97c3-67be65242797>.

Ashley Gold and Maria Curi, *Tech after a Trump victory*, AXIOS, July 17, 2024, <https://www.axios.com/pro/tech-policy/2024/07/17/tech-after-a-trump-victory>.

Anna Langlois and Ben Remaly, *Past settlements may boost DOJ's bid for Live Nation breakup*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, May 24, 2024, <https://global>

[competitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/past-settlements-may-boost-doj-bid-live-nation-breakup](https://www.competitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/past-settlements-may-boost-doj-bid-live-nation-breakup).

Daysia Tolentino and Rob Wile, *'It is time to break up Live Nation': DOJ sues Ticketmaster parent over alleged monopoly*, NBC NEWS, May 23, 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/ticketmaster-sued-department-justice-monopoly-rcna153645>.

Rob Wile, *What the Ticketmaster-Live Nation lawsuit could mean for fans of live music*, NBC NEWS, May 23, 2024, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/ticketmaster-live-nation-lawsuit-mean-fans-live-music-rcna153739>.

Anna Langlois, *Powers moves to antitrust boutique*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, April 29, 2024, <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/powers-moves-antitrust-boutique>.

Anna Langlois, *Visa, Mastercard allow steering to resolve interchange fee case*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, Mar. 27, 2024, <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/visa-mastercard-allow-steering-resolve-interchange-fee-case>.

Open Letter to Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Kanter (Mar. 21, 2024), available at <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/d8lrla4f/staging/23fa7c81de31d2c97e58b81285af85f719b5721f.pdf>.

Kathleen Murphy, *Meador joins Heritage*, FTCWATCH, Jan. 29, 2024 (digital copy provided).

Chris May, *Comment: Major League Baseball scores postponed reckoning over U.S. Federal antitrust exemption with settlements*, MLEX, Nov. 7, 2023, <https://www.mlex.com/mlex/articles/2000158/comment-major-league-baseball-scores-postponed-reckoning-over-us-federal-antitrust-exemption-with-settlements>.

Marcia Brown, *The Next Generation of Law Students Is Obsessed With Lina Khan*, POLITICO MAGAZINE, Nov. 6, 2023, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/11/06/law-students-antitrust-lina-khan-00124240>.

Anna Langlois, *Congressional committees float proposals to curb DOJ funding*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, Aug. 9, 2023, <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/congressional-committees-float-proposals-curb-doj-funding>.

Moment of Truth: Will We Revolutionize Antitrust? (ft. Mark Meador), American Moment (July 31, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4lGMBf6-ys>.

David Mamone, *Mark Meador: the exit interview*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, July 3, 2023, <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/mark-meador-the-exit-interview>.

Ben Remaly and David Mamone, *Boutique of former Kanter colleagues grows with Senate hire*, GLOBAL COMPETITION REVIEW, July 3, 2023, <https://globalcompetitionreview.com/gcr-usa/article/boutique-of-former-kanter-colleagues-grows-senate-hire>.

Our Curious Amalgam: #215 What Does Antitrust Counsel to a United States Senator Do? A Conversation With Mark Meador, American Bar Association (Apr. 23, 2023), <https://ourcuriousamalgam.com/episode/215-mark-meador/>.

20. List all digital platforms (including social media and other digital content sites) on which you currently or have formerly operated an account, regardless of whether or not the account was held in your name or an alias. Include the full name of an “alias” or “handle”, including the complete URL and username with hyperlinks, you have used on each of the named platforms. Indicate whether the account is active, deleted, or dormant. Include a link to each account if possible.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/markmeador/> (active)

X: @mrmeador (active)

Instagram: @mrmeador (deactivated)

Facebook: Mark Meador (deleted)

Substack: @mrmeador (active, reading only)

QRZ.com: K3ATR, <https://www.qrz.com/db/k3atr> (active)

Clubhouse: @mrmeador (dormant)

TruthSocial: @mrmeador (dormant)

GETTR: @mrmeador (dormant)

SSRN: Mark R. Meador, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per_id=1658093 (active)

21. Please identify each instance in which you have testified orally or in writing before Congress in a governmental or non-governmental capacity and specify the date, committee, and subject matter of each testimony. None.

22. Given the current mission, major programs, and major operational objectives of the department/agency/commission/corporation to which you have been nominated, what in your background or employment experience do you believe affirmatively qualifies you for appointment to the position for which you have been nominated, and why do you wish to serve in that position?

The Federal Trade Commission bears the incredibly important responsibility to ensure fairness in American markets by preventing anticompetitive conduct and mergers and unfair and deceptive practices. I have dedicated my career to the pursuit of these same goals and believe they are fundamental to ushering in the President's vision for America's golden age.

To start, my antitrust experience spans over many vantage points and includes advising at the highest levels. I began my career as a staff attorney in the Health Care Division of the Bureau of Competition at the FTC, where I spearheaded investigations into complex health care markets. I have also served as a staff attorney at the Antitrust Division of the United States Department of Justice, where I played a leading role in efforts to protect consumers and competition in the transportation, technology, and fintech industries.

I leveraged these experiences as antitrust counsel in the United States Senate for Senator Mike Lee, where I assisted in drafting and reviewing antitrust legislation. I also advised on oversight of Federal antitrust enforcers, working to ensure that the agencies promoted consumer welfare and adhered to their stated mission as defined by Congress.

I have spent several years practicing antitrust law in private practice, both at a large defense-oriented firm and at my own small firm specializing in offense-oriented antitrust. I have appeared before FTC and DOJ both to defend parties under investigation and to solicit investigations on behalf of victims. These experiences have given me insight into the challenges faced by both antitrust defendants and private plaintiffs, something that I believe is essential to making sound judgments as an antitrust enforcer.

Outside of my legal practice, I have also been a strong advocate for protecting children online. Alongside the FTC's critical work to prevent fraud, scams, and other predatory conduct against consumers, protecting our children from the dangers posed by various social media platforms is one of the agency's highest callings. As a father of six, I take this responsibility seriously and understand the challenges that parents face in striking the right balance for the role of technology in their kids' lives.

I care deeply about the FTC's mission, as well as for the rule of law. My experiences have made me sensitive to the effects that legal and regulatory policies have on stakeholders, consumers, and most importantly American families. What's more, I have the proven ability to find the balance between Federal governance, private companies, and consumers in promoting a healthy and sustainable marketplace. If confirmed, I look forward to using my diverse experiences as an antitrust lawyer and parent to ensure that the FTC Act is, to borrow the words of President Trump, "enforced both vigorously and fairly, with clear rules that facilitate, rather than stifle, the ingenuity of our greatest companies."

23. What do you believe are your responsibilities, if confirmed, to ensure that the department/agency/commission/corporation has proper management and accounting controls, and what experience do you have in managing a large organization?

Prudent stewardship of taxpayer resources is one of the most important responsibilities of the executive branch. If confirmed, my responsibility will be to work with the Chairman, other Commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that agency resources are used efficiently and effectively to fulfill the agency's mission within the bounds of the law.

I have experience managing large teams of attorneys in private practice, supervising teams of law clerks on the Senate Antitrust Subcommittee, and managing a law firm. I also have six children.

24. What do you believe to be the top three challenges facing the department/agency/commission/corporation, and why?

The top three challenges facing the FTC are: (1) the growing number and complexity of threats to the American family and consumer, oversight of which has been hampered by the misallocation of resources under the prior administration; (2) a staff that has been demoralized by four years of mismanagement; and (3) a lack of trust within the business community after four years of repeated leaks of confidential information, weaponized and unpredictable agency procedures, and politicized enforcement actions.

B. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe all financial arrangements, deferred compensation agreements, and other continuing dealings with business associates, clients, or customers. Please include information related to retirement accounts, such as a 401(k) or pension plan.

Upon confirmation, I will resign from Kressin Meador Powers LLC and forfeit my interest in any contingency cases. In exchange for forfeiting my interest in any contingency cases, the firm will make a payment to my capital account, the amount of which will be fixed before I enter government service. The firm also will pay into my capital account partnership distributions to which I was entitled at the time of my departure. This payment will be based solely on the firm's earnings through the date of my withdrawal, and the amount of the payment will be fixed before I enter government service. The amounts in my capital account will be paid to me over a period of six months. The firm also will be renamed to remove my name.

2. Do you have any commitments or agreements, formal or informal, to maintain employment, affiliation, or practice with any business, association, or other organization during your appointment? If so, please explain. No.

3. Indicate any investments, obligations, liabilities, or other relationships which could involve potential conflicts of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the U.S. Office of Government Ethics and the Federal Trade Commission's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. If confirmed, any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of the ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commission's Designated Agency Ethics Official.

4. Describe any business relationship, dealing, or financial transaction which you have had during the last ten years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated. Explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the U.S. Office of Government Ethics and the Federal Trade Commission's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify potential conflicts of interest. If confirmed, any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of the ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Commission's Designated Agency Ethics Official.

5. Identify any other potential conflicts of interest and explain how you will resolve each potential conflict of interest.

I am not aware of any other potential conflicts of interest.

6. Describe any activity during the past ten years, including the names of clients represented, in which you have been engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration and execution of law or public policy.

During my time as a detailee and employee of the Senate, my responsibilities included working on the drafting, negotiating, and passage of legislation, as well as oversight of the FTC and DOJ Antitrust Division.

In private practice, especially in my current role, I have frequently been retained by persons harmed by violations of the antitrust laws. Those engagements typically entail meeting with Federal and/or state antitrust enforcers to share concerns and seek an investigation and/or enforcement action (*i.e.*, "influence . . . the administration and execution of law"). Victims in antitrust cases are extremely vulnerable to retaliation, and therefore my representation of those parties is highly confidential in addition to being protected by the attorney-client privilege. The Rules of Professional Conduct for the District of Columbia Bar prevent me from disclosing the identity of those clients.

The National Grocers Association retained me to provide antitrust counseling and legal advice on a number of matters. This included guidance on model legislation to protect competition in the grocery sector.

C. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics, professional misconduct, or retaliation by, or been the subject of a complaint to, any court, administrative agency, the Office of Special Counsel, an Inspector General, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If yes:

a. Provide the name of the court, agency, association, committee, or group;

- b. Provide the date the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action was issued or initiated;
- c. Describe the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action;
- d. Provide the results of the citation, disciplinary action, complaint, or personnel action.

No.

2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged, or held by any Federal, State, or other law enforcement authority of any Federal, State, county, municipal, or foreign government entity, other than for a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

3. Have you or any business or nonprofit of which you are or were an officer ever been involved as a party in an administrative agency proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil litigation? If so, please explain.

In 2007, a roommate and I were plaintiffs in a lawsuit against our former landlord, in which we alleged that he had comingled funds in violation of Chicago city ordinances. The matter settled shortly after the suit was filed. The case number was 2007-MI-179986, in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Municipal Department, First District.

4. Have you ever been convicted (including pleas of guilty or *nolo contendere*) of any criminal violation other than a minor traffic offense? If so, please explain. No.

5. Have you ever been accused, formally or informally, of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other basis? If so, please explain.

In 2018, while at Paul, Weiss, I was the senior associate overseeing a second request response for a client. My duties included managing a significant number of junior associates. One junior associate, a male, consistently turned in work that was late and of poor quality. After a short period, I removed him from the matter, over his strenuous objections. In retaliation, he made baseless allegations in a written "upward review" that I had engaged in favoritism toward male associates while managing the matter. I was shocked to see this, as nearly all of the associates to whom I entrusted the most important tasks and from whom I received the best work product were women. After reading the allegations, I shared them with two of the female associates I oversaw, and they both confirmed that there was absolutely no merit to the claims. The concern was never raised to me by anyone else at the firm, and the male associate parted ways with the firm shortly after his next performance review.

6. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be disclosed in connection with your nomination. None.

D. RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMITTEE

1. Will you ensure that your department/agency/commission/corporation complies with deadlines for information set by congressional committees, and that your department/agency/commission/corporation endeavors to timely comply with requests for information from individual Members of Congress, including requests from members in the minority?

If confirmed, I will work diligently with my fellow commissioners to ensure compliance with deadlines and requests for information.

2. Will you ensure that your department/agency/commission/corporation does whatever it can to protect congressional witnesses and whistleblowers from reprisal for their testimony and disclosures? Yes.

3. Will you cooperate in providing the Committee with requested witnesses, including technical experts and career employees, with firsthand knowledge of matters of interest to the Committee? Yes.

4. Are you willing to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress on such occasions as you may be reasonably requested to do so? Yes.

ATTACHMENT A

Mark R. Meador

EXPERIENCE

<i>Kressin Meador Powers LLC</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Partner	July 2023—Present
<i>United States Senate</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Deputy Chief Counsel for Antitrust and Competition Policy to Senator Mike Lee	Jan. 2022—June 2023
▪ Counsel Detailee, Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy & Consumer Rights	July 2020—Dec. 2021
<i>United States Department of Justice</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Trial Attorney, Antitrust Division, Transportation, Energy & Agriculture Section	Aug. 2019—Dec. 2021
<i>Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Associate	Aug. 2016—July 2019
<i>United States Senate</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Counsel Detailee, Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy & Consumer Rights	Aug. 2015—July 2016
<i>Federal Trade Commission</i>	Washington, DC
▪ Attorney, Bureau of Competition, Health Care Division	Oct. 2011—July 2016
<i>Attorney General of Texas</i>	Austin, TX
▪ Law Clerk, Antitrust Section	June 2010—Nov. 2010

EDUCATION

<i>University of Houston Law Center</i>	Houston, TX
▪ Dean's Scholar	J.D., May 2011
▪ Editor-in-Chief, <i>Houston Business and Tax Law Journal</i>	
▪ Vice President, Federalist Society	
▪ Founder & President, Advocates for Life	
<i>University of Chicago</i>	Chicago, IL
▪ General Honors in The College	A.B., Philosophy, June 2007
▪ Secretary, The Edmund Burke Society	

AFFILIATIONS

- Bar Licenses: District of Columbia, 2017 (#1046270); Texas (Inactive), 2011 (#24078988)
- Visiting Fellow, The Heritage Foundation Technology Policy Center
- Member, Federalist Society Corporations, Securities & Antitrust Practice Group Executive Committee
- Member, American Compass
- Vice Chair, American Bar Association Antitrust Law Section, U.S. Comments & Policy Committee
- ISI Honors Fellow
- ADF Blackstone Legal Fellow
- Fauquier Amateur Radio Association
- Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America
- Trail Life Troop 1188

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you to you both. Your backgrounds are remarkable. Mr. Kratsios, let's start with you. Mr. Kratsios, during the first Trump Administration, you served as the U.S. Chief Technology Officer and as the third highest ranking official at the U.S. Department of Defense.

Mr. Meador, you bring extraordinary experience not only from your time at the FTC, but also from your tenure at the Department of Justice in the Antitrust Division, and your work in the Senate as a recidivist, twice going to work for Mike Lee.

Mr. Kratsios, please tell the Committee why do you want to be the Director of the Office of Science Technology Policy?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I deeply believe that it is critically important for our Nation to lead the world in emerging technologies. These are technologies like AI, like quantum, like advanced telecommunications that will power our economy—ensure a long term national security.

And if there is one agency within the Government that can help in this mission is OSTP. It is an organization that was established to coordinate all the disparate science and technology equities across the Government. I am familiar with how the agency operates, and I believe that I can do a very great job in driving these initiatives across Government.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, as Chief Technology Officer during the first Trump Administration, you played a key role in freeing up a significant amount of Federal spectrum for 5G through the AMBIT process. Do you expect that this Administration will again push for freeing up spectrum for commercial use?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think it is critically important to always be looking at ways that we can better utilize the spectrum that is currently being occupied by various Government agencies. And the process that we are able to show in the AMBIT process is that if you bring the right technologies to bear on these problems, we can find a way that can benefit both the national security interest of the United States and the commercial interest.

So I think it is very possible to be done, and I think we just have to bring to bear the great science and technologies at OSTP to help solve the critical technical problems or technical challenges associated with freeing up some of the spectrum.

The CHAIRMAN. And given your experience as a senior leader at the Defense Department, would you agree that it is technologically possible to free up spectrum without compromising national security?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think it is proven that it can be done. It has been done before. And I think if we get the right minds together in a room, I think these are the types of problems that we can solve collectively.

The CHAIRMAN. Terrific. Mr. Meador, during the nomination hearing for Commissioners Ferguson and Holyoak, I noted the challenges posed by evolving markets and emerging technologies. I have long thought the actions of big tech and our reliance on such companies may raise both consumer protection and antitrust concerns.

I was very pleased to see Chairman Ferguson issue a request for information last week seeking public comment regarding technology platforms' censorship. He highlighted that current actions by tech platforms may violate their own terms of service, in violation of Section 5 of the FTC Act.

Mr. Meador, how should the FTC address the challenges posed by emerging technologies and big tech?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the FTC has taken the first step, which is to collect all of the facts. Before we can make any enforcement decision, we need to know the marketplace reality.

And so, reaching out to consumers to hear about their experiences is the very first thing we need to do. After that, it is a matter of looking at the facts under the law to see whether there has been, in the case of a consumer protection matter, some act of unfair practice or a deception of consumers.

And so I am confident that with this first step of collecting information, the FTC is off to the right start. And if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson and the other Commissioners to look at this issue very closely.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you agree that the FTC has ample tools to address the challenge of big tech censorship? And I have long said that I think big tech censorship poses the single greatest threat to free speech and free and fair elections in this country. Do you agree with that assessment?

Mr. MEADOR. I do, Chairman. I believe that the FTC has a lot of tools at its disposal currently, and the first thing that it can do is to undertake an examination of the market through that lens, to see what tools we have available to address the harms that we identify in the marketplace.

Should we encounter some harm that can't be solved with the tools that FTC has today, I would be happy to work with your office and other members of the Committee to discuss what the path forward might be for additional tools to solve that problem.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kratsios, at OSTP you played a pivotal role in advancing the United States's AI strategy, and you helped establish many of the tenets put in place under the 2020 National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act. But some of those tenets were abused by the Biden Administration.

The first Trump Administration's AI initiative emphasized NIST's role in developing basic measurement standards for AI. Under President Biden, misused authorities granted by the AI Initiative Act to develop standards for evaluating supposed AI "risks," and I put that in quote, such as bias and misinformation, testing standards became a Trojan horse for progressive social policies.

In January 2025, President Trump issued a new AI Executive Order in which he directed OSTP to develop an AI action plan. The President knows the United States must avoid the European model of premature regulations, something Vice President J.D. Vance also emphasized in his speech at the Paris AI Summit the other week.

How did the previous Administration deviate from the AI strategy that you put in place, and how do you anticipate that the Trump Administration will build on your past work to ensure American leadership and dominance in AI?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I look forward to, if confirmed, working on the AI action plan with other members of the White House and inter-agency.

The most important thing when you—to me, when you think about applying an AI strategy across the agencies, is to think very carefully and critically about what the individual missions of the various agencies are and align the policy actions associated with the strategy to the mission.

With regards to NIST, for example, NIST has a long bipartisan history of being an agency that does measurement science, and the

work associated with any AI initiative should be in the light of that—it should be focused on measurement science.

So to me, I look forward to working with a wide variety of agencies that would be involved in driving this AI action plan, but most critically and I think through the lens that I would be looking through all this through is understanding what the strengths are of individual agencies and making sure that how they contribute to the larger strategy aligns with that, rather than deviating from it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Blunt Rochester.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. Thank you, Chair Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell. And thank you both to Mr. Meador and Mr. Kratsios for being here. I would like to start with a few questions for Mr. Meador.

I appreciated our meeting yesterday, and we discussed protecting consumers is at the heart of the Federal Trade Commission's work. I shared with you in our meeting that I have received an overwhelming outreach from my constituents from calls and e-mails.

We had a town hall yesterday with over a thousand folks, and many of them are concerned and some are just afraid that Elon Musk and DOGE are accessing their personal data, from their Social Security numbers to tax records. Not only are they concerned about people accessing this but what they will use it for.

As a consumer protection enforcer, what responsibility do you think the FTC has to monitor DOGE with regards to sensitive and private consumer data?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. I enjoyed our conversation as well. It is good to be with you again. So as I mentioned at the time, there are laws the FTC enforces, and there are also laws to which the FTC is subject. And in the latter category is included confidentiality protection.

So, when I was staff attorney practicing antitrust law, we would collect information from third parties as part of the investigation, and we were required to keep that confidential. And that is very important, so that businesses can trust that when they come to the FTC and share information as a witness to help our investigations, that it won't be leaked. Those cover the other side of the FTC as well and consumer protection matters.

And so, the agency has an obligation to keep all of the confidential information that it collects private and within the agency. I can't speak to what the internal plans or practices are for DOGE, but I can commit that if confirmed to this position, I would ensure the FTC is following the laws that it enforces as well as the laws that restrict it.

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. Thank you. Yesterday, we also discussed our shared concern over pharmacy benefit managers or PBMs. As we discussed, PBMs contribute to inflated drug costs for Americans and play an outside role in the drug supply chain at the expense of consumers.

In the House, I was able to co-lead a bipartisan effort to rein in PBMs and want to continue to do that in the Senate. Will you com-

mit to supporting continued work at the FTC to investigate PBMs and take necessary enforcement actions?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you. I was fortunate to begin my career at FTC in the health care division. And so, this is an area of the economy that I care deeply about and is really one of those kitchen table issues that people pay close attention to.

And if confirmed, yes, I am committed to ensuring we have competitive markets in the health care space and using all of the agency's tools in furtherance of that mission.

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. Thank you. Mr. Kratsios, in your 2019 confirmation hearing, you said "workforce development must be at the heart of everything we do at the Office of Science Technology Policy." Do you still believe this?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do, yes.

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. So I am laser focused on preparing the workforce for jobs of today and the future. I was Secretary of Labor in Delaware. I started a bipartisan future work caucus in the House. And especially when we look at things like biotech and AI and quantum, as Director of OSTP, would you prioritize strategies to increase our emerging tech workforce? And if so, how?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Absolutely. Whenever I think about how you structure a national strategy around emerging tech, it typically falls on four pillars. One is R&D. One is on regulations. One is on international.

And the fourth pillar is always workforce. And within the Federal Government, there is lots of levers that you can use to drive those efforts. It can be through grants and fellowships to researchers.

And it can also be through lots of other programs to allow for training and reskilling. So I am a big advocate and would be delighted to work with you on those issues.

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. Great. Much of the work is outside of Government, but I am concerned about the mass firings of scientists and engineers at NIH and NIST. Do they—does that concern you? And do you think that the hollowing out of the Federal Government for this technical talent risks losing ground to economic competitors like China?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think it is very important when you enter into a new Administration to have the opportunity to assess the team that you have on the field and determine what is the best way to be able to drive the priorities of the American people and the President. And I think it is very natural and common sense and logical to do that evaluation.

And what I have observed from the outside is that these considerations of employment are ones that do not—are not specifically targeted to science and technology but are broad across all the agencies. So I think it is an important and necessary step to take when you start a new Administration.

Senator BLUNT ROCHESTER. My time has expired, but I will submit some questions for the record, Mr. Chair. And one of which is I wanted to know if you believe there is bias in AI or has been bias in AI. Thank you, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Fischer.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DEB FISCHER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA**

Senator FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to both of our nominees here today. I enjoyed meeting with both of you before this hearing, so thank you for coming into my office and having a good discussion. Mr. Kratsios, I welcome your enthusiasm for advancing American leadership on emerging technologies.

As you know, OSTP is responsible for coordinating science and tech policy among Federal agencies. When you were the United States Chief Technology Officer, one of your focuses was advancing DOD's unique testing authorities to drive innovation.

And at the time, you stated that the Department of Defense is at the forefront of cutting edge 5G testing and experimentation. Do you still believe that?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do, yes.

Senator FISCHER. And when it comes to 5G and other spectrum matters, do you believe that DOD testing should be faithfully integrated into a national spectrum policy?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes, DOD is a critical component of the spectrum strategy.

Senator FISCHER. If you are confirmed to be Director of OSTP, your role will still be influential on national spectrum policy, even though it may be smaller compared to other agencies. Previously, I understood you were involved with America's Mid-Band Initiative Team, known as AMBIT, and you brought that up a couple times yesterday in our discussion.

And so, I looked into it a little bit more to familiarize myself with it. And that was an auction off mid-band spectrum held by DOD, and it was to make those licenses available to wireless companies. Is that correct?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes.

Senator FISCHER. Did AMBIT auction, did that cause more congestion for defense systems operating in that lower 3 band?

Mr. KRATSIOS. In my opinion, I think AMBIT provided an opportunity for a technical analysis of that spectrum range and find a way to be able to still complete the security mission by moving some of the workloads that were in the auction band to lower bands.

Senator FISCHER. So they had to compress that band even more then, in order to accommodate that into the lower 3? Is that correct?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. So some of the activities that were in the band that ultimately were auctioned were moved down to lower bands.

Senator FISCHER. Are you familiar—oh, first of all, I understand that AMBIT struggled on the back end with major relocation costs from the defense systems that were de-placed in that process of compressing them. Is that correct?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I don't—I haven't tracked the details of that since I left office, but there is always transition costs associated with freeing up bands typically.

Senator FISCHER. Are you familiar with any of the costs? Are those readily available to be—so we can access those? Do you know

how that cut into the net revenue that was expected from the auction?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I am not familiar with those details but I can try to see what is publicly available.

Senator FISCHER. That would be great. Mr. Meador, over the years, the Federal Trade Commission has faced off in court against the deepening pockets of major corporations, especially when it comes to big tech. If confirmed, how would you prioritize litigation and effectively use agency resources in upholding the FTC's mission?

Mr. MEADOR. That is a very important topic. I will say the FTC staff have gotten very good at doing a lot with often much less.

If confirmed, my first step will be to consult with the Chairman, the Commissioners, and of course, the staff to understand what challenges they are facing—what do we have on our docket and what resources do we have available.

And then, work collaboratively with all of them to determine which cases are the highest priority to protect the largest number of consumers from the greatest threats.

Senator FISCHER. It is my understanding that at times there can be tension with that enforcement coordination with the Department of Justice. Do you have any comments on that, or if that would occur, what would you do?

Mr. MEADOR. Sure. Yes, this is something that has happened frequently in the past. Some of it has unfortunately been very public.

I am confident that President Trump has selected leaders for this Administration who can work very well together. I think is of paramount importance that both agencies be singing from the same hymn sheet and be aligned on policy and enforcement decisions. And there should really be no daylight between them when it comes to how they are enforcing the antitrust laws.

I think anything is possible if you don't care who gets the credit. And so, when it comes to merger clearance, we should be focusing on protecting consumers as fast as possible, not trying to get one up on the other agency.

Senator FISCHER. Thank you both for putting yourselves forward to serve in these very dangerous times that we live in. I really appreciate it and thank you to your families as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Baldwin.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY BALDWIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act authorized one of the largest investments in our Nation's history into public research and development. These investments will help ensure the United States remains a global leader in innovation for critical and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing.

Unfortunately, it has been reported that the Trump Administration is considering reducing the National Science Foundation, their annual budget, by up to 66 percent, and I believe this would be a disastrous step backward in the international race to invest in and develop these technologies.

So Mr. Kratsios, do you support the bipartisan investments that have been made under the CHIPS and Science Act?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I generally have for many years supported the important role that federally funded, early stage, basic pre-competitive research plays in the ecosystem. And—

Senator BALDWIN. so, is that a yes, as far as the CHIPS and Science Act?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think components of the CHIPS and Science Act are extremely important for ensuring U.S. leadership in semi-conductors and the broader AI ecosystem.

Senator BALDWIN. OK. Do you think it would be wise to reduce the budget of the National Science Foundation and cut back on these critical investments in research and development?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I can't speak necessarily the top line of the National Science Foundation budget—

Senator BALDWIN. About 66 percent is what we have heard floated.

Mr. KRATSIOS. So I will defer to the President and OMB as they decide those top lines. But to me, I think what is important is in some sense the absolute number, but more importantly, how the dollars that actually are budgeted and ultimately appropriated are spent in prioritizing them in areas of the national interest.

When I served as the USCTO in the last Administration even in constrained budget environments, we spent a lot of time trying to ensure that we were prioritizing investments in the areas that were most critical for the future of American prosperity.

Senator BALDWIN. But you wouldn't rule out a 66 percent cut in NSF funding?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I would defer again to the process that the President and OMB are going to lead.

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you. We know that in order to remain a global leader, we need our best and our brightest, regardless of their gender, their race, their ethnicity, their sexual orientation, to be on the front lines in these research careers.

That is why the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act requires OSTP to develop and publicize guidance to Federal laboratories and universities on best practices to help identify any institutional barriers that limit the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM research careers.

So, Mr. Kratsios, do you believe President Trump's Executive Order ending DEI programs contradicts this bipartisan law? And do you commit to executing this OSTP directive in the law, even if you are directed by President Trump not to?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do not believe that the DEI Executive Order is in conflict with the law. I have for many years and will continue to advocate for all Americans to be able to pursue STEM degrees. In my opinion, there are not enough Americans pursuing advanced degrees in STEM, and it would be my priority, if I was to be confirmed, to try to get as many Americans as possible to go back into STEM fields.

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you. Mr. Meador, I really appreciate your taking the time last week to stop by to discuss some of the critical issues that are before the Federal Trade Commission.

In our meeting, we discussed our shared concerns around the market consolidation in the health care industry. I appreciated hearing from you about your perspectives on private equities' acquisition of hospitals, physician groups, and nursing homes.

Can you share with the Committee what role you believe the Federal Trade Commission has in the interest of health care quality and costs?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you for raising that topic. The FTC plays a critical role in its antitrust enforcement duties to ensure that our markets remain competitive. That includes both preventing anti-competitive conduct, but also policing mergers to ensure there is not undue consolidation with any—within any individual market.

There, it is important to look at the competitive effects of a merger, regardless of who is purchasing it, to ensure that in the aftermath we are going to have a competitive status quo. That competition will be maintained so that all health care providers feel that need to continue to provide better quality services to patients.

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you. So I only have 20 seconds left. Mr. Kratsios, you may answer this either here or for the record. You come to this role with significant prior experience with artificial intelligence. With respect to healthcare, I want to know what role you believe AI has in our healthcare systems, and what, if any, guardrails you think should be in place?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think one of the greatest and most impactful applications of artificial intelligence will be in the world of health care, from drug discovery to the way that we operate our health care institutions. So there is a tremendous opportunity, both at places like HHS and in the private sector to make an impact.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Curtis.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN CURTIS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH**

Senator CURTIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Meador, in the waning days of the Biden Administration, the FTC noticed two proposed rulemakings regarding earnings claims. These rules unfairly targeted the direct selling industry, which is a large industry in Utah. It represents 38,000 jobs, \$2.7 billion of statewide earnings.

But more important, an industry that I know from firsthand observation works diligently to obey all the laws, to stay within all the parameters, and yet frequently finds themselves attacked by bureaucrats. So my question for you is, can you commit to voting against implementing the two proposed rules?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. Well, I can't commit to any specific vote, should I be confirmed, but I can tell you that if I am confirmed, I will work with staff to get up to speed on that issue and approach it with an open mind.

Senator CURTIS. Good. And I appreciate and understand that, so I am going to rephrase what you said with a little more emphasis and see if you could say yes to this. Can you commit to giving full and fair consideration to their concerns of the direct selling industry, and what they have about these two proposed rulings?

Mr. MEADOR. Absolutely.

Senator CURTIS. Great. Thank you very much. I appreciate that. And it is very important to these companies to get it right and to

be able to also just to have that audience to be able to explain their perspective. Thank you.

Mr. Kratsios—if I pronounce that wrong, you are probably used to that. I am sorry. Thank you for coming by my office. The Director of Office of Science and Technology Policy will have a seat on the President Trump’s National Energy Dominance Council. We talked about that.

What do you see as his role on this council, and how will you leverage that role to push forward new energy technologies?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think on that council, one of our primary missions, I guess first and foremost, is to provide important technological and scientific advice to the rest of the council members.

I think what OSTP can also advocate for are new and emerging ways—new and emerging technologies that can be used in energy—achieving energy dominance. Things like small modular reactors. And it is something that I look forward to, if confirmed, building out a team to help support.

Senator CURTIS. Excellent. And I would love you to come see in person Utah’s innovation in this field, and I think they are doing some amazing things. If you get a chance, come see us in Utah.

Mr. KRATSIOS. Thank you. I would love to.

Senator CURTIS. Yes. The second question, when we met we talked about, your interest is this intersection between national security and technology. Unsurprisingly, our greatest rival is China.

What would be the national security implications of China leading in emerging technologies, and how would you advise the President on the best policy approach to ensure the U.S. leadership in these technologies?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think first and foremost we have to make a priority to drive U.S. leadership in these critical fields, which I think the President has done.

The next step is actually being able to execute and bring to bear the totality of the American innovation ecosystem, which is the Federal Government, the private sector, and academia working together to develop and—these new technologies, both sort of from discovery all the way to fielding them.

I think one area that is also very important is taking technologies that have proven very successful and sort of represent American dominance in the field—take, for example, large language models—and actually making the step to apply those to the critical national security missions that we have at the DOD and in the IC.

It would be a shame if we are able to lead in these technologies, but we are not actually fielding them in support of the warfighter. So I think there is a lot of work to be done both in maintaining our leadership and things like AI, but also fielding those technologies in Government itself as well.

Senator CURTIS. I appreciate that. Appreciate both of your answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Luján.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator LUJÁN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you both for being here today. Mr. Meador, when we met in my office, we discussed the importance of an independent FTC. Unfortunately, the current Administration is undermining that independence by refusing to defend the Supreme Court's 90-year-old decision in *Humphrey's Executor*.

In that decision, the Supreme Court held that FTC Commissioners and members of other bipartisan, independent agencies can only be fired for a cause. My office sent over the text of *Humphrey's Executor* letter to Congress from the Acting Solicitor General, stating that the Administration will no longer defend the Constitutionality of certain for cause removal protections, and a statement from Chair Ferguson that he agrees with the Acting Solicitor General's position. Did you receive that information?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, sir. I received it late last night, yes.

Senator LUJÁN. Did you have a chance to review them?

Mr. MEADOR. In brief, I did.

Senator LUJÁN. Appreciate that. Do you agree with the Solicitor General's position?

Mr. MEADOR. So, Senator, thank you for bringing up this important topic. I can't weigh in too much on the substance, given that it is the subject of ongoing litigation involving the FTC, but I think I can share some additional thoughts. I agree with some of the scholarship of Justice Elena Kagan on this.

She has written about Presidential Administration and made the observation that direct Presidential control of Federal agencies increases democratic accountability. I believe on November 5, the American people give a very clear signal that they want greater accountability in how the Federal Government is administered, and that is what led to the election of President Trump.

And I can commit that, if confirmed to this position, that I will work to serve the American people and will do so by advancing the agenda of the President that they elect.

Senator LUJÁN. Mr. Meador, can you repeat again why you can't answer that question?

Mr. MEADOR. The underlying legal question, Senator, is subject to ongoing litigation in which the FTC is involved. And so, it wouldn't be appropriate for me to weigh in on that.

Senator LUJÁN. Appreciate that. So is it appropriate for Mr. Ferguson to weigh in?

Mr. MEADOR. I would defer to Chairman Ferguson on that.

Senator LUJÁN. But you believe that you should not because it is currently before the courts?

Mr. MEADOR. I believe—

Senator LUJÁN. And you stand strong behind that?

Mr. MEADOR. It is inappropriate for me as a nominee to weigh in on pending litigation—

Senator LUJÁN. If you were an FTC Commissioner, would it be appropriate for you to weigh in?

Mr. MEADOR. I would have to consult with the Office of General Counsel. I expect they would likely reach a similar conclusion, but

I haven't asked them that question from the standpoint of a confirmed Commissioner.

Senator LUJÁN. Mr. Chairman, you are a legal scholar. I am not. I am a lay person. I think that that answers the question resoundingly, and I very much appreciate that clarification. Mr. Meador, if you are confirmed and the Supreme Court overturns Humphrey's Executor, how are you going to maintain your independence?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I view this question as having the same answer, regardless of how the legal proceedings play out. My understanding is that the President has nominated me to serve the American people. And regardless of how the court decides these matters, I will show up each day to serve the American people by working to enforce the law fully and fairly.

Senator LUJÁN. Do you believe the FTC should be independent?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I will defer to the courts, and Congress, and the President on the resolution of that matter. I view my job as a narrowly focused one on enforcing the law to the best of my ability.

Senator LUJÁN. And it speaks for itself. The previous Administration, the FTC with their work, with their mission with PBM—I think that there was a question asked by Lisa Blunt Rochester in this space. Will you commit to continuing the important work of holding PBMs accountable with their practices?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you. Yes, as I mentioned for Senator Blunt Rochester, this is a very important topic, and I am glad to see the interest in it among the Committee members. If confirmed, I can absolutely commit to ensuring we are enforcing the competition laws across the entire health care space.

Senator LUJÁN. Last Congress, I pressed Merck CEO to ensure that they wouldn't play patent games when the primary patent for their cancer drug, KEYTRUDA, comes up.

He agreed that they wouldn't for the intravenous version of the drug, but soon after it came out the subcutaneous version of the drug, which you may be aware is between the skin and the muscle—so it tries to get below all the skin, but right above the muscle. A blatant example of the games companies play called “product hopping”.

What will you do at the FTC to address these uncompetitive practices?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you. This was a topic I had the—well, I wouldn't say the fortune since we don't like to see anti-competitive conduct, but I had the experience of working on these matters as an attorney in the health care division.

And if confirmed, I will be working with that staff and the other Commissioners very closely to ensure that we are enforcing the law to its fullest extent.

Senator LUJÁN. Mr. Kratsios, yes or no, do you believe the national labs are critical to our Nation's scientific research and technological advancement, including supporting our Nation's energy future and ensuring our national security?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do. I have for many years has been a fierce advocate of our DOE lab system.

Senator LUJÁN. Do you see a role for the national labs in using AI for national security risk assessment?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think the DOE already does that, and I think they should continue to do that work.

Senator LUJÁN. You previously testified on the importance of quantum as a key industry of the future. Do you support the reauthorization of the National Quantum Initiative Act to help advance American leadership in quantum?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I was a big advocate of the initial passage of the bill, and I would love to work with this committee again to see if we can get it reauthorized.

Senator LUJÁN. Appreciate that. Mr. Chairman, just a little sidebar there. I remember asking a question about quantum computing. It may have been in a SCIF.

And the individual that was presenting to us at the time said that they should not answer the question on quantum because it is classified. I then held up a copy of *Fortune Magazine*, which that issue decided to cover quantum. So it is just refreshing to be able to have that conversation in this committee. I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, and I agree that far too much is classified that you can read in the newspaper. I will say also to my friend from New Mexico who raised good questions, I do not have any of the constraints the nominee has.

And so, I am happy to answer your question, which is that I think Humphrey's Executor was wrongly decided and should be overruled. As I read Article II, all Executive power is vested in the President of the United States.

And I would note this is a similar exchange that this committee had with Secretary Howard Lutnick, where some members of the Committee were surprised that Secretary Lutnick, appointed by President Trump, was going to work to implement the President's agenda.

And I would suggest that is not a surprising thing. I would expect President Trump's nominees to work to implement his agenda, just as President Biden's nominees worked to implement his agenda, as did President Obama's and every President we have had.

And the beauty of our Constitutional structure is the President is democratically accountable to the people. Senator Hickenlooper.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN HICKENLOOPER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gentlemen, I appreciate your commitment to working in the public interest. Let me start off with Mr. Kratsios. In your role as Director of OSTP, you will be responsible for working with various advisory bodies, the President's Council on Advisors and Science and Technology, PCAST, the National Science and Technology Council.

Obviously, I am—you know, in Maslow's hierarchy of science, a geologist is near the bottom, but I am a scientist, have published peer reviewed research, and I think it is important that we make sure that science remains impartial, objective, and nonpartisan.

So we need to make sure that our scientific enterprise is examined, and reexamined, and continues to be modified to be more successful in those essential needs of our country. If you are confirmed, how do you commit to, or can you commit to ensuring

OSTP works with scientific community's voice? That the scientific community is fairly represented, and their voice is truly uplifted?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes, I—thank you for bringing that up. I think to me, one of the most important goals that I even mentioned in my opening statement was to ensure that the team that we build at OSTP is representative of a wide variety of scientists and technologists that support the important policy priorities of the President.

So in any Administration, OSTP starts with very few people on the team, and the next year is spent finding the best scientists and technologists from across the interagency to bring into the White House to work with the agency. So I commit to doing that.

And I think it is critically important that any policy processes around the White House is informed by high quality, sound science. And that is something I look forward to bringing to bear on, on what we do at the White House.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. Well, that is something we will support you on as it gets complicated, and as I am sure it will. Mr. Meador, a national privacy law would require a great amount of oversight to be able to hold businesses accountable. Sometimes these are very large businesses with immense capability.

State Attorneys General experience investigative teams that cover a range of consumer protection laws. Do you believe it is appropriate for State AGs to help the FTC enforce a Federal privacy law, especially if that Federal law preempts State laws? So why or why not?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. I believe that is ultimately a decision for Congress to make, at the time that it would pass a Federal privacy law to put structures in their governing—coordination with State AGs.

I can say that on the antitrust side of FTC, there has been very productive relationships between State AGs and the FTC. And so, hopefully, you know, should Congress give the agency additional powers in that area, we would see equally productive relationships there.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. In terms of recognizing the immense power of these very large companies and what we have seen with social platforms and in many cases the lack of any ability of Government to curtail some of the things we recognize are—I mean, some of the deepfake pornography, that is one example that comes up. How do you think we should be looking at AI on that same—within that same context of being able to get the market to have some balance?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes. That is an incredibly important topic that I think is only going to increase in prominence in the coming years. I think the first step is to view it through the lens of our existing enforcement authorities. So the FTC has the ability to police unfair and deceptive practices.

And we know that AI is already being used to turbocharge many of those acts. And so, it would be incumbent upon the FTC to keep a close eye on that activity, to make sure we are not letting anything slip through the cracks.

And should we become aware of something that we are not able to address with existing authorities, to consult with you and other members of the Committee to make sure that that is resolved.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Right. And then the last thing we talked a little bit in our office about the importance of markets being balanced, how sometimes it is Government, sometimes it is private industry, but everybody is trying to distort markets when it is to their advantage.

Last week, FTC Chair Ferguson announced the agency will maintain the 2023 joint merger guidelines with the DOJ, with Department of Justice. And these guidelines—the guidelines outline the criteria for the FTC to consider as it looks at mergers and acquisitions.

You know, a lot of these decisions have direct effect on the markets themselves. How can the FTC ensure we maintain fair competition in markets as we keep a forward looking vision?

Mr. MEADOR. That is a great question. I really enjoyed our conversation. I thought you made several excellent points about the need to balance the prevention of anti-competitive conduct with not going too far to burdening markets with too much intervention.

And I think that has to remain at the forefront of every enforcement decision that the FTC takes, looking to ensure that they are actually improving the lives of consumers when they do act, but not going so far as to micromanage the economy in any area.

Senator HICKENLOOPER. I appreciate that. I yield back to the Chair. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Young.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TODD YOUNG,
U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA**

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman. Congratulations to our nominees. And I am very excited about your service and doing some good together. Mr. Kratsios, thanks for taking some time to visit with me a number of days ago.

And in that meeting, we discussed the critical importance of emerging technologies to our national security and our economic competitiveness. We discussed the CHIPS and Science Act. You know that is important to me as the Republican co-lead of that effort. I am still focused, as I indicated to you in that meeting, on achieving through the CHIPS program office for the reshoring and on shoring of our semiconductor manufacturing base.

And you offered me reassurances about those efforts, should you be confirmed. I just want to ask you to commit on the record to honoring existing CHIPS agreements to ensure stability for this growing industry as we work to further implement this program?

Mr. KRATSIOS. The specific agreements, I will have to defer to Secretary Lutnick in Commerce. But what I will certainly commit to, if confirmed, is working very closely with the Secretary and with a larger interagency on sort of the two pronged goal of being able to reshore the critical fabrication of high-end semiconductors to the United States. And part two, creating the R&D ecosystem necessary to continue to be the world leader in the design of these chips.

Senator YOUNG. Great. And I trust that Secretary Lutnick will be following Congressional directives and intent and look forward to working with him on those efforts. You played a role, Mr. Kratsios, a key role in AI policy in the first Trump Administration.

I would expect in this different capacity, you will continue to play an important role. You played a very important role in the February 2019 Executive Order on maintaining American leadership in AI. If confirmed, do you plan to build on this work? And if so, in what way?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Absolutely. I think that was the first Executive Order ever signed by a President on artificial intelligence. That was signed by President Trump in February 2019.

I think the core crux of that Executive Order is the necessity for a whole of Government approach to achieving sustained American leadership in AI. We have to lead the world in artificial intelligence R&D.

We have to lead the world in creating a regulatory environment that allows our artificial intelligence companies to grow and succeed in the U.S.. We have to create an environment where our workforce can actually thrive and take advantage of new technology.

And the last pillar is around international engagement of how we can work with like-minded partners to ensure that U.S. AI becomes a default AI of the world versus some of our adversaries.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you for that comprehensive answer. You know, there is a welcomed and I think important emphasis by certain incoming members of the Administration on making sure that we don't unduly throttle innovation as it relates to AI and that we encourage deployment. Can we better leverage public-private partnerships in emerging technologies more broadly to ensure that the U.S. remains a leader in innovation?

Mr. KRATSIOS. We can, Senator, yes. I think both in the world of AI and in quantum, we have seen examples where AI centers, both from NSF and DOE, have shown the opportunity where the private sector can come in and work with academia and Government together to do the important basic R&D, and then ultimately be able to translate that into use cases for the commercial sector. So I think we need to continue to look at those opportunities and do more of that.

Senator YOUNG. I will move on to biotechnology briefly. Mr. Kratsios, I have chaired for the last roughly 18 months a National Security Commission on Emerging Biotech. We will produce our final report for Members of Congress in the next couple of months.

And I have come to learn how important this technology will be to our national security and our economic vigor for the next generation and beyond. If confirmed, how will you ensure the U.S. is prepared to take advantage of this key platform technology?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes, similar to other emerging technologies, the way that you can achieve U.S. leadership is through a whole of Government approach that is able to leverage the strengths of individual agencies and how they can plug in to the larger strategy.

I think just like we have seen with AI and quantum, you need coordination between agencies like DOE, the National Science Foundation, and Commerce, and even agencies like DOD that ulti-

mately use this technology. And I think the same will go with biotech.

Senator YOUNG. More specifically, what role will our ability to produce, gather, and put in readable format biological data play in our staying ahead of the competition?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think it is very critical. If we look at some of the largest players in in China, I think their sole mission is to Hoover up as much of that as possible. And I think the U.S. has been in a position to prioritize and think about the value of this genetic data.

Senator YOUNG. One final thing from Mr. Meador. Noncompete reform has been a priority of mine. I think that non-competition agreements are overbroad, they are over utilized, and there are better instruments existing under labor law to deal with the stated concerns of employers.

This is an impediment to upward mobility and so forth. I think Ms. Khan acted illegally. The courts vindicated my view as it relates to this policy issue, but I think on the substance, directionally, they were headed in the right direction.

Do you have any plans as it relates to noncompete reform? And can you assure me that you will work with this committee if you start to rulemaking in—as it pertains to this issue?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. Thank you. I share your concerns with regard to non-competes. I agree they have been overused and abused. And I won't comment on the legal status of the rulemaking since I know that is subject to litigation, but I can say there is a lot more the FTC can do, including through competition enforcement actions. I think that would be a good next step for the agency to take, is to investigate how we can use our traditional enforcement powers to address those harms.

Senator YOUNG. Fantastic. I look forward to working with you on that, should you be confirmed. Can we work together?

Mr. MEADOR. Absolutely.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, sir. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ranking Member Cantwell.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you again to both of the nominees, and your willingness to serve, and your families. Kids have been camped out there in the ante room having a good time, but they said that they can't wait to hear you answer more questions, so.

[Laughter.]

Senator CANTWELL. Mr. Meador, on 13(b)—you know, we have had the FTC Commissioners before us. I almost think you could almost get to a resolution before we could get to a resolution. But you agree the importance of having 13(b) for consumers?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I think it is incredibly important that the Federal Trade Commission have the ability to return money to consumers who have been harmed.

Senator CANTWELL. Right. So, do you have any thoughts about how to come to an agreement on restoration of that authority?

Mr. MEADOR. I would defer to this committee and Congress as a whole as to how best to navigate that. But if confirmed, I am ready and willing to consult and assist with your office or any oth-

ers to figure out how we can make that happen as quickly as possible.

Senator CANTWELL. But you see that refunds are part of that?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes. I believe when we have consumers who have been harmed by unfair or deceptive practices, one of the best things the FTC can do is get the money back to the consumers.

Senator CANTWELL. So, but refunds writ large are a good way of preventing anti-competitive behavior?

Mr. MEADOR. They can certainly be a tool, I think. You know, everything is obviously fact specific. It depends on the case. But if confirmed, I look forward to working with the staff to examine what has been effective in the past and what we would want to do in the future.

Senator CANTWELL. OK. Thank you. And then I know you got a question from one of my colleagues on PBMs, but Senator Grassley and I have reintroduced our PBM bill that is about outlawing spread pricing and clawback actions by PBMs. Do you have thoughts about that?

Mr. MEADOR. I will tell you; I enjoyed working with Senator Grassley staff in the Judiciary Committee on many of these same issues. And if confirmed, I would really appreciate consulting with your office and others to talk about what the best Legislative solution could be in this industry.

Senator CANTWELL. But do you think that that is—you know, I like this anti-manipulation authority. I have given anti-manipulation authority to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. I gave it to the Commodities Futures Trading Commission. They both have established a very aggressive oversight of very anti-competitive and manipulative practices.

In fact, both agencies have gotten billions of dollars in fines against companies. The FTC not—hasn't done so much here. But Senator Grassley felt very specific about saying these types of practices are illegal. You don't have any problem saying that?

Mr. MEADOR. I would want to see the final report for the 6(b) study that is currently pending before the Commission. I think that is the first step we have to take. I have been looking at PBM since I was in law school, writing about them.

I am familiar with a lot of the concerns in the industry. I also know things have changed a lot since then, so I think it is important we understand what is happening in the marketplace today, and then we will know what steps to take.

Senator CANTWELL. Yes, well, there could be good actors who basically do get you a discount. But if somebody goes to a large employer and says, I will get you a 35 percent discount, and then they pocket 30 percent of it at the PBM and only give the company and the workers 5 percent, that doesn't seem like a fair way to do business.

OK, I have to ask your seatmate there, Mr. Kratsios, about technology. I am sure people talked about testbeds while I was gone. You believe that that is a vital role that we play at the Federal level when, you know, aviation, or quantum or, you know, somebody can't do the scale at which an industry needs to get an answer?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. Testbeds have served a very important purpose for a wide variety of technologies. NIST, for example, has a lot of experience in building testbeds as well.

Senator CANTWELL. And so, where do you fall—I love that Senator Lee was here, as well as Senator Hagerty, because they both—well, one comes from a very benefited DOE state and the other one is chairing now the Energy Committee, and these are initiatives oftentimes on the testbed side that are at DOE or at NSF.

What are your thoughts about the President's NSF comments, and how do you think these two agencies fill that role of doing that testbed work?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think both NSF and DOE have proven with the CHIPS Act implementation, and with work that was done even before that for both AI and quantum centers, there is great opportunity to leverage those two agencies with their rich history of funding and creating and organizing user facilities to be places where a lot of these very important testbeds can reside for their communities.

Senator CANTWELL. So, you want to speak loudly about how robust that is. Is that correct? Is that—I want to make sure I get the characterization. I don't want to—you say this and then we will find out, oh, yes, go ahead. Take a meat cleaver to NSF.

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think it is critically important that through an interagency process, that OSTP is able to relay the importance of the scientific and technological community to the larger discussion and ultimately to the decision of the President. And I commit to bring to bear the science and technology advice to those conversations.

Senator CANTWELL. OK, that sounded more like a politician than a science guy, but OK. What about spectrum? Do you think that we could use a little testbedding on the spectrum technology to help us really move ahead of our competitors here and really get the solution for the future?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do. I think it is important to do kind of advanced spectrum testing. When I served as Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, we did some work around 5G testbeds at some of our military bases.

And why that was sort of an interesting opportunity was that some of the regulations around approvals for these types of tests were much easier when they were done on military facilities. So I think across all emerging technologies, I think we have to be innovative and thoughtful on how to be able to make sure that the U.S. is continually leading on these technologies.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you. I will have more questions for the record on that. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator BLACKBURN. Thank you, Senator Cantwell. And welcome. We are delighted that you all are here, and congratulations on your nominations. Mr. Kratsios, I know that Senator Luján asked you about the Quantum Initiative and getting that back in gear. I want you, for the record, just talk about what you can do in this position as—if confirmed, to really advance quantum.

In Tennessee, this is something that is important. Chattanooga and the electric powered board there, they are working to commercialize the first open, available—commercially available quantum network. So, I would love to hear that from you.

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. So OSTP plays a special role in quantum, and that is the home for the National Quantum Coordination Office. And it is essentially the focal point for the larger interagency on how sort of quantum policy is run for the Federal Government.

I think for me, we have an incredible opportunity before us in this Congress to reauthorize the National Quantum Initiative. I think there is important work to be done on the way that sort of a lot of the very great and vital basic research that is done on quantum is ultimately translated into things that can actually benefit the American people through use cases. The other thing that I think we also need to always—

Senator BLACKBURN. Testbeds for near-term applications?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes, testbeds are a great opportunity and a place where that translation can happen. I think the closer that we can get sort of commercial operators to the folks who are doing the basic R&D and actually accelerating that lab to market, I think is very important. And I think a lot of the centers that have been set up both at NSF and at DOE can serve that opportunity.

Senator BLACKBURN. Let me ask you about standard settings. This is something Senator Warner and I have talked a good bit about. We are concerned about China's aggression as—whether it is the WRC or whether it is any number of other applications, and we are trying to encourage U.S. leadership in that regard. And is that on your radar? Are you watching that?

Mr. KRATSIOS. It is, yes. I think whenever I think of a comprehensive strategy for emerging technology, how the U.S. is able to posture globally to be the ones who will be the standard setters in the standard setting process is important.

In the 2019 Executive Order, the President called on NIST to drive these types of standards setting initiatives on AI globally. And I think the same important work can and should be done in quantum.

Senator BLACKBURN. OK. And hypersonics? You know, in Tennessee, we have got the only place where hypersonic testing can be done. And we know Russia and China, North Korea is over—meddling with hypersonic technology. So is—tell me what you are looking at there.

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. So hypersonics are a critical technology that the DOD and the U.S. must lead on. In the first Trump Administration, a very large—a policy decision was made to refocus a big and significant portion of the research engineering budget toward hypersonics efforts, and I think those continue. And I think it is incumbent on sort of our larger defense tech ecosystem to continue to drive on hypersonics.

Senator BLACKBURN. OK. And Mr. Meador, we look forward to seeing you go to the FTC. The BOTS Act is something that was passed in 2016, and the FTC has taken up only one case in the BOTS Act. Enforcement on that is necessary. It is important to our Tennessee entertainers, and indeed anybody with a live venue. So have you looked at that issue?

Mr. MEADOR. Somewhat yes, Senator. I think it is incredibly important. I have been active in the ticketing space and ensuring that we have competitive markets that are free from interference by unfair and deceptive practices. And so, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commission and staff to make sure we enforce that law fully.

Senator BLACKBURN. OK. And children in the virtual space. We have got some young attendees here today. And of course, protecting children in the virtual space is terribly important. The Kids Online Safety Act, we have tried to get that passed very—we have done well within the Senate.

We are working with our friends over in the House who just couldn't seem to get there to protect kids. So I would hope that you will work with us as we try to get this legislation passed and on the books.

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I care personally very much about this topic, and I would be happy to be a resource and work with your office.

Senator BLACKBURN. Absolutely. Well, congratulations. We appreciate that you all are here. Senator Markey, you are recognized for five minutes.

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD MARKEY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Madam Chair, very much. In 1998, I authored the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which is still the only Federal privacy legislation to protect young people online. Mr. Meador, in our meeting yesterday, you acknowledged that you were not that familiar with COPPA. If confirmed, can you commit to quickly getting up to speed on that law?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator, I look forward to it.

Senator MARKEY. And if confirmed, will you commit to strictly enforcing the Federal Trade Commission's COPPA rules?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I think it is important for the FTC to strictly enforce all the authorities Congress has given it.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you. And while the original COPPA has been a major success, it is past time we updated COPPA's protections to account for new predatory practices online. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2023, 1 in 4 teenage girls seriously considered suicide, 1 in 8 teenage girls attempted suicide, and 1 in 5 LGBTQ youth high school students attempted suicide.

And that is why for over a decade, I have been fighting to modernize COPPA to protect teenagers from targeted ads that promote content related to eating disorders, amongst other things. Mr. Meador, do you agree that Congress should protect children and teens' online privacy?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I think protecting children is one of the most important missions for both the FTC and Congress and would love to work with your office on that.

Senator MARKEY. And I am glad to hear that because we do need to address the pervasive tracking and targeting of young people, and we do need COPPA 2.0 to become the law in the country.

Now, I want to turn to the baseless claim that big tech has unfairly censored conservatives. Mr. Meador, when we met yesterday, you said that you needed to learn more information about the issue and would follow the facts.

But when Chairman Cruz asked earlier this morning whether you agree that “big tech censorship poses the greatest threat to free speech and free and fair elections in this country,” you said you agreed.

So that answer is inconsistent with our conversation yesterday. So let’s be completely clear. Do you believe the big tech has censored conservative speech?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, thank you for that question. So I would make a distinction between sharing the concern about the behavior of big tech and how they conduct their online platforms, and whether or not that conduct amounts to a specific violation of the FTC Act.

And so, when we were speaking yesterday, that is how I view that discussion, is how would I look at the question of whether any specific action by an online platform violates one of the provisions of the FTC Act. That is something that I don’t want to prejudge. I would have to look at it at a fact, case by case basis, comparing the facts to the law.

I am glad that the FTC has taken the first step to start collecting that information so we can assess that important question, but I do share the overarching concern about how content moderation has been implemented by many online platforms.

Senator MARKEY. Well, again, that is not the answer, in my opinion, that you gave to Senator Cruz today. Last week, the Federal Trade Commission began collecting comments on whether the platforms have censored users based on their speech, and this action is clearly designed to intimidate the platforms to adopt speech policies that promote conservatives. Mr. Meador, is it the FTC’s responsibility to ensure that the platform’s content moderation rules support conservative viewpoints?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I believe it is the FTC’s responsibility solely to enforce the laws that Congress has given it.

Senator MARKEY. OK. Well, many people like myself strongly believe that the platforms did not improperly censor conservatives. In fact, a peer reviewed study from last year found that while conservatives were suspended more often on Twitter, they were also much more likely to share misinformation. Madam Chair, I would like to include that study in the record.

Senator BLACKBURN. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

Analysis

Differences in misinformation sharing can lead to politically asymmetric sanctions

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07942-8> Mohsen Mosleh^{1,2,3}, Qi Yang⁴, Tauhid Zaman⁵, Gordon Pennycook⁶ & David G. Rand^{1,4,7,8}

Received: 6 May 2023

Accepted: 13 August 2024

Published online: 2 October 2024

Open access

 Check for updates

In response to intense pressure, technology companies have enacted policies to combat misinformation^{1,2}. The enforcement of these policies has, however, led to technology companies being regularly accused of political bias^{3–7}. We argue that differential sharing of misinformation by people identifying with different political groups^{8–15} could lead to political asymmetries in enforcement, even by unbiased policies. We first analysed 9,000 politically active Twitter users during the US 2020 presidential election. Although users estimated to be pro-Trump/conservative were indeed substantially more likely to be suspended than those estimated to be pro-Biden/liberal, users who were pro-Trump/conservative also shared far more links to various sets of low-quality news sites—even when news quality was determined by politically balanced groups of laypeople, or groups of only Republican laypeople—and had higher estimated likelihoods of being bots. We find similar associations between stated or inferred conservatism and low-quality news sharing (on the basis of both expert and politically balanced layperson ratings) in 7 other datasets of sharing from Twitter, Facebook and survey experiments, spanning 2016 to 2023 and including data from 16 different countries. Thus, even under politically neutral anti-misinformation policies, political asymmetries in enforcement should be expected. Political imbalance in enforcement need not imply bias on the part of social media companies implementing anti-misinformation policies.

Mass communication is a central feature of modern life, with social media having an increasingly important role in the global distribution and consumption of information¹⁶. This increase in importance has been accompanied by increased concern about the part played by social media in the spread of misinformation. For example, both liberals and conservatives in the USA believe technology companies should take action against misinformation^{17,18}, as do many people across European Union member countries⁹. In response, social media companies have implemented a wide range of anti-misinformation policies in recent years, such as removing or flagging posts deemed to be false by professional fact-checkers^{19–22} or platform users^{23,24}, using ranking algorithms to reduce the likelihood that users see potentially inaccurate posts^{22,25} and suspending users who spread misinformation^{1,26,27}.

These policies, however, have often led to social media companies being accused of political bias in their choices about who and what to take action against. In the USA, for example, it has been claimed that conservatives and Republicans are purposefully targeted for enforcement because of their political orientation³ (for example, when Donald Trump said that Twitter “totally silences conservatives’ voices”⁴, or when Representative Jim Jordan charged that academics, social media platforms and the government colluded to censor conservatives⁵). Accordingly, many social media companies are also very concerned about being perceived as having an anti-conservative bias⁶, and such

concerns may sway the decision-making of such companies. Concerns of bias against conservatives also contributed to Elon Musk’s decision to purchase Twitter in 2022 (ref. 30) and to roll back various anti-misinformation policies (such as reinstating many suspended users)^{31,32}.

Here, we critically examine these allegations of biased treatment. Our argument rests on the following logic: partisan asymmetries in behaviour can lead to partisan asymmetries in treatment, even when the policy is politically neutral and unbiased. For example, if dog-lovers share more misinformation than cat-lovers, we would expect more dog-lovers than cat-lovers to get suspended by social media companies—and would not interpret such a pattern as reflecting bias against dog-lovers.

The same is true when it comes to politics. As we will show here, there is clear evidence of a political asymmetry in misinformation sharing among social media users in the USA—and, crucially, we will use evaluations by politically balanced groups of laypeople to show that this asymmetry cannot be easily attributed to partisan bias on the part of those determining what counts as misinformation. Such asymmetries in sharing do not necessarily imply psychological asymmetries in susceptibility to misinformation, but could instead arise from factors such as asymmetries in exposure to misinformation (for example, from political elites^{33,34}). Whatever their source, these asymmetries in behaviour mean that differential treatment of those on one versus

¹Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK. ²Management Department, University of Exeter Business School, Exeter, UK. ³Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA. ⁴Institute on the Digital Economy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA. ⁵Yale School of Management, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA. ⁶Department of Psychology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. ⁷Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA. ⁸e-mail: drand@mit.edu

Analysis

the other side of the aisle does not on its own constitute evidence of political bias on the part of social media companies.

Twitter suspensions after the 2020 election

We begin to shed new empirical light on this issue by taking a specific social media policy choice that has drawn intense criticism as a case study: Twitter's suspension of users following the 2020 US presidential election. Specifically, in October 2020 we identified 100,000 Twitter users who shared hashtags related to the US presidential election, and randomly sampled 4,500 of those users who shared at least one #VoteBidenHarris2020 hashtag and 4,500 who shared at least one #Trump2020 hashtag. We used each user's data from that pre-election time period to quantify their tendency to share low-quality news (as well as numerous other potentially relevant characteristics), and then checked 9 months later (after the election season) to determine which users had been suspended by Twitter (for details, see the Methods; data and code are available at <https://osf.io/a2t7d/>). These data allow us to make several contributions to policy discussions around political bias and anti-misinformation efforts.

First, accusations of political bias are based largely on anecdotes or salient unique cases, such as the suspension of former President Donald Trump. Our data allow us to evaluate these claims more systematically. Indeed, we find that accounts that had shared #Trump2020 during the election were 4.4 times more likely to have been subsequently suspended than those that shared #VoteBidenHarris2020 ($\chi^2(1) = 486.9$, $P < 0.0001$). Specifically, whereas only 4.5% of the users who shared Biden hashtags had been suspended as of July 2021, 19.6% of the users who shared Trump hashtags had been suspended.

Critically, however, this association does not necessarily indicate a causal effect of a user's politics on suspension—because of the potential for political orientation to be confounded with the tendency to share misinformation (or to engage in other sanctioned behaviours). Indeed, previous work has found consistent evidence of a partisan asymmetry in misinformation sharing: links to websites that journalists and fact-checkers deemed to be low-quality 'fake news' sites were shared much more by conservatives than liberals on Facebook during the 2016 election³ and the 2020 election⁴, and on Twitter during the 2016 election⁵ and during Donald Trump's first impeachment⁶; conservatives on Twitter were much more likely to follow elites that made claims fact-checkers rated as false compared with Democrats⁷; Republican-oriented images on Facebook were much more likely to be rated as misleading than Democratic-oriented images⁸; and survey experiments that present participants with politically balanced sets of headlines (removing the supply-side confound present in many observational studies) typically find that conservatives indicate higher sharing intentions for articles deemed to be false by professional fact-checkers than liberals⁹. Furthermore, this association is not limited to the USA. For example, a survey experiment conducted in 16 countries found widespread cross-cultural evidence of conservatives sharing more unambiguously false claims about COVID-19 than liberals¹⁰; and an examination of Twitter data found that conservative political elites shared links to lower-quality news sites than liberal political elites in the USA, Germany and the UK¹¹. These observed differences in behaviour have clear implications for differences in treatment by social media platforms.

Low-quality news sharing on Twitter

We therefore also examined how the political orientation of the users in our study related to their sharing of links to low-quality news sites in October 2020. We find a similar pattern to past work in our dataset: people who used Trump hashtags shared news from domains that were on average rated as significantly less trustworthy than people who used Biden hashtags. For example, using trustworthiness ratings

of 60 news domains (the 20 highest volume sites within each category of mainstream, hyper-partisan and fake news, as determined by fact-checkers and journalists; see Table 1 for a list of the domains used and ref. 38 for details) from 8 professional fact-checkers³⁸, the average quality of domains shared by people who used Trump hashtags was 2.52 s.d. lower than people who used Biden hashtags (t -test, $t(8,943) = 1.2 \times 10^2$, $P < 0.0001$; Fig. 1a). We find equivalent results when using a set of 283 domains rated by Ad Fontes Media, Inc. (<http://adfontesmedia.com>; $d = 2.16$, $t(8,996) = 1.0 \times 10^2$, $P < 0.0001$), 3,216 domains rated by Media Bias/Fact Check (<http://mediabiasfactcheck.com>; $d = 2.06$, $t(8,997) = 97.6$, $P < 0.0001$) and 4,767 domains rated by aggregating ratings from various fact-checkers and academics³⁹ ($d = 2.16$, $t(8,997) = 1.0 \times 10^2$, $P < 0.0001$) (Extended Data Fig. 1). For further details, see the Methods.

These results, however, rely on journalists and professional fact-checkers to determine what counts as misinformation. Thus, it is possible that conservatives are found to share more misinformation not because of a true underlying difference in misinformation sharing, but simply because the misinformation evaluators have a liberal bias. To evaluate this possibility, we ask whether a similar pattern of results is observed when using evaluations that are designed to minimize the chance of political bias: trustworthiness ratings generated by politically balanced groups of laypeople. Specifically, we use ratings from a pre-registered study³⁸ in which $n = 970$ demographically representative (quota-sampled) laypeople from the USA indicated how much they trusted each of the 60 news outlets in Table 1 using a 5-point Likert scale, as well as indicating their preference for the Democratic versus Republican party (6-point Likert scale, with no independent/neutral midpoint; ratings are similar when using party identification and excluding independents³⁸). For each outlet, we then calculated politically balanced layperson ratings by calculating the average trust among people who indicated they preferred the Democrats, and the average trust among people who indicated they preferred the Republicans, and then averaging those two average ratings. Thus, we gave the ratings of people who preferred the Democrats versus Republicans equal weight when constructing our laypeople ratings, and as a result these laypeople ratings cannot reasonably be accused of having liberal bias. See the Methods for further details, and Table 1 for the politically balanced crowd ratings for each domain.

Critically, this unbiased measure produces similar results to those described above using professional fact-checker ratings: when using the ratings of a politically balanced group of laypeople, the average quality of domains shared by people who used Trump hashtags was 2.17 s.d. lower than people who used Biden hashtags (t -test, $t(8,943) = 1.0 \times 10^2$, $P < 0.0001$; Fig. 1b). Even when creating a purposefully right-biased quality measure by only using the trustworthiness ratings of Republican laypeople, we still find a qualitatively similar pattern: the average quality of domains shared by people who used Trump hashtags was 1.29 s.d. lower than people who used Biden hashtags ($t(8,943) = 61.1$, $P < 0.0001$; Extended Data Fig. 1). To further contextualize the magnitude of this difference, we discretize our politically balanced layperson quality ratings to classify each of the 60 rated domains as low versus high quality (Extended Data Fig. 2), and find that the median Trump hashtag poster shared four times more links to low-quality websites compared with the median Biden hashtag poster.

Our findings are not unique to the use of Biden versus Trump hashtags to classify users' political orientation: we find high correlations between sharing lower-quality news sources and conservative ideology as estimated on the basis of the Twitter accounts the users follow³⁹ or the news sites that the users share⁴⁰ (expert ratings, $0.73 < r < 0.88$ depending on partisanship/ideology measure, $P < 0.001$ for all; politically balanced layperson ratings, $0.73 < r < 0.82$ depending on partisanship/ideology measure, $P < 0.001$ for all; see the Methods for methodological details).

Table 1 | Set of 60 news site quality scores generated by trustworthiness ratings from 8 professional fact-checkers and from averaging the trustworthiness ratings of Democrats and Republicans to create politically balanced trustworthiness ratings from 970 laypeople

Domain	Mainstream		Hyper-partisan		Fake news			
	Fact-checker rating	Politically balanced layperson rating	Domain	Fact-checker rating	Politically balanced layperson rating	Domain	Fact-checker rating	Politically balanced layperson rating
abcnews.go.com	0.56	0.45	activepost.com	0	0.2	americannews.com	0	0.22
aol.com/news	0.41	0.35	antwar.com	0	0.18	angrypatriotmovement.com	0	0.18
bbc.co.uk	0.81	0.38	blacklistednews.com	0	0.18	bb4ip.com	0	0.18
bostonglobe.com	0.75	0.33	breitbart.com	0.16	0.22	beforeitsnews.com	0	0.19
cbsnews.com	0.66	0.48	commondreams.org	0.03	0.18	channel24news.com	0.06	0.25
chicagotribune.com	0.53	0.38	conservativetribune.com	0.03	0.24	clashdaily.com	0	0.18
cnn.com	0.84	0.47	crooksandliars.com	0.13	0.18	conservativedaily.com	0	0.23
daily.co.uk	0.44	0.3	dailycaller.com	0.13	0.21	dailybuzzlive.com	0	0.24
foxnews.com	0.44	0.45	dailykos.com	0.16	0.2	downtrend.com	0	0.19
huffingtonpost.com	0.47	0.41	dailysignal.com	0	0.2	freedomdaily.com	0.03	0.2
latimes.com	0.75	0.33	dailywire.com	0.16	0.25	newsbreakshare.com	0	0.19
manbc.com	0.66	0.44	ijr.com	0.09	0.19	notallowedto.com	0	0.17
news.yahoo.com	0.59	0.4	infowars.com	0.03	0.21	now@news.com	0	0.2
nydailynews.com	0.34	0.33	newsmax.com	0.13	0.23	onepoliticalplaza.com	0	0.19
nypost.com	0.38	0.38	patriotpost.us	0	0.21	react365.com	0	0.17
nytimes.com	0.91	0.45	rawstory.com	0.09	0.19	realnewsrightnow.com	0	0.21
sfchronicle.com	0.59	0.26	redstate.com	0.06	0.2	sociallevythings.com	0	0.18
usatoday.com	0.66	0.45	thedailysheepie.com	0.09	0.18	thenewyorkevening.com	0	0.24
washingtonpost.com	0.91	0.45	thepoliticalinsider.com	0.03	0.22	whatdoesitmean.com	0	0.19
wsj.com	0.72	0.34	westernjournal.com	0.06	0.22	yournewswire.com	0.06	0.19

See ref. 38 for details. These scores indicate quality, such that higher values indicate higher quality. To generate the low quality news site sharing scores used in our analyses, these quality scores are subtracted from 1 (to transform quality scores into low quality scores).

Broad asymmetries in news sharing quality

This pattern also extends beyond the particular setting of Twitter users during the 2020 election. Across 7 extra datasets, we evaluate the correlation between the average quality of news sources shared (using the set of 60 news sites in Table 1) and political orientation. We find a significant negative relationship of shared news quality and conservatism when examining YouGov respondents' on-platform Facebook sharing in 2016 (ref. 11) (fact-checker ratings, $r(757) = 0.33, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(757) = 0.21, P < 0.0001$); prolific respondents' on-platform Twitter sharing in 2018 (ref. 41) (fact-checker ratings, $r(592) = 0.17, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(592) = 0.16, P < 0.0001$) and 2020 (ref. 41) (fact-checker ratings, $r(377) = 0.27, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(377) = 0.20, P < 0.0001$), and the on-platform sharing of Twitter users sampled in various ways in 2021 (ref. 13) (fact-checker ratings, $r(3,068) = 0.57, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings ($r(3,068) = 0.40, P < 0.0001$); 2022 (fact-checker ratings, $r(4,038) = 0.40, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(4,038) = 0.20, P < 0.0001$) and 2023 (fact-checker ratings, $r(4,404) = 0.28, P < 0.0001$); politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(4,404) = 0.14, P < 0.0001$) (Fig. 1d). For methodological details, see the Methods; for further analyses, see Supplementary Information section 3.

For reasons of tractability, these analyses of posts shared on social media follow the common practice of using domain-level quality ratings as a proxy for information quality rather than examining the actual information contained in each individual post (on the basis of the premise that low-quality news outlets are more likely to publish claims that are false or misleading; see Box 1 for a more detailed discussion

regarding different ways of measuring misinformation sharing). Importantly, however, two further analyses of the sharing of posts that specifically contain inaccurate information also find a similar pattern. The first analysis examines the sharing on Twitter of URLs deemed to be inaccurate by either professional fact-checkers or politically balanced layperson ratings, and estimates users' ideology on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed³⁸. Users estimated to be conservative shared significantly more inaccurate URLs than users estimated to be liberal (Wilcoxon signed-rank test, $z = 6.641, P < 0.0001$ for fact-checker ratings, $b = 0.654, P < 0.0001$ for layperson ratings; Fig. 2a,b). For methodological details, see the Methods; for further analyses, see Supplementary Information section 3.6 and Extended Data Fig. 3. The second analysis examines a large-scale survey experiment in which participants from 16 countries reported their sharing intentions for a series of COVID-19-related claims (eliminating potential exposure confounds, and presented without source attribution), and conservatism was determined on the basis of responses to two questions about economic conservatism versus liberalism³⁹. Once again, there was a significant correlation between conservatism and average sharing intentions for inaccurate claims (USA: fact-checker ratings, $r(439) = 0.11, P = 0.027$; politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(439) = 0.10, P = 0.029$; across all 16 countries: fact-checker ratings, $r(7,577) = 0.06, P < 0.0001$; politically balanced layperson ratings, $r(7,577) = 0.05, P = 0.0001$; Fig. 2c,d). For methodological details, see the Methods; for further analyses, see Supplementary Information section 3.7.

Together, these data indicate a consistent pattern whereby conservative or Republican-leaning social media users share more low-quality information—as evaluated by fact-checkers or politically balanced groups of laypeople, and be it judged on the basis of domain-level

Analysis

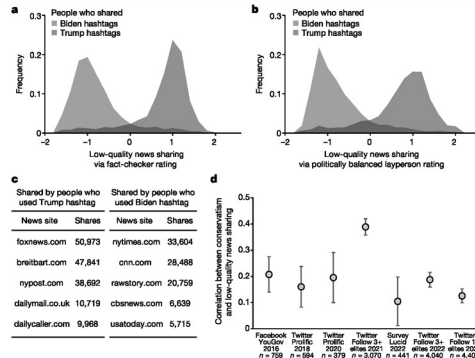


Fig. 1 | Social media users who supported Trump and/or were conservative shared links to lower-quality news sites than users who supported Biden and/or were liberal. a, b, Distribution of relative frequency of low-quality news sharing scores across people who used the #VoteBidenHarris2020 hashtag versus the #Trump2020 hashtag in our sample of 9,000 Twitter users, on the basis of links shared as of October 2020. The x-axis scores are standardized (z-scored) for comparability; higher values indicate lower-quality news sharing. They axis indicates relative frequency, such that the area under each curve sums to 1. News site quality ratings as given by 8 professional fact-checkers (a) and news site quality ratings as given by $n = 970$ laypeople from the USA recruited using Lucid (b), quota-matched to the national distribution on age, gender, education and geographic region; ratings of Democratic respondents and Republican respondents were averaged to create politically balanced

layperson ratings. For details of the ratings, see the Methods and ref. 38. c, Top five most-shared news sites among the people in our sample who used Trump versus Biden hashtags, using the list of news sites from ref. 38. d, The correlation between conservatism and low-quality information sharing across seven extra datasets. For x-axis labels, the first row indicates the data source for low-quality news sharing, the second row indicates the source from which the users were sampled, the third row indicates the year in which the data were collected and the fourth row indicates the sample size. For details of each dataset, see Supplementary Information section 3. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals. Thus, the pattern observed in panels a and b generalizes beyond Twitter users who shared political hashtags during the 2020 US presidential election to a variety of other contexts.

or post-level ratings—than liberal or Democratic-leaning users. That being said, of course, it is important to keep in mind that people who share content on social media are not representative of the general public, and therefore the consistent pattern we observe here does not necessarily generalize to comparisons of the average liberal versus conservative or Democrat versus Republican; and that the pattern that we observe in these data may be different at other points in time. Our data are also agnostic regarding the extent to which conservatives share more misinformation because they are more psychologically inclined to do so, versus simply being exposed to more misinformation (for example, because, at least during the study period, conservative elites share more misinformation than liberal elites^{33,39}).

News sharing can help explain suspension

Returning to our dataset of Twitter suspensions during the 2020 election, the political asymmetry in sharing low-quality information that we observe may therefore help to explain the apparent preferential suspension of right-leaning users. When we calculate the area under the curve (AUC, which captures accuracy while accounting for differences in base rates and is a standard metric of model performance in fields such as machine learning⁴⁰), the various measures of sharing low-quality news predict suspension (0.68 < AUC < 0.72) to a similar degree as the various partisanship and ideology measures (0.67 < AUC < 0.71) (Fig. 3a) (no significant difference between average AUC for low-quality news sharing measures versus political orientation measures: bootstrapped

95% confidence interval, $-0.005, 0.011$). Thus, when examined independently, political orientation and sharing low-quality news are similarly predictive of suspension.

We also ask what happens when political orientation and sharing low-quality news, along with numerous relevant control variables, are used simultaneously to predict which accounts were suspended during the 6 months after the 2020 US presidential election. To do so, we construct an aggregate measure of the political orientation of the 9,000 politically active Twitter users in our sample by taking the first component of a principal component analysis (PCA) of our four ideology/partisanship measures (on the basis of sharing Trump versus Biden hashtags, the Twitter accounts the users follow³⁹ and the news sites that the users share^{32,40}), and an aggregate measure of sharing low-quality news. We created the latter by taking the first component of a PCA of our 4 expert news site quality measures (60 sites rated by professional fact-checkers³⁸, 283 domains rated by Ad Fontes Media, Inc., 3,216 domains rated by Media Bias/Fact Check and 4,767 domains rated by aggregating ratings from various fact-checkers and academics³⁹). We then use probit regression to predict whether the user was suspended as of the end of July 2021, with P values Holm–Bonferroni corrected to adjust for multiple comparisons (see Supplementary Information section 1 for a full list of control variables and Extended Data Table 1 for regression models). When doing so, the association between political orientation and suspension is not statistically significant ($b = 0.12, z = 2.33, P_{adj} = 0.14$), whereas sharing low-quality news is positively associated with suspension ($b = 0.24, z = 5.18, P_{adj} < 0.001$),

Box 1

How misinformation sharing is defined and measured has important implications for the conclusions that can be drawn from any analyses

Most research on online misinformation takes one of two approaches. The first approach—most often used when analysing large social media datasets in which it is not feasible to evaluate each post individually—focuses on URLs, and uses the quality of the publishing domain as a proxy for the veracity (or, more broadly, ‘quality’) of the specific URL³⁴. The logic behind this approach is that URLs from low-quality sources are more likely to be false or inaccurate than URLs from high-quality domains. Although this approach is scalable, it is quite coarse as some stories from lower-quality outlets may be accurate, and some stories from higher-quality outlets may be false, inaccurate or otherwise misleading³⁵. That being said, there is at least substantial consistency in which domains experts consider to be low quality³⁴, and this domain-based approach has the benefit of providing ratings of relative quality for a sizable fraction of people’s news diet.

The second approach—most often used when recruiting participants to complete survey experiments—is to collect specific headlines, posts or articles that have been debunked or are veridical, and ask participants to indicate how likely they would be to share the posts if they saw them online³⁶. Although this approach does not suffer from the coarseness of the domain ratings and

removes potential exposure confounds (where some types of users may be exposed to misinformation more than others), it is difficult to implement at scale and relies on self-report sharing intentions rather than actual social media sharing. As each approach has limitations, it can be particularly compelling to observe convergent results when asking the same question using both approaches.

Across both approaches, researchers typically rely on professional fact-checker ratings (either of the trustworthiness of publishers, or the veracity of individual stories) to evaluate content. In this article, we demonstrate how ratings from politically balanced groups of laypeople can also be used to evaluate domains and stories in a fashion that minimizes the potential for political bias in the evaluations.

Finally, we note that although most misinformation research to date has largely focused on news stories, other forms of content such as images, videos and posts without URLs are also very important vectors of information online. It is vital for future research to look at content beyond just URLs (that is, to examine post text, images and videos), as well as to develop ways of measuring the actual impact of exposure to content at scale rather than simply using inaccuracy as the metric of harm³⁷.

as are other problematic behaviours such as likelihood of being a bot (estimated using the model from ref. 43; $b = 0.20$, $z = 5.09$, $PHB < 0.001$) and use of toxic language ($b = 0.17$, $z = 6.58$, $P_{toxic} < 0.001$); results are similar when using ridge (penalized) regression or logistic regression (Extended Data Table 1).

Of course, because of their correlational nature, these analyses do not allow us to definitively assess whether there was a causal effect of political orientation on Twitter suspensions during the 2020 election. Even if we had more precise measures of misinformation sharing (for example, post-level instead of source-level, or real-time ratings instead of using pre-election tweets to prospectively predict as we do here), or were able to include extra features (for example, harmful content that was deleted before we were able to download it), our estimates could still be biased in either direction by further omitted variables.

Who is sanctioned by unbiased policies

These data do, however, allow us to ask a more general question that has implications beyond just re-litigating the 2020 election cycle in the USA: what would we expect to happen if, theoretically, an entirely politically neutral anti-misinformation policy was implemented? To answer this question, we use simulations to examine which users would have been suspended if suspension had been based only on sharing links to low-quality news sites (using the set of 60 domains rated by laypeople described above³⁸; Extended Data Fig. 2) and not at all on political orientation. That is, by construction we can remove any causal effect of political orientation, and then ask how much of a political asymmetry we nonetheless observe given politically neutral enforcement policies implemented on these data (of course, we do not know what specific policies were actually used by Twitter). To do so, we consider a range of suspension policies that differ in their harshness, for which a given policy specifies the probability of a user getting suspended each time they share a link to a low-quality news domain. For each policy, we can then calculate the average suspension probability of users estimated

to be Democrats versus Republicans on the basis of their use of Biden versus Trump hashtags. See the Methods for details.

Using this approach, we find that suspending users for sharing links to news sites deemed to be untrustworthy by politically balanced groups of laypeople³⁸ leads to higher rates of suspension for Republicans than Democrats (Fig. 3b). For example, if users have a 1% chance of getting suspended each time they share a low-quality link, 2.41 times more users who shared Trump hashtags would be suspended compared with users who shared Biden hashtags ($d = 0.63$; t -test, $t(8,998) = 30.1$, $P < 0.0001$). Findings are equivalent when basing suspension on expert assessments of the 60 news sites³⁹, or when correlating predicted suspension rate with ideology ($0.31 < r < 0.39$, depending on ideology measure; $P < 0.0001$ for all); see Supplementary Information section 2 for details.

Beyond the sharing of misinformation or conspiracy theories often promoted by low-quality news sites, conservatives in our dataset may also have been preferentially suspended for engaging in other sanctioned behaviours, such as engaging in calls for violence (for example, in connection with the events at the US capital on 6 January 2021, which occurred during our study period), or for using bots. Indeed, as with sharing links to low-quality news sites, users on the political right had significantly higher estimated likelihoods of being a bot ($0.70 < r < 0.76$ depending on political orientation measure, $P < 0.0001$ for all; Extended Data Fig. 4), and simulating suspension on the basis of likelihood of being a bot leads to much higher suspension rates for Republican accounts than Democrat accounts (Fig. 3c; see the Methods and Supplementary Information section 2 for details). For example, suspending users with a bot score above 0.5 would lead to 14.2 times more users who shared Trump hashtags getting suspended compared with users who shared Biden hashtags ($d = 1.26$; t -test, $t(8,976) = 59.9$, $P < 0.0001$). Importantly, the associations between political orientation and low-quality news sharing are robust to controlling for bot scores, and to only examining users with low likelihood of being bots (Supplementary Information section 2). Regardless of which prohibited behaviour(s) are in operation, the same fundamental point

Analysis

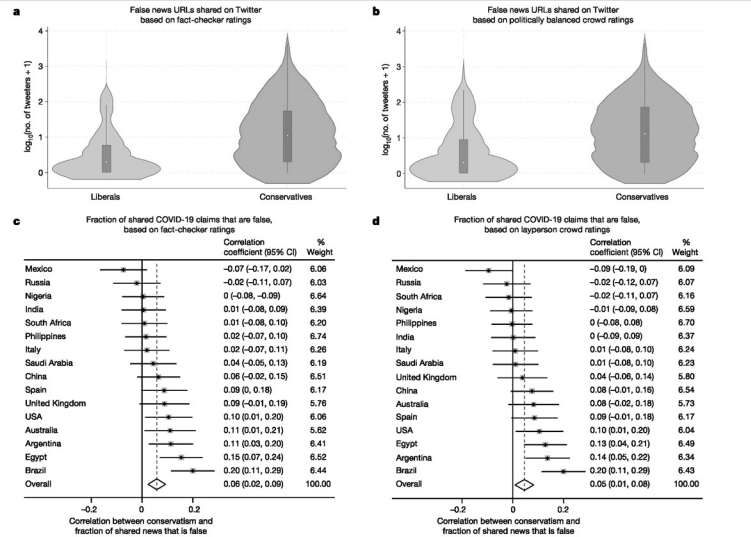


Fig. 2 | Conservatives shared more false claims than liberals. **a, b.** Distribution of the number of Twitter posts containing links to articles rated as false by professional fact-checkers (**a**), or rated as inaccurate by politically balanced groups of survey respondents (**b**), made by Twitter users estimated to be liberal versus conservative when analysing data from ref. 53. The y axis shows $\log_{10}(\text{count of primary posts containing the URL} + 1)$. For details, see the Methods and Supplementary Information section 3.6.

c, d. Analysis of sharing intentions for COVID-19 claims from a survey conducted in 16 countries, from ref. 37. Shown is the correlation between self-reported endorsement of conservative economic principles and fraction of shared content that was rated false by fact-checkers (**c**) or inaccurate by layperson crowds (**d**). Overall effect was calculated using random effects meta-analysis. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals (95% CI). For details, see the Methods and Supplementary Information section 3.7.

applies—partisan asymmetries in behaviour can lead to partisan asymmetries in suspension, even when suspension policies are politically neutral.

These analyses show that even in the absence of any (intentional) disparate treatment on the part of technology companies, partisan asymmetries in sanctioned behaviours will lead to (unintentional) disparate impact whereby conservatives are suspended at greater rates. From a legal perspective, political orientation is not a protected class in the USA⁴⁶ and thus neither form of disparate treatment is illegal (although potentially still normatively undesirable). Although disparate impact may reasonably be considered to constitute discrimination in some cases (for example, employment discrimination on the basis of job-irrelevant factors that correlate with race)⁴⁵, in the present context reducing the spread of misinformation and the prevalence of bots are legitimate and necessary goals for social media platforms. This makes a normative case for disparate impact on the basis of political orientation.

Social media companies typically do enforcement on the basis of the contents of specific posts, rather than sanctioning users on the basis of the domains they share^{46–48}. This post-level approach has the advantage of being much finer grained, as much of the content from low-quality

domains may be accurate. Thus, enforcement using domain-level quality will lead to many false positives, in which users are sanctioned for sharing content that is not misinformation. Conversely, post-level sanctions create an incentive for users to not post inaccurate or misleading content in particular. Relatedly, platform sanctions can be deployed at the level of the user (for example, suspending users who post inaccurate content) or the post (for example, attaching warning labels to posts flagged by fact-checkers⁴⁹), and ranking algorithms—which generally favour content that generates engagement and thus may promote misinformation—can also be tools of anti-misinformation enforcement by downranking content that has been identified as inaccurate (or comes from users who have previously posted inaccurate content).

Asymmetrical treatment need not imply bias

In the context of regulation such as the Digital Services Act recently passed by the European Union—which requires platforms to take down content that involves misinformation—our results suggest that when platforms comply with such regulations, they are likely to face accusations of partisan bias even if their policies are in fact politically neutral.

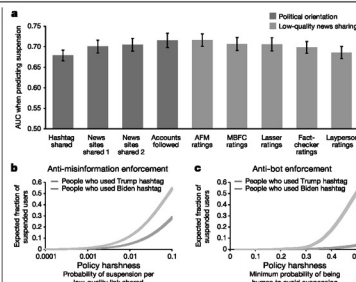


Fig. 3 Political orientation is not a unique predictor of getting suspended, and politically neutral enforcement policies will lead to political asymmetries in suspension rates. **a**, When considered separately, political orientation and sharing low-quality information are similarly predictive of suspension. Shown is AUC (a standard measure of predictive accuracy) when predicting whether a user was suspended using models that take different features as the independent variable. Purple bars indicate AUC for measures of political orientation (partisanship on the basis of sharing of #VoteBiden/tarr2020 versus #Trump2020 hashtags; ideology on the basis of accounts followed, estimated using the model of ref. 39; ideology on the basis of news sites shared, estimated using the model of ref. 40 or the model of ref. 12). Green bars indicate AUC for measures of sharing links to low-quality news sites on the basis of ratings from Ad Fontes Media (AFM; <http://adfontesmedia.com>), Media Bias/Fact Check (MBFC; <http://mediabiasfactcheck.com>), an aggregation of different fact-checkers and journalists³⁹, 8 professional fact-checkers⁴⁰ and 970 lay people from the USA, weighting Democrats and Republicans equally³⁸. Error bars indicate bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals. See Extended Data Table 1 for results of regressions jointly considering political orientation, sharing low-quality news links and other controls. **b**, Simulating a politically neutral anti-misinformation policy—in which there is a constant probability of getting suspended each time a user shares a link to a low-quality news site, as judged by politically balanced groups of laypeople—leads to disparate impact against users on the political right. Shown is the expected probability of suspension for policies that vary in their harshness (that is, in the probability of getting suspended each time a user shares a low-quality link); see the Methods for details. **c**, Simulating a politically neutral anti-bot policy, in which accounts below a given probability of being human are suspended, shows a similar partisan asymmetry; see the Methods for details.

Our results also suggest that using politically balanced groups of laypeople to evaluate content^{39–42} may be a way to identify misinformation while ameliorating charges of political bias. Furthermore, increased transparency on the part of platforms regarding the characteristics (for example, demographics) of users who are getting sanctioned, and why those sanctions are occurring, may help the public better understand how neutral policies can lead to the appearance of bias.

In sum, when there are political asymmetries in misinformation sharing (in either direction), platforms will face a substantial trade-off between reducing the spread of misinformation and being politically balanced in their enforcement. Asymmetric enforcement could also occur outside the context of political orientation (for example, if a particular demographic group is preferentially targeted with misinformation), they may share more of it and thus be sanctioned more frequently). Our argument is not specific to one particular direction of association between political orientation and misinformation sharing—which could potentially be different at different points in time, or

for particular topics. If one political, social or demographic group shares more misinformation—be it liberals, conservatives or some other group—it is not possible to be maximally effective in combating misinformation without preferentially taking action against members of that group. That being said, of course our analyses also do not rule out the possibility of bias on the part of platforms. Instead, we show that asymmetries in treatment are, on their own, not diagnostic of purposeful targeting one way or the other. Be that as it may, given the widespread (and bi-partisan³⁹) public demand for reducing misinformation online, policy makers must be aware that some level of differential treatment across groups is likely even if technology companies are working in an unbiased way to keep misinformation in check.

Online content


Any methods, additional references, Nature Portfolio reporting summaries, source data, extended data, supplementary information, acknowledgements, peer review information; details of author contributions and competing interests; and statements of data and code availability are available at <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07942-8>.

- Kozyrev, A., Lewandowsky, S. & Herwig, R. Citizens versus the internet: confronting digital challenges with cognitive tools. *Psychol. Sci. Public Interest* **21**, 103–156 (2020).
- Pennycook, G. & Rand, D. G. The psychology of fake news. *Trends Cogn. Sci.* **26**, 388–402 (2022).
- Persily, N. & Tucker, J. A. *Social Media and Democracy: The State of the Field, Prospects for Reform* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2020).
- Kozyrev, A. et al. Topdown of individual-level interventions against online misinformation. *Nat. Hum. Behav.* **8**, 1044–1052 (2024).
- Bond, S. Trump accuses social media of anti-conservative bias after Twitter marks his tweets. <https://www.npr.org/2020/05/17/836842272/trump-accuses-social-media-of-anti-conservative-bias-after-twitter-marks-his-tweets>.
- Wermund, B. Ted Cruz digs in for congressional battle over 'censorship' on Twitter. *Facebook*. *Houston Chronicle* <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/politics/texas/article/Ted-Cruz-digs-in-for-congressional-battle-over-15740624.php> (2020).
- Vogels, E. A., Perrin, A. & Anderson, M. Most Americans think social media sites censor political viewpoints. *Pew Research Center* <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2020/09/16/most-americans-think-social-media-sites-censor-political-viewpoints> (2020).
- Guay, B., Pennycook, G. & Rand, D. Examining partisan asymmetries in fake news sharing and the efficacy of accuracy prompt interventions. Preprint at [PayAciv](https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/929) <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/929> (2023).
- Pennycook, G. & Rand, D. G. Accuracy prompts are a replicable and generalizable approach for reducing the spread of misinformation. *Nat. Commun.* **13**, 2333 (2022).
- Arach, A. A. et al. Understanding and combating misinformation across 16 countries on six continents. *Nat. Hum. Behav.* **7**, 1502–1513 (2023).
- Guess, A., Nagler, J. & Tucker, J. Less than you think: prevalence and predictors of fake news dissemination on Facebook. *Sci. Adv.* **5**, eaau4586 (2019).
- Grinberg, N., Joseph, K., Friedland, L., Swire-Thompson, B. & Lazer, D. Fake news on Twitter during the 2018 US presidential election. *Science* **363**, 374–378 (2019).
- Mosleh, M. & Rand, D. G. Measuring exposure to misinformation from political elites on Twitter. *Nat. Commun.* **13**, 7444 (2022).
- Nikolov, D., Flammini, A. & Menczer, F. Right and left, partisanship predicts (asymmetric) vulnerability to misinformation. *Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review* <https://misinformationreview.harvard.edu/articles/right-and-left-partisanship-predicts-asymmetric-vulnerability-to-misinformation> (2021).
- DeVries, M. R., Guess, A. M., Berinsky, A. J., Tucker, J. A. & Jost, J. T. Rumors in retreat: Ideological asymmetry in the failure to correct misinformation. *Pers. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* **50**, 3–17 (2024).
- Mitchell, A., Jurkowitz, M., Oliphant, J. B. & Shearer, E. Americans who mainly get their news on social media are less engaged, less knowledgeable. *Pew Research Center* <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable> (2020).
- Koopman, C. COO Tech Poll. The Center for Growth and Opportunity at Utah State University <https://www.thecgo.org/research/tech-poll/> (2021).
- Atraja, S., Hemphill, L. & Resnick, P. Remove, reduce, inform: what actions do people want social media platforms to take on potentially misleading content? In *Proc. ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* (ed. Nichols, J.) **1**, 1–33 (2020).
- Directorate-General for Communication. *Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake News and Disinformation Online*. European Union http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/52183_464_ENG (2018).
- Pennycook, G., Bear, A., Collins, E. T. & Rand, D. G. The implied truth effect: attaching warnings to a subset of fake news headlines increases perceived accuracy of headlines without warnings. *Manag. Sci.* **66**, 4844–4857 (2020).
- Clayton, K. et al. Real solutions for fake news? Measuring the effectiveness of general warnings and fact-check tags in reducing belief in false stories on social media. *Polit. Behav.* **42**, 1073–1095 (2020).
- Facebook Community Standards—Misinformation. *Meta* <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/policies/community-standards/misinformation/> (2024).

Analysis

23. Allan, J., Martel, C. & Rand, D. G. Birds of a feather don't fact-check each other: Partisanship and the evaluation of news in Twitter's Birdwatch crowdsourced fact-checking program. In *Proc. 2022 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (eds Barbosa, S. et al.) 1–19 (2022).
24. Silverman, H. Meta Newsroom—Helping fact-checkers identify false claims faster. *Meta* <https://about.fb.com/news/2019/12/helping-fact-checkers/> (2019).
25. Singh, S. & Bagchi, K. How internet platforms are combating disinformation and misinformation in the age of COVID-19. *New America* www.newamerica.org/61/reports/how-internet-platforms-are-combating-disinformation-and-misinformation-age-covid-19/facebook/ (2020).
26. Orszay, B. & Sweet, K. APNewsBreak: Twitter suspended 58 million accounts in 4Q. *APNews* <https://apnews.com/article/1ee30b22a9ae4267a4e6e5f218bc625b> (2018).
27. Roth, Y. & Harvey, D. How Twitter is fighting spam and malicious automation. *X* https://blogs.com/official/en_us/topics/company/2018/how-twitter-is-fighting-spam-and-malicious-automation.html (2018).
28. Tollefson, J. Disinformation researchers under investigation: what's happening and why. *Nature* <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-023-02195-3> (2023).
29. Clayton, J. Social media: Is it really biased against US Republicans? *BBC* www.bbc.com/news/technology-54698186 (2020).
30. Elon Musk on Real Time with Bill Maher: Elon Musk Interviews <https://elon-musk-interviews.com/2023/05/02/real-time-bill-maher-en/> (2023).
31. Ivanova, I. These formerly banned Twitter accounts have been reinstated since Elon Musk took over. *CBS News* www.cbsnews.com/news/twitter-accounts-reinstated-elon-musk-donald-trump-kanye-jordan-peterson-katly-griffin-andrew-saxe/ (2022).
32. The Associated Press. Musk's Twitter has dissolved its Trust and Safety Council. *NPR* www.npr.org/2022/12/12/1142399392/twitter-trust-and-safety-council-elon-musk (2022).
33. Laaser, J. et al. Social media sharing of low-quality news sources by political elites. *PNAS Nexus* **1**, ppac186 (2022).
34. González-Ballón, S. et al. Asymmetric ideological segregation in exposure to political news on Facebook. *Science* **381**, 393–398 (2023).
35. Rossetti, M. & Zaman, T. Sots, disinformation, and the first impeachment of US President Donald Trump. *PLoS ONE* **18**, e0283971 (2023).
36. Yang, Y., Davis, T. & Hindman, M. Visual misinformation on Facebook. *J. Commun.* **73**, 395–408 (2023).
37. Arechar, A. A. et al. Understanding and combatting misinformation across 16 countries on six continents. *Nat. Hum. Behav.* **7**, 1502–1513 (2023).
38. Pennycook, G. & Rand, D. G. Fighting misinformation on social media using crowdsourced judgments of news source quality. *Proc. Natl Acad. Sci. USA* **116**, 2521–2526 (2019).
39. Barberá, P., Jost, J. T., Nagler, J., Tucker, J. A. & Bonneau, R. Tweeting from left to right is online political communication more than an echo chamber? *Psychol. Sci.* **26**, 1531–1542 (2015).
40. Eady, G., Nagler, J., Bonneau, R. & Tucker, J. News sharing on social media: mapping the ideology of news media, politicians, and the mass public. Preprint as *OSF Preprints* <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/hh8qj> (2020).
41. Moshah, M., Pennycook, G., Arechar, A. A. & Rand, D. G. Cognitive reflection correlates with behavior on Twitter. *Nat. Commun.* **12**, 921 (2021).
42. Huang, J. & Ling, C. X. Using AUC and accuracy in evaluating learning algorithms. *IEEE Trans. Knowl. Data Eng.* **17**, 299–310 (2005).
43. Social Media Account Classifier. *Bot Sentinel* <https://botsentinel.com> (2022).
44. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. *National Archive* www.archives.gov/education/lessons/civil-rights-act (2018).
45. Civil Rights Division. *Title IV Legal Manual Section VII: Proving Discrimination – Disparate Impact* (U.S. Department of Justice, 2016). www.justice.gov/crt/foia/Manual7.
46. Facebook Community Standards. *Meta* <https://transparency.fb.com/en-gb/policies/community-standards/> (2024).
47. YouTube Community Guidelines. *YouTube* www.youtube.com/howyoutubeworks/policies/community-guidelines/#detecting-violations (2024).
48. The X Rules. *X Help Center* <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/x-rules> (2024).
49. Martel, C. & Rand, D. G. Misinformation warning labels are widely effective: a review of warning effects and their moderating features. *Curr. Opin. Psychol.* **84**, 101710 (2023).
50. Allan, J., Arechar, A. A., Pennycook, G. & Rand, D. G. Scaling up fact-checking using the wisdom of crowds. *Soc. Adv.* **7**, eab4383 (2021).
51. Oodeel, W. et al. Moderating with the mob: evaluating the efficacy of real-time crowdsourced fact-checking. *J. Online Trust Saf.* <https://doi.org/10.54501/jots.v1i1.15> (2021).
52. Resnick, P., Allayee, A., Im, J. & Gilbert, E. Searching for or reviewing evidence improves crowdworkers' misinformation judgments and reduces partisan bias. *Collect. Intell.* <https://doi.org/10.1177/2633937221125407> (2023).
53. Ghezae, I. et al. Partisans neither expect nor receive reputational rewards for sharing falsehoods over truth online. *PNAS Nexus* **3**, ppae297 (2024).
54. Lin, H. et al. High level of correspondence across different news domain quality rating sets. *PNAS Nexus* **2**, ppac298 (2023).
55. Allen, J., Watts, D. J. & Rand, D. G. Quantifying the impact of misinformation and vaccine-related content on Facebook. *Science* **384**, eadi3491 (2024).
56. Pennycook, G., Binnewitz, J., Newton, C. & Rand, D. G. A practical guide to doing behavioral research on fake news and misinformation. *Collabra Psychol.* <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.25293> (2021).

Publisher's note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

 **Open Access** This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License, which permits any non-commercial use, sharing, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if you modified the licensed material. You do not have permission under this licence to share adapted material derived from this article or parts of it. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

© The Author(s) 2024

Methods

Sample and basic data collection for 2020 election study

First, we collected a list of Twitter users who tweeted or retweeted either of the election hashtags #Trump2020 and #VoteBidenHarris2020 on 6 October 2020. We also collected the most recent 3,200 tweets sent by each of those accounts. We processed tweets and extracted tweeted domains from 34,920 randomly selected users (15,714 shared #Trump2020 and 19,206 shared #VoteBidenHarris2020), and filtered down to 12,238 users who shared at least five links to domains used by the ideology estimator of ref. 57. We also excluded 426 'elite' users with more than 15,000 followers who are probably unrepresentative of Twitter users more generally (because of this exclusion, suspension data were not collected for these users; however, as described in Supplementary Information section 2, our main results on the association between political orientation and low-quality news sharing are also observed among these elite users). These data were collected as part of a project that was approved by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Committee on the Use of Humans as Experimental Subjects Protocol 91046.

We then constructed a politically balanced set of users by randomly selecting 4,500 users each from the remaining 4,756 users who shared #Trump2020 and 7,056 users who shared #VoteBidenHarris2020. After 9 months, on 30 July 2021, we checked the status of the 9,000 users and assessed suspension. We classify an account as having been suspended if the Twitter application programming interface (API) returned error code 63 ('User has been suspended') when querying that user.

To measure a user's tendency to share misinformation, we follow most other researchers in this space^{23,38,39} and use news source quality as a proxy for article accuracy, because it is not feasible to rate the accuracy of individual tweets at scale. Specifically, to quantify the quality of news shared by each user, we leveraged a previously published set of 60 news sites (20 mainstream, 20 hyper-partisan 20 fake news; Table 1) whose trustworthiness had been rated by 8 professional fact-checkers as well as politically balanced crowds of laypeople. The crowd ratings were determined as follows. A sample of 971 participants from the USA, quota-matched to the national distribution on age, gender, ethnicity and geographic region, were recruited through Lucid⁴⁰. Each participant indicated how much they trusted each of the 60 news outlets using a 5-point Likert scale. For each outlet, we then calculated politically balanced crowd ratings by calculating the average trust among Democrats and the average trust among Republicans, and then averaging those two average ratings.

We also examined Reliability ratings for a set of 283 sites from Ad Fontes Media, Inc., Factual Reporting ratings for a set of 3,216 sites from Media Bias/Fact Check and Accuracy ratings for a set of 4,767 sites from a recent academic paper by Lasser et al.³³ We then used the Twitter API to retrieve the last 3,200 posts (as of 6 October 2020) for each user in our study, and collected all links to any of those sites shared (tweeted or retweeted) by each user. Following the approach used in previous work^{38,39}, we calculated a news quality score for each user (bounded between 0 and 1) by averaging the ratings of all sites whose links they shared, separately for each set of site ratings. Finally, we transform these ratings into low-quality news sharing scores by subtracting the news quality ratings from 1. Over 99% of users in our study had shared at least one link to a rated domain. When combining the four expert-based measures into an aggregate news quality score, we replaced missing values with the sample mean; PCA indicated that only one component should be retained (87% of variation explained), which had weights of 0.50 on Pennycook and Rand (ref. 38) fact-checker ratings, 0.51 on Ad Fontes Media Reliability ratings, 0.48 on Media Bias/Fact Check Factual Reporting ratings and 0.51 on Lasser et al.³³ Accuracy ratings. In all PCA analyses, we use parallel analysis to determine the number of retained components.

To measure a user's political orientation, we first classify their partisanship on the basis of whether they shared more #Trump2020 or #VoteBidenHarris2020 hashtags. Additionally, we retrieved all accounts followed by users in our sample and used the statistical model from ref. 39 to obtain a continuous measure of users' ideology on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed. Similarly, we used the statistical models from ref. 40 and ref. 12 to estimate users' ideology using the ideological leanings of the news sites that the users shared content from. We also calculated user ideology by averaging political leanings of domains they shared through tweets or retweets on the basis of the method in ref. 12. The intuition behind these approaches is that users on social media are more likely to follow accounts (and share news stories from sources) that are aligned with their own ideology than those that are politically distant. Thus, the ideology of the accounts the user follows, and the ideology of the news sources the user shares, provide insight into the user's ideology. When combining these four measures into an aggregate political orientation score, we replaced missing values with the sample mean; PCA indicated that only one component should be retained (88% of variation explained), which had weights of 0.49 on hashtag-based partisanship, 0.49 on follower-based ideology, 0.51 on sharing-based ideology estimated through ref. 40 and 0.51 on sharing-based ideology estimated through ref. 12. We also used this aggregate measure to calculate a user's extent of ideological extremity by taking the absolute value of the aggregate ideology measure; and we used PCA to combine measures of the standard deviation across a user's tweets of news site ideology scores from ref. 12 and ref. 40, and standard deviation of ideology of accounts followed from ref. 39, as a measure of the ideological uniformity (versus diversity) of news shared by the user.

Policy simulations

In addition to the regression analyses, we also simulate politically neutral suspension policies and determine each user's probability of suspension; and from this, determine the level of differential impact we would expect in the absence of differential treatment. The procedure is as follows. First, we identify a set of low-quality sources that could potentially lead to suspension. We do so using the politically balanced layperson trustworthiness ratings from ref. 38, as well as using the fact-checker trustworthiness ratings from that same paper. For both sets of ratings, there is a natural discontinuity at a value of 0.25 (on a normalized trust scale from 0 = Not at all to 1 = Entirely) (Extended Data Fig. 2). Thus, we consider sites with average trustworthiness ratings below 0.25 to be 'low quality'; and for each user, we count the number of times they tweet links to any of these low-quality sites.

We then define a suspension policy as the probability of a user getting suspended each time they share a link to a low-quality news site. We model suspension as probabilistic because many (almost certainly most) of the articles from low-quality news sites are not actually false, and sharing such articles does not constitute an offence. Thus, we consider who would get suspended under suspension policies that differ in their harshness, varying from a 0.01% chance of getting suspended for each shared link to a low-quality news site up to a 10% chance. Specifically, for each user, we calculate their probability of getting suspended as

$$P(\text{suspended}) = 1 - (1 - k)^l$$

where l is the number of low-quality links shared, and k is the probability of suspension for each shared link (that is, the policy harshness). The only way the user would not get suspended is if on each of the l times they share a low-quality link, they are not suspended. Because they do not get suspended with probability $(1 - k)$, the probability that they would never get suspended is $(1 - k)^l$. Therefore, the probability that they would get suspended at some point is $1 - (1 - k)^l$.

Analysis

We then calculate the mean (and 95% confidence interval) of that probability across all Democrats versus Republicans in our sample (as determined by sharing Biden versus Trump election hashtags). The results of these analyses are shown in Fig. 3b, and Supplementary Information section 2 presents statistical analyses of estimated probability of suspension on the basis of each measure of political orientation.

We also do a similar exercise using the likelihood of being a bot, rather than low-quality news sharing. The algorithm of ref. 43 provides an estimated probability of being a bot for each user, on the basis of the contents of their tweets. We define a suspension policy as the minimum probability of being human, k , required to avoid suspension (or, in other words, a threshold on bot likelihood above which the user gets suspended). Specifically, for a policy of harshness k , users with bot probability greater than $(1 - k)$ are suspended. The results of these analyses are shown in Fig. 3c.

Reanalyses of extra datasets

Facebook sharing in 2016 by users recruited through YouGov. Here we analyse data presented in ref. 11. A total of $n = 1,191$ survey respondents recruited using YouGov gave the researchers permission to collect the links they shared on Facebook for 2 months (through a Facebook app), starting in November 2016. As part of the survey, participants self-reported their ideology (using a 5-point Likert scale; not including participants who selected 'Not sure', yielding $n = 995$ respondents with usable ideology data) and their party affiliation (Democrat, Republican, Independent, Other, Not sure). As in our Twitter studies, we calculate low-quality information sharing scores for each user by using the fact-checker and politically balanced crowd ratings for the 60 news sites from ref. 38, as described above in Table 1. A total of 893 participants shared at least one rated link.

Twitter sharing in 2018 and 2020 by users recruited through Prolific. Here we analyse data presented in ref. 41. A total of $n = 2,100$ participants were recruited using the online labour market Prolific in June 2018. Twitter IDs were provided by participants at the beginning of the study. However, some participants entered obviously fake Twitter IDs—for example, the accounts of celebrities. To screen out such accounts, we followed the original paper and excluded accounts with follower counts above the 95th percentile in the dataset. We had complete data and usable Twitter IDs for 1,901 users. As part of the survey, participants self-reported the extent to which they were economically liberal versus conservative, and socially liberal versus conservative, using 5-point Likert scales. We construct an overall ideology measure by averaging over the economic and social measures. The Twitter API was used to retrieve the content of their last 3,200 tweets (capped by the Twitter API limit). Data were retrieved from Twitter on 18 August 2018, and then again on 12 April 2020 (the latter data pull excludes tweets collected during the former data pull). We calculate low-quality information sharing scores for each user by using the fact-checker and politically balanced crowd ratings for the 60 news sites from ref. 38, as described above in Table 1. A total of 594 participants shared at least one rated link in the 2018 data pull and 379 participants shared at least one rated link in the 2020 data pull; 288 participants shared at least one rated link in both data pulls.

Twitter sharing in 2021 by users who followed at least three political elites. Here we analyse data presented by Mosleh and Rand³¹, in which Twitter accounts for 816 elites were identified, and then 5,000 Twitter users were randomly sampled from the set of 38,328,679 users who followed at least three of the elite accounts. Each user's last 3,200 tweets were collected on 23 July 2021, and sharing of low-quality news domains was assessed using the fact-checker and politically balanced crowd ratings from ref. 38. A total of 3,070 users shared at least one rated link. The statistical model from ref. 39 was used to obtain a

continuous measure of users' ideology on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed.

Twitter sharing in 2022 by users who followed at least three political elites. Here we analyse previously unpublished data, in which 11,805 Twitter users were sampled from a set of 296,202,962 users who followed at one of the political elite accounts from ref. 41. We randomly sampled from users who had more than 20 lifetime tweets and followed at least three political elites for whom we had a partisanship rating. Each user's last 3,200 tweets were collected on 25 December 2022, and sharing of low-quality news domains was assessed using the fact-checker and politically balanced crowd ratings from ref. 38. A total of 4,040 users shared at least one rated link. The statistical model from ref. 39 was used to obtain a continuous measure of users' ideology on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed.

Twitter sharing in 2023 by users who followed at least one political elite, stratified on follower count. Here we analyse previously unpublished data in which 11,886 Twitter users were randomly sampled, stratified on the basis of \log_{10} -transformed number of followers (rounded to the nearest integer) from the same set of 296,202,962 users who followed at one political elite account. On 4 March 2023, we retrieved all tweets made by each user since 22 December 2022 using the Twitter Academic API. Sharing of low-quality news domains was assessed using the fact-checker and politically balanced crowd ratings from ref. 38. A total of 4,408 users shared at least one rated link. The statistical model from ref. 39 was used to obtain a continuous measure of users' ideology on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed.

Sharing of false claims on Twitter. Here we analyse data from Cheze et al.³³ Unlike the previous analyses, this dataset does not use domain quality as a proxy for misinformation sharing. Instead, sets of specific false versus true headlines were used. The headline sets were assembled by collecting claims that third-party fact-checking websites such as snopes.com or politifact.org had indicated were false, and collecting veridical claims from reputable news outlets. Furthermore, the headlines were pre-tested to determine their political orientation (on the basis of survey respondents' evaluation of how favourable the headline, if entirely accurate, would be for the Democrats versus Republicans; see ref. 56 for details of the pre-testing procedure).

Survey participants were recruited to rate the accuracy of each URL's headline claim. Specifically, each participant was shown ten headlines randomly sampled from the full set of headlines, and rated how likely they thought it was that the headline was true using a 9-point scale from 'not at all likely' to 'very likely'. For each headline, we created politically balanced crowd ratings by averaging the accuracy ratings of participants who identified as Democrats, averaging the accuracy ratings of participants who identified as Republicans and then averaging these two average ratings. We then classify URLs as inaccurate (and thus as misinformation) on the basis of crowd ratings if the politically balanced crowd rating was below the accuracy scale midpoint.

Additionally, the Twitter Academic API was used to identify all Twitter users who had posted primary tweets containing each URL. These primary tweets occurred between 2016 and 2022 (2016, 1%; 2017, 2%; 2018, 4%; 2019, 5%; 2020, 34%; 2021, 27%; 2022, 27%). The ideology of each of those users was estimated using the statistical model from ref. 39 on the basis of the ideological leaning of the accounts they followed. This allows us to count the number of liberals and conservatives who shared each URL on Twitter.

The dataset pools across three different iterations of this procedure. The first iteration used 104 headlines selected to be politically balanced, such that the Democrat-leaning headlines were as Democrat-leaning as the Republican-leaning headlines were Republican-leaning; $n = 1,319$ participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk were then shown a random subset of headlines that were half politically neutral and half aligned

with the participant's partisanship. The second iteration used 155 headlines (of which 30 overlapped with headlines used in the first iteration); $n = 853$ participants recruited using Lucid rated randomly selected headlines. The third iteration used 149 headlines (no overlap with previous iterations); $n = 866$ participants recruited using Lucid rated randomly selected headlines. The Amazon Mechanical Turk sample was a pure convenience sample, whereas the Lucid samples were quota-matched to the national distribution on age, gender, ethnicity and geographic region, and then true independents were excluded. For the 30 headlines that overlapped between iterations 1 and 2, the politically balanced crowd accuracy ratings from Amazon Mechanical Turk and Lucid correlated with each other at $r(28) = 0.75$. Therefore, we collapsed the politically balanced ratings across platforms for those 30 headlines. In total, this resulted in a final dataset with fact-checker ratings, politically balanced crowd ratings and counts of numbers of posts by liberals and conservatives on Twitter for 378 unique URLs.

Finally, we also classified the topic of each URL. To do so, we used Claude, an artificial intelligence system designed by Anthropic that emphasizes reliability and predictability, and has text summarization as one of its primary functions. We uploaded the full set of headlines to the artificial intelligence system, and first asked it to summarize the topics discussed in the headlines. We then asked it to indicate the topic covered in each specific headline, and manually inspected the results to ensure that the classifications were sensible. Next, we examined the frequency of each topic, synthesized the results into a set of six overarching topics and then finally asked the artificial intelligence system to categorize each headline into one of these six topics. This process led to the following distribution of topics: US Politics (174 headlines), Social Issues (91 headlines), COVID-19 (48 headlines), Business/Economy (41 headlines), Foreign Affairs (28 headlines) and Crime/Justice (26 headlines). As a test of the robustness of the classification, we also asked another artificial intelligence system, GPT-4, to classify the first 100 headlines into the six topics. We found that Claude and GPT-4 agreed on 80% of the headlines.

Sharing intentions of false COVID-19 claims across 16 countries. Here, we examine survey data from ref. 37. In these experiments, participants were recruited from 16 different countries using Lucid, with respondents quota-matched to the national distributions on age and gender in each country. Participants were shown ten false and ten true claims about COVID-19 (sampled from a larger set of 45 claims), presented without any source attribution. The claims were collected from fact-checking organizations in numerous countries, as well as sources such as the World Health Organization's list of COVID-19 myths. This approach removes ideological variation in exposure to misinformation online⁵, as well as any potential source cues/effects, and directly measures variation in the decision about what to share.

As in our other analyses, we complement the professional veracity ratings with crowd ratings. Specifically, $n = 8,527$ participants in the Accuracy condition rated the accuracy of each of the headlines they were shown using a 6-point Likert scale. We calculate the average accuracy rating for each statement in each country, and classify statements as misinformation if that average rating is below the scale midpoint.

Our main analyses then focus on the responses of the $n = 8,597$ participants from the Sharing condition, in which participants indicated their likelihood of sharing each claim using a 6-point Likert scale. To calculate each user's level of misinformation sharing, we first discretize the sharing intentions responses such that choices of 1 (Extremely unlikely), 2 (Moderately unlikely) or 3 (Slightly unlikely) on the Likert

scale are counted as not shared, whereas choices of 4 (Slightly likely), 5 (Moderately likely) or 6 (Extremely likely) are counted as shared. We then determine, for each user, the fraction of shared articles that were (1) rated as false by fact-checkers, and (2) rated as below the accuracy scale midpoint on average by respondents in the Accuracy condition.

We then ask how misinformation sharing varies with ideology within each country. Specifically, we construct a conservatism measure by averaging responses to two items from the World Values Survey that were included in the survey, which asked how participants would place their views on the scales of 'Incomes should be made more equal' versus 'There should be greater incentives for individual effort' and 'Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for' versus 'People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves' using 10-point Likert scales. Pilot data collected in the USA confirmed that responses to these two items correlated with self-report conservatism ($r(956) = 0.32$ for the first item and $r(956) = 0.40$ for the second item).

Reporting summary

Further information on research design is available in the Nature Portfolio Reporting Summary linked to this article.

Data availability

All data necessary to reproduce the results are available at <https://osf.io/a2c7d/>.

Code availability

All scripts necessary to reproduce the results are available at <https://osf.io/a2c7d/>.

57. Eady, G., Nagler, J., Gueas, A., Zilinsky, J. & Tucker, J. A. How many people live in political bubbles on social media? Evidence from linked survey and Twitter data. *Sage Open* **9**, 2155044018832705 (2019).
58. Pennycook, G. et al. Shifting attention to accuracy can reduce misinformation online. *Nature* **602**, 590–595 (2021).
59. Mosleh, M., Marini, C., Edles, D. & Rand, D. G. Reverse downstream consequences of debunking: being corrected by another user for posting false political news increases subsequent sharing of low quality, partisan, and toxic content in a Twitter field experiment. In *Proc. 2021 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (eds Kitamura, Y. et al.) 1–13 (2021).
60. Coppock, A. & McClellan, O. A. Validating the demographic, political, psychological, and experimental results obtained from a new source of online survey respondents. *Res. Politics* **6**, 202301860982714 (2019).

Acknowledgements We thank A. Gueas and I. Ghazae for assistance in our re-analysis of data from the papers on which they are lead authors. We thank A. Bear and B. Teppin for constructive feedback that improved this work.

Author contributions M.M. and D.G.R. designed the study. M.M. and Q.Y. collected the data. M.M. and D.G.R. analysed the results. D.G.R. and G.P. wrote the paper with input from T.Z. and M.M.

Competing Interests M.M., D.G.R. and G.P. have received funding from Meta and Google to conduct research related to reducing the spread of misinformation online and identifying inauthentic accounts. G.P. was a Faculty Research Fellow at Google in 2022. D.G.R. was an unpaid consultant for Twitter in 2021 and 2022. Q.Y. was an intern at Snapchat in 2020, and worked at Meta 2021–2023.

Additional Information

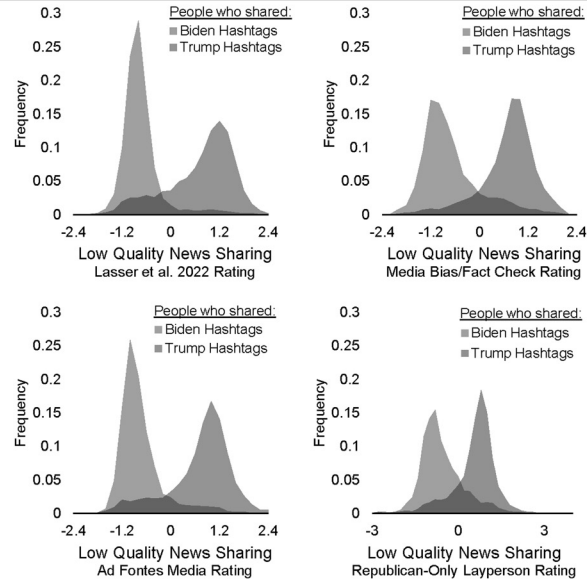
Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-024-07842-8>.

Correspondence and requests for materials should be addressed to David G. Rand.

Peer review information Nature thanks Adida Leviv, Sander van der Linden, Yunkang Yang, David Yokum, Alex Zwane and the other, anonymous, reviewer(s) for their contribution to the peer review of this work.

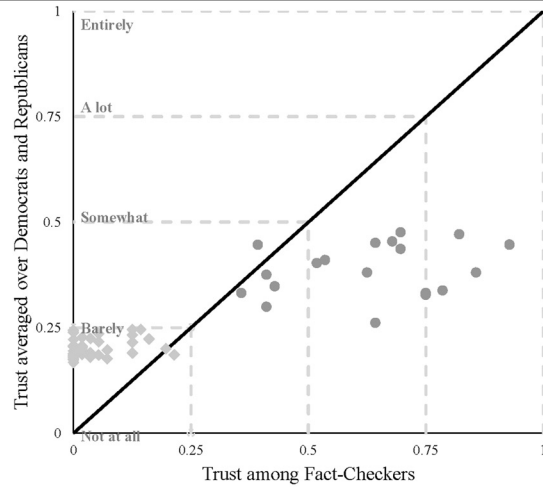
Reprints and permissions information is available at <http://www.nature.com/reprints>.

Analysis



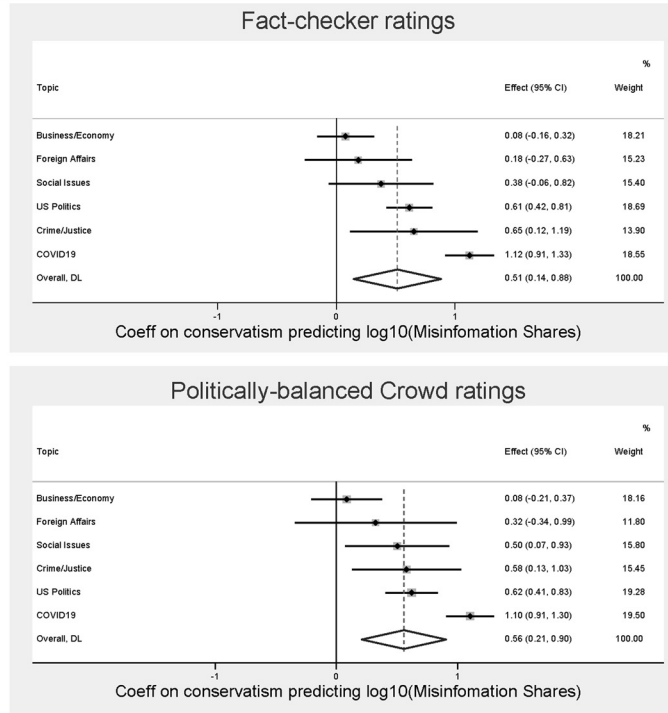
Extended Data Fig. 1 | Twitter users who used Trump hashtags shared links to lower quality news sites than Twitter users who used Biden hashtags, regardless of which set of quality ratings are used. Low Quality News Site

Sharing scores by partisanship using alternative quality rating sets. Scores are standardized (z-scored) for comparability; higher values indicate lower quality news sharing.



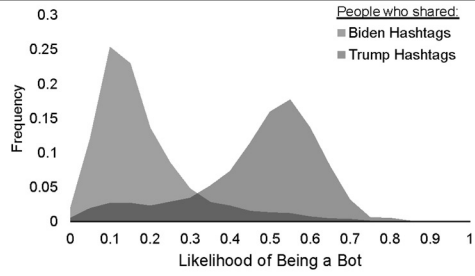
Extended Data Fig. 2 | News quality ratings from Pennycook & Rand (2019). Ratings generated by politically balanced crowds of laypeople (y-axis) and professional fact-checkers (x-axis). News sources shown as orange diamonds are counted as low quality for simulating suspensions.

Analysis



Extended Data Fig. 3| No evidence of topics for which liberals on Twitter share more links to false articles than conservatives. Further analysis of the number of posts containing misinformation links shared by liberals versus conservatives on Twitter when analyzing data from Ref. 53. Shown is the coefficient on an ideology dummy in a linear regression predicting

$\log_{10}(W \text{ misinformation shares} + 1)$ separately for URLs of each topic, along with the overall estimate from a random effects meta-analysis. Top panel shows results when considering URLs rated as false by professional fact-checkers; bottom panel shows results when considering URLs rated as inaccurate by politically-balanced crowds.



Extended Data Fig. 4 | Twitter users who used Trump hashtags are rated as more likely to be bots than Twitter users who used Biden hashtags. Bot Sentinel¹⁴ scores for the Twitter users in our 2020 election study, by partisanship (estimated based on whether users shared more Biden versus Trump hashtags).

Analysis**Extended Data Table 1 | Quality of news domains shared significantly predicts suspension, unlike political orientation**

	(1) Probit	(2) Probit Ridge	(3) Logit	(4) Logit Ridge
Political Orientation	0.123 (0.0526)	0.134	0.250 (0.0999)	0.266
Low Quality News Sharing	0.240*** (0.0463)	0.224	0.460*** (0.0860)	0.430
Followers & Friends	-0.000759 (0.0208)	0.002	-0.000937 (0.0386)	0.003
Toxic Language	0.166*** (0.0253)	0.162	0.286*** (0.0462)	0.280
Sexually Explicit Language	0.0862** (0.0263)	0.084	0.155** (0.0477)	0.151
Profane Language	0.0592* (0.0207)	0.058	0.103* (0.0371)	0.101
# Tweets in Past 2 Weeks	0.328*** (0.0208)	0.317	0.605*** (0.0378)	0.585
Bot Score (Botsentinel)	0.195*** (0.0384)	0.188	0.374*** (0.0703)	0.359
Political Extremity	-0.107*** (0.0221)	-0.099	-0.224*** (0.0411)	-0.208
Valanced Language	-0.0339 (0.0225)	-0.034	-0.0578 (0.0412)	-0.058
Moral Outrage	0.0313 (0.0333)	0.033	0.0724 (0.0614)	0.073
Political Language	-0.0289 (0.0276)	-0.029	-0.0726 (0.0509)	-0.070
Max # Tweets in 1h Window	0.366*** (0.0696)	0.357	0.636*** (0.129)	0.623
# Highly Similar Tweets	-0.0308 (0.0359)	-0.028	-0.0614 (0.0663)	-0.056
Political Uniformity	-0.0235 (0.0254)	-0.027	-0.0339 (0.0462)	-0.041
Constant	-1.788*** (0.0773)	-1.776	-3.153*** (0.144)	-3.125
Observations	9,000		9,000	

Regression models predicting which Twitter accounts in our sample were suspended. Models 2 and 4 shows coefficients from ridge regression. For details of the independent variables, see Methods section 1 and SI Section S1.

Reporting Summary

Nature Portfolio wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Portfolio policies, see our [Editorial Policies](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a Confirmed

- The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
- A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
- The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.
- A description of all covariates tested
- A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
- A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
- For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.
- For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
- For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
- Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection

Data analysis

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Portfolio [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A description of any restrictions on data availability
- For clinical datasets or third party data, please ensure that the statement adheres to our [policy](#)

All data necessary to reproduce the results are available at <https://osf.io/a2t7d/>

Research involving human participants, their data, or biological material

Policy information about studies with [human participants or human data](#). See also policy information about [sex, gender \(identity/presentation\), and sexual orientation](#) and [race, ethnicity and racism](#).

Reporting on sex and gender	We did not collect sex/gender of the participants/users in the studies.
Reporting on race, ethnicity, or other socially relevant groupings	We did not collect race, ethnicity or other socially relevant information of the participants/users in the studies.
Population characteristics	We focused on a politically balanced set of users (half-democrats and half republicans) based on the related election hashtags they shared on Twitter. We did not estimate or collect age or gender of the users.
Recruitment	In October 2020 we identified 100,000 Twitter users who shared hashtags related to the U.S. Presidential Election, and randomly sampled 4,500 of those users who shared at least one #VoteBidenHarris2020 hashtag and 4,500 who shared at least one #Trump2020 hashtag.
Ethics oversight	The study was conducted at MIT. The study is observational and uses public social media data and did not require ethical approval.

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

Life sciences Behavioural & social sciences Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	We investigated probability of Twitter users being suspended during the course of 2020 US election using a variety of users characteristics and behaviors on the platform including political ideology, sharing low-quality content, and use of toxic language. We complemented our main results by seven other datasets of sharing from Twitter, Facebook, and survey experiments, spanning 2016 to 2023
Research sample	Our sample includes 9000 Twitter users based on the related election hashtags they shared on Twitter.
Sampling strategy	In October 2020 we identified 100,000 Twitter users who shared hashtags related to the U.S. Presidential Election, and randomly sampled 4,500 of those users who shared at least one #VoteBidenHarris2020 hashtag and 4,500 who shared at least one #Trump2020 hashtag. We used each user's data from that pre-election time period to quantify their tendency to share low quality news (as well as numerous other potentially relevant characteristics), and then checked seven months later (after the election season) to determine which users got suspended by Twitter.
Data collection	We used the Twitter API to collect public data of the users on the platform.
Timing	We collect users data in October 2020 (during the 2020 US election) then checked seven months later (after the election season) to determine which users got suspended by Twitter
Data exclusions	We didn't exclude any users' data.
Non-participation	Our study is observational and we included information of all 9000 sampled user in our study.
Randomization	Our study is observational. We created politically sample set of users from a larger sample of 100,00 Twitter users who shared hashtags related to US presidential election in during October 2020.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems		Methods	
n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> Involved in the study	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> Involved in the study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Antibodies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ChIP-seq
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Eukaryotic cell lines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Flow cytometry
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Palaeontology and archaeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> MRI-based neuroimaging
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Animals and other organisms		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical data		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Dual use research of concern		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Plants		

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Meador, will you commit to objectively following the facts in any of these conspiratorial fishing expeditions into censorship of conservatives?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I commit to fairly looking at the facts in every case that would come before me if I am confirmed as a Commissioner.

Senator MARKEY. Well, again, I remain deeply concerned because your comments earlier today suggest that you have already come to a conclusion on this issue. Chairman Ferguson has made similar comments.

Mr. Meador, if the FTC career staff conclude that no further investigation or enforcement action is warranted against the big tech platforms for supposedly censoring conservatives, will you commit to following that recommendation?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I can commit to closely examining the evidence collected by staff, along with their recommendations, and consulting with my fellow Commissioners, if confirmed, to ensure that we are reaching the right decision based on the facts and the law.

Senator MARKEY. Well, that is deeply disappointing because in my opinion, you know, objectively looking at it, the staff will come to a conclusion that there has been no censorship. But my fear is, of course, is that President Trump is clearly trying to turn the FTC into the Federal Truth Commission. And I think that is going to be very, very damaging to our country. So I am going to be watching very closely. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Schmitt.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ERIC SCHMITT,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI**

Senator SCHMITT. Well, it is interesting because as Attorney General of Missouri, I followed the *Missouri v. Biden* lawsuit that uncovered the vast censorship enterprise. The idea that there wasn't censorship is nonsense, total nonsense.

We saw the weaponization of the whole of Government against political opponents because they dared to dispute the efficacy of masks or had concerns about the vaccine. The idea that there wasn't censorship does a real disservice.

I think the worst abuse of the First Amendment we have ever seen in the United States of America. So I hope, I hope you continue to look at this, because I think we have just scratched the surface. And it is—the idea that the Federal Truth Commission—how about the Disinformation Governance Board that was established under President Biden?

This is Orwellian stuff. So the FTC is right. I think glad that the leadership has been shown to sort of open up and find out what other examples exist, because there is no way we are effectively going to deal with this until we admit that there was a problem.

And my friend from the other side who just made the statement is just totally ignorant of the facts. And by the way, who decides the truth like the Government doesn't. People get to decide that. You only get to do that in a free and open society where people are—have the ability to speak their minds. And so, I guess, Mr. Meador, I want to ask you this question then I guess. What other steps can be done to ensure that people can speak their minds?

I know—we have talked about the coordination between the Government and big tech. That is certainly a thing because that is a direct violation of the First Amendment. But I know that you have got a couple of different buckets, whether it is violating terms of service or violating the core tenants of Section 230 protections. What is sort of—how do you view this in the role the FTC has?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. So, I think there are two avenues through which the FTC could potentially address this kind of conduct. There is the antitrust laws. So if you have competitors

colluding on content moderation standards, that could potentially amount to a violation of the antitrust laws.

And on the consumer protection side, if the application of terms of service or other promises made by a platform end up being deceptive in some way to consumers, you could potentially have a concern there under the FTC Act.

Senator SCHMITT. And I think when Europe is really messed up on AI as it has been overregulated and it is—they are sort of pushing a political bias, which has, I think, demolished Europe's chances at being a leader in this, which I guess that is good for us.

But how do we avoid that? How do we avoid woke AI? How do we avoid black George Washington? Like what do we do to make sure that this doesn't become the next frontier for this level of censorship, with quantum chips fueling it?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes. Here, I think the best thing the FTC can do within its remit is to fully enforce the competition laws to ensure that markets are not unduly concentrated or dominated by a single actor and that consumers have choice.

Ultimately, I think we can trust that the market will work if we give it a chance, but that means we have to maintain competition so that consumers can take their business elsewhere if they are unhappy with the services they have received.

Senator SCHMITT. Thank you. Mr. Kratsios, thank you for your willingness to serve as well. Highly qualified. I have respected you for years. We have gotten to know each other. The President has announced a national initiative to drive innovation, like the American AI Initiative.

David Sacks is a great pick to be helping with a lot of this stuff in the National Quantum Initiative. How do you view your role in making sure those programs are successful—those initiatives are successful?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. The Office of Science Technology Policy has the role in the White House to coordinate these efforts across the Federal Government.

So whether you are driving a national strategy on artificial intelligence or on quantum information science, all the wide variety of agencies that all have a very important role to play, from basic research funding at the National Science Foundation, to more applications work at some of our DOE labs, to some standards related work at NIST.

And where OSTP plays a more critical role is being the convener and the coordinator for these efforts across the Government. And that is what we did in the—in 45 with a variety of emerging techs, and we hope to do again in 47.

Senator SCHMITT. What do you think the biggest challenge is right now for the United States to be the leader—and AI gets thrown around, you know, sort of broadly, but to be the leader in kind of innovation? And, you know, obviously DeepSeek is a wakeup call. I mean, there is no way they did it for \$6 million.

But the fact is, I think our assumptions about how far ahead we were, have been shattered to some degree, right. So this is a very serious race we have with China. What do you think our biggest obstacle is to continue to be the leader?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think our biggest obstacle is effectively pursuing a promote and protect strategy. So you can have an institute, a set of export controls, for example, around high end chips, but if you are not successfully enforcing those export controls and not actually limiting the access of bad actors in the PRC from accessing those chips, you are not actually protecting well.

And the same goes on the promote side. You can encourage the, you know, research and development, and translational research in these emerging tech fields, but if you are not effectively allocating those dollars to the biggest and hardest problems in those fields, you are not actually moving the ball forward.

So I think the strategy is there. I think you just have to effectively execute on the two sides of that coin to promote and protect.

Senator SCHMITT. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Klobuchar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much. Thank you. Congratulations to both of you. I think I will just start with one question of you, Mr. Kratsios. In your testimony, you mentioned helping to double R&D spending during President Trump's first Administration.

You have already seen this Administration's attempt to gut funding from many important research agencies, including NIH. If confirmed, will you commit to funding research and development at levels authorized by Congress?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I will have to coordinate with the President and with OMB obviously on budgets, but my commitment is to bring to the table and bring to those conversations the importance of research and development in these emerging technologies.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Right. Do you agree that domestic semiconductor production should continue to be a priority for the U.S.?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Absolutely. We have to be able to produce high-end chips here in the U.S.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Excellent. Thank you. Mr. Meador, I worked closely with you, with my staff I know did on antitrust and competition issues during your time in Senator Lee's office. And I hope, if confirmed, you will continue to work in a bipartisan manner as you did there.

Today, the Commission is litigating antitrust cases against Meta, Amazon, John Deere, a pesticide manufacturer, a medical provider, many others. Will you commit to continuing to prosecute the antitrust cases currently at the Commission, and to pursue remedies that will protect consumers from anti-competitive conduct?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. It's good to see you again.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Yes.

Mr. MEADOR. So, while I can't commit to any specific action, obviously I share the concerns that the agency is seeking to address. I think it has a lot of important work on its docket, and I can commit to taking that very seriously, if confirmed, to ensure we are doing everything we can to enforce the law.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you. Appreciate that. You have written that, "It's long past time for our government to finish what

they've started, break up Live Nation-Ticketmaster, and bring real competition back to the live event ecosystem."

While you worked for Senator Lee, I teamed up with him, as you know, to hold a rather memorable hearing. Senator Cruz was there in Judiciary on Live Nation-Ticketmaster's monopoly over venues, artists promotion, and online ticketing.

While the Justice Department, I know you are aware of this, is litigating that case, can you elaborate why it is so important to take on monopolies like Live Nation, Ticketmaster, and how will that experience help you at the FTC?

Mr. MEADOR. Absolutely. So, in that case, we have an industry that has many parts in sort of a vertical chain. And what we have seen is that combining all of them into one firm has allowed them to engage in what is called foreclosure in many instances.

So when one company controls both the primary ticketing service that artists use and venues use, as well as the actual venues themselves, it gives them the ability to lock up the entire industry, which ultimately raises prices for consumers, reduces the quality of their experience at these events, deprives artists of the money that they would have otherwise earned, and it just leads to a worse ecosystem overall.

And so, if confirmed to this position, I would take those concerns from that industry and be on the lookout for similar situations in other industries to make sure that if one firm is seeking to dominate an entire industry, it is not doing so to the detriment of consumers.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. Very good. FTC independence, I know that Senator Luján asked you some questions along these lines, but do you agree that the sole focus of the FTC should be to protect consumers from unfair methods of competition and deceptive practices, which is clearly in their act setting them up, without concern for political pressures from the White House?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, with the one caveat that we have about 80 statutes we enforce total. And so, I would—

[technical problems].

Senator KLOBUCHAR. That is what I thought. Actually, as I asked the question, I thought that might be a very smart answer on your behalf. As you know, I worked with Senator Grassley to update corporate merger fees for the first time in 20 years to give our antitrust agencies more resources to hire attorneys and economists.

And Senator Lee and I coordinated on his bill on the tech cases, allowing the State AGs to keep them in their jurisdictions, which was a Lee, Klobuchar bill. Thank you. As well as this bill that I had with Grassley, and both passed.

Do you agree that to take on some of the biggest companies in the history of the world, that the FTC must be funded and staffed with the best people possible?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I think it is obviously important for the FTC to have everything it needs. And I was honored to work with your office on that legislation and create the possibility of antitrust enforcement that is self-funded without burdening taxpayers.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. How will you work with State AGs—there is a lot of action going on in the states right now—to enforce antitrust and consumer protection laws?

Mr. MEADOR. I think that is one of the unique things about American antitrust that I really appreciate is the multiple levels of enforcement that we have, including private suits, Federal suits, but also State AGs. And I know the FTC has a long history of working productively with State AGs, and if confirmed, I would look forward to continuing those relationships.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. All right. Thank you. I want to thank both of you for actually answering the questions and doing it in a short period of time and not filibustering. So, that was actually miraculous. Thank you. And if we have any other questions, I will put them on the record. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Moreno.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BERNIE MORENO,
U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO**

Senator MORENO. Thank you, Mr. Chair—

The CHAIRMAN. [Technical problems]—chance for a filibuster.

[Laughter.]

Senator MORENO. Thank you. I am new. I haven't quite learned the skills of just talking endlessly about nothing, but I am sure it will come naturally as time goes on. In that vein, Mister—

The CHAIRMAN. Given that you sold cars, I don't believe you.

[Laughter.]

Senator MORENO. Well, you know what—you know what—

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, I did not say that.

Senator MORENO. I was trying to improve my life status from car dealer, and I went backward—politician. If I get my law degree, I am toast.

[Laughter.]

Senator MORENO. But anyway, Mr. Meador, back to you, who is a lawyer, so I mean that the nicest way possible. Thank you for agreeing to serve again in this Administration. How—if you were to describe this—your job to a 13 year old, is that right? How would you describe your job?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I believe my job is to make the lives of American families better. And that is primarily through protecting the markets that they rely upon to put food on the table, to get health care for their children, and just to go about their daily business.

And that includes competitive markets so that they have options that are affordable and high quality, and that in the midst of trying to provide for their families, they aren't deprived of their wealth or security through scams and other fraudulent behavior.

Senator MORENO. And as you think about this job that you are about to undertake, what would be your top one or two priorities?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I am focused on the sort of the kitchen table issues. Again, going to those things that affect the average person on a daily basis, making sure that they have, you know, competitive markets that provide affordable housing, energy, health care, food. All of those, I think should be top of mind for the FTC.

Senator MORENO. That is right. And having your fellow Commissioners here to support you shows that the agency really should be free of politics and should be somebody that does the right thing. So I appreciate your willingness to serve. Mr. Kratsios, I appreciate you being here and your willingness to serve. I also applaud your parents being here.

As you know, I am a first generation immigrant myself from Columbia, South America. So we know the Spanish Empire was the greatest empire, not the Greek Empire. But I appreciate you being here. I am sure your parents are extremely proud of you serving once and now doing it again.

I just want to remind my Democrat colleagues that you were unanimously confirmed, and to keep that in mind despite their tendencies to want to be partisan. You are taking on a big job, report directly to the President of the United States.

It will be great to have a President of United States who understands artificial intelligence, and not somebody who actually needed it injected into his brain. So that is a step up from the previous Administration. And in the previous Administration, the person who had your job talked a lot about electrifying America.

What is your thoughts on this idea that everybody should have electric stoves, everybody should have electric cars, and there is only one-size-fits-all? Is that based on science in your mind?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think to solve the energy problems of this country, we have to take an all the above energy approach. And electricity is obviously one part of it, but there is a whole lot more there. And I look forward to working with the President's Energy Dominance Council to make sure that is a reality.

Senator MORENO. So forcing everybody to drive electric cars, even though they don't want it, seems like probably not science-based or practical.

Mr. KRATSIOS. No, the Government should not be forcing anyone to drive a particular type of vehicle.

Senator MORENO. That is good to hear in California. Maybe they haven't quite heard that memo. But speaking of California, objectively a pretty state run by terrible people, would you think that California should set standards for the rest of the country? Meaning, do you think it is up to California to decide what kind of cars people in Ohio should buy?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I am not very familiar with how the policy around that works, but I think in principle that probably is something that should be looked at and more carefully.

Senator MORENO. Yes. I would think my colleagues would want to have the Federal Government set even standards for the entire country and not have one state or another. That makes sense, right? We do regulate interstate commerce here in the Federal Government. Does that make sense to you?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes, and we have seen that in the technology policy domain around issues like privacy. When if there is an inability to create a Federal privacy law, you end up having a patchwork sort of created by states and that that ultimately is—doesn't do the best thing for industry or for consumers.

Senator MORENO. And do you think it is also important that business gets certainty for a long—as long a horizon as humanly

possible and not think about a policy that lasts for a year or two or three or four, but rather over maybe a decade?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. I think regulatory certainty is a big driver on encouraging investment, particularly in science and technology. So, I do believe that, yes.

Senator MORENO. And we should be—I think you would agree, we should be the leaders. I mean, this is the country that innovation is born here. That we should be the leaders not only in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, blockchain technology, the technology—human machine interaction. These are all the things that are ahead of us. And what—how do you see Government's role in that? Like where do you see philosophically the role of the Government making that happen?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. So I think the Government plays essentially I think a role in four categories. The first is on early stage basic competitive R&D. So this is investing Federal dollars in areas where the private sector is not incentivized to do yet.

And we have been doing that for 50 or 60 years. We need to keep doing that. The second piece is around regulations. And the way I usually think about it is removing barriers to innovation.

So finding ways that you can actually unlock the potential of these technologies and allow them to flourish, and not have regulation get—kind of get in the way. The fourth is through—the fourth is through workforce programs.

So it is critical that both we have individuals who are able to actually become the next great scientists and technologists to make these discoveries, and also prepare American workers to wield these technologies in their daily life.

And the fourth is around international engagement. We as a Government need to make sure that we are partnering with our allies on using these technologies globally and pushing back on actions like the ones that the CCP take to try to push their technology globally.

Senator MORENO. Well, that is a fantastic answer. Great job. Look forward to having both of you unanimously confirmed, getting you in office, and most importantly, having you visit the greatest state in America, Ohio.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kim.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ANDY KIM,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

Senator KIM. Yes. Thank you, Chair. Mr. Meador, I think I would like to start with you just to be able to build on some of the conversation that has happened here. FTC has a particular structure in terms of its leadership. It is one that has bipartisan tradition in that way. I guess I just wanted to ask you, do you see benefit in that type of structure and that type of bipartisan nature of the FTC?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. Yes, my experience both as an attorney at FTC and as a practitioner appearing before it is that the consensus building that took place at FTC always made its enforcement action stronger.

Senator KIM. You know, I guess I just kind of raised that because, you know, I know there was some talk about the independ-

ence of FTC and why I think it is so important that we ensure that because, you know, there is a sense of credibility, right.

Like, I would imagine you believe that for FTC, for its rulings to be considered, for it to have the kind of resonance with the American people about a sense of fairness, that credibility is critical for FTC to be able to function, is that right?

Mr. MEADOR. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator KIM. Yes. So I just—as we kind of proceed on this—you know, I know there is lots of politics swirling around, but you and I had a really good conversation talking through some critical issues, like for instance about the role of FTC when it comes to big tech.

And I would believe that for FTC to make decisions that are potentially going to be controversial around big tech, it is important, right, that it be seen as being done from a sense of what is right for the American people and a sense of fairness, rather than something that is political or something that is associated with a political donor or a special interest group. Is that right?

Mr. MEADOR. So, Senator, the way I would view my job if confirmed is to show up each day working to serve the American people and enforcing the law the way that it has been written. And while I can't speak for the other Commissioners, I am confident that they share that view as well.

Senator KIM. I hope so. And I think that that is something that—again, you know, for the majority of people watching, I mean, I talk to people in new Jersey about this, they don't necessarily fully understand the debate about independence of different agencies. You know, I think that is much more of a D.C., you know, world view in that way.

But they do understand fairness, and they do understand a sense of whether or not their interests are being put forward. So I ask, you know, if you are confirmed that you keep that in mind, you know, about this.

And if the FTC loses that sense of credibility, if it is seen as a political entity that is carrying out actions based off of whoever, which party is in control, I do think that it just very much will undermine the capacity for the FTC to be able to engage.

Mr. Kratsios, I wanted to ask you some questions here. You know, I heard you speak on this from a different—a couple different angles, but I guess I just wanted to ask kind of directly. Do you think we as a nation are spending enough on basic science research?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think over the years since I guess the 1950s and since sort of NSF was initially created, the amount of federally funded R&D has continued to generally increase, and I think has been critically important to the way that we have been able to sort of make these discoveries.

I think what has changed a lot over the years is the contribution that the private sector makes to the larger R&D ecosystem. I think right around the time of World War II, the percentage of R&D that the Federal Government was funding was more than 50 percent, and that has changed dramatically.

And I think that is actually a good thing for the country. We are actually seeing some of the greatest innovations coming from the private sector.

Senator KIM. But do you think that just overall spending, not just Government spending, but private sector included, academia. Like, where are we? You know, I keep hearing a lot about China increasing their basic science research funding upwards of double digits. We are obviously not keeping pace with that trajectory. Does that concern you in terms of overall spending?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think as someone who is deeply obsessed with American leadership in science and technology, I do believe that as an economy, continuing to invest in this critical R&D kind of across the board is beneficial to the country.

Senator KIM. So right now, the foundation of it, as you said Government, private sector—sort of the largest amount Government has been decreased in terms of total percentage. I think it is right around 40 percent Government funding right now, 37 percent private sector.

Does that seem fair to you? Is that sort of a right level? I am trying to think through and understand your calibration here in terms of what you would like to see and whether or not you think the private sector should take over more of what the Government does when it comes to basic science research?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Yes. I think what is amazing about the U.S. ecosystem is that a lot of these changes are driven by what I spoke about in my opening statement, this free market approach to scientific discovery in the U.S.

I think the challenges and I think the problems with a sort of authoritarian or CCP type approach to science funding is that you end up having over allocation to the wrong things and under allocation to the right things. And thinking that, you know, you can sort of be God for the day and make sure that you allocate things to the right places I think is a mistake.

I think in the U.S., the reason why we do have the greatest chips, and the greatest algorithms in the world, and various applications in the world is because we go back to that free market approach to innovation.

Senator KIM. I don't discount that. And I will yield back to the Chair in a second. But, you know, when you listen through in your opening statement, splitting the atom and getting a man to the moon, you know, the transistor and the creation of the microchips.

I mean, so much of that was based off of Government research funding or Government acquisition with microchips early on. So I just say, look, you know, there is certainly models in that direction, but I do think that we need to be careful about moving too much toward one that is just solely based off of profitability. With that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Peters.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GARY PETERS,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MICHIGAN**

Senator PETERS. [Technical problems]—Mr. Chairman. And congratulations both of you in your nominations. Mr. Meador, you know, regardless of your own accomplishments and qualifications,

I want to follow up on a question that Senator Kim asked and that deals with the independence of the Commission, because I am deeply concerned that the situation that you are entering into if confirmed in this position.

From my viewpoint, the FTC appears to be at the center of a broader effort by President Trump to further consolidate his own power and disrupt literally nearly a century of precedent regarding the role of independent Executive Branch agencies.

So my question for you is pretty straightforward following up on Senator Kim's comments. Do you agree with the DOJ's position announced earlier this month that it now believes that for cause removal protections applicable to independent Commissions are unconstitutional?

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. So I will defer to the Department of Justice and the White House on the legal positions. FTC is involved in litigation involving this question right now as well, that it would be inappropriate for me to comment on. What I can speak to are my own intentions, should I be confirmed, which is to show up each day to enforce the law, to serve the American people without fear or favor with respect to any party.

Senator PETERS. So, if confirmed, and a motion comes up after your confirmation that aligns the FTC position on the matter that the Trump Administration, which is trying to basically neuter the independent status of these agencies, what side would you fall on?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I wouldn't be able to commit to how I would vote on any matter that might come before me as a Commissioner.

Senator PETERS. Well, you know, I am still very concerned about what is happening here. And I would hope Commissioners understand the importance of independence, something that has been happening for many, many years—decades.

That this is a dangerous course. I know it is part of this unitary Executive philosophy. Folks want to know what a unitary Executive is, think of Putin, for example. That is a unitary Executive. That is the direction that we are going unfortunately.

Mr. Kratsios, you previously worked on President Trump's AI Executive Order in 2020, which among other things, required agencies to publish AI use cases and ensured that agencies protected privacy, civil rights, as well as civil liberties.

So my question for you is, do you still agree with that Trump Executive Order that agencies should publish use case inventories that use their AI uses to protect privacy, civil rights, as well as civil liberties?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do believe that the AI inventories that were started under the first Trump Administration are very important, and the Biden inspiration continued those. For both the White House, and more broadly for other agencies, the American people to see what these use cases are and how the Government is using AI I think is very valuable.

I think one tweak or something to think about with those is that AI is becoming more and more pervasive across everything that we do as Americans, and everything that individual people and civil servants do across Government.

So I think maybe one way to—a more valuable sort of list going forward, maybe some categorization of high impact use cases, so you are not inundated with, you know, the next Copilot that is being used in a browser, for example.

Senator PETERS. Certainly that all those should be protected, but obviously there are different risk levels. So is what you are saying, make sure that we have category of risk levels? The risk of autonomous lethal weapon system is a whole lot different than a predictive maintenance for trucks. Is that what you are referring to?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I am, yes. And I think for the purposes of these inventories, I think impact is probably a better cut than risk. I think to me, I like impact, of how is this particular AI application making a difference in the way that an agency is providing its services to citizens.

Senator PETERS. I am also concerned about the brain drain that is occurring in Federal science agencies. The so-called Department of Government Efficiency has fired, as you know, broad swaths of workers without—not on the basis of poor performance, basically indiscriminately, and sometimes without even knowing what those workers were responsible for—in the case of workers that were overseeing the nuclear arsenal, for example.

These firings included scientists and experts at NASA, the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Institutes for Standards and Technology, or NIST. DOGE has also created a workplace environment where issue area experts are essentially being harassed with the explicit goal of getting them to resign.

This environment is not conducive to ensuring the Government can retain the top talent in science fields, which is essential for our competitive advantage, which we need for AI, and space exploration, and manufacturing, et cetera.

So my question for you, sir, is do you agree that it is essential to retain top science and technology talent in the Federal Government to further success of the United States? And if so, how would you advise the President to reverse course in these policies that are actually having these folks with very specialized and important talent being fired?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do believe that it is important for all of our science and technology agencies to have high skilled, technical and scientific folks there to do the very important work for American people. I also think it is entirely reasonable for a new President to be able to evaluate the team that he has on the field across his agencies, and sort of make the necessary changes to ensure that he can achieve the goals that he campaigned on and won.

Senator PETERS. Well, the key word there is to evaluate. There is no evidence that there was any evaluation going on. It was indiscriminate across the board. In fact, the thing that really caught me is that because it is probationary employees that are new ones, there was basically people who were promoted.

So they were outstanding performers. They got promoted to a different job, and now that is probationary. So we actually fired people who just got promoted because of their outstanding work.

Congratulations, you did a great job. You are now fired. I don't think that works in any business. I hope that you would step up

and say that doesn't work in the science enterprise as well. Yes or no?

Mr. KRATSIOS. Oh, thank—yes, if I am involved in any of this in the future, I certainly will bring to bear important—the importance of science and technological advice at all of these agencies.

Senator PETERS. Very good.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. I am now going to recognize Senator Rosen. And I am going to entrust the gavel to Senator Rosen while I run to vote. And I am going to have trust and confidence that in my absence, she is not going to seek unanimous consent to dissolve the White House, or the Department of Commerce, or something else.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JACKY ROSEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEVADA**

Senator ROSEN. I will not. Maybe I will just declare my birthday a holiday or something.

The CHAIRMAN. There you go. Knock yourself out.

[Laughter.]

Senator ROSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for the nominees, your families, for being here today, for your willingness to serve. I am going to talk a little bit about consumer prices, because over the past several years, Americans have seen skyrocketing prices for everything from groceries to housing.

And in many sectors, consolidation, of course, has led to higher costs, less competition, and often no choice for consumers of where to shop. And that is why last year I pushed the FTC to sue to block the Kroger, Albertson's grocery store merger, the mega merger that would have eliminated good paying jobs and led to even higher food prices in my home state of Nevada and across the country. So, Mr. Meador, if confirmed, would you support actions by the FTC to block mergers up and down the grocery supply chain to prevent further price increases for Nevadans? And of course, everybody in this country has to eat no matter who you are, so I will say for everyone.

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you, Senator. I share those concerns. As a father of six, I pay a lot attention to our grocery bill, and I think it is an incredibly important topic. And yes, I can commit that if confirmed, I will do everything I can to work—ensure that we are enforcing competition up and down the grocery supply chain.

Senator ROSEN. And would you take action to review whether bad actors are taking advantage of the current supply chain issues? We know that there is dire egg shortages. We want to be sure that people aren't price gouging. And so, will you commit to working on that as well?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I would be happy to help the staff and Commissioners look into those issues.

Senator ROSEN. And another thing, we are talking about AI and, of course, surveillance pricing. It is a new strategy where companies use personal data to change prices in real time for individual consumers.

And so, this presents clear opportunities for discrimination and for price gouging as the goal of surveillance pricing is to offer the highest price to the specific customer who is willing to pay. For example, a new mom shopping for diapers, seniors for over-the-

counter medication, or construction workers—well, Las Vegas, it is pretty hot out there and a Gatorade on a hot, sunny day.

As the new FTC Chair recently withdrew the request for comments that the Commission had open on surveillance pricing—he closed it nearly 3 months early. I am concerned that this signals a lack of concern about rising consumer prices and the FTC’s mandate to protect Americans from these discriminatory practices.

So, again, would you commit to support publishing the comments received under the FTC’s RFI and surveilling pricing, and support the publication of those findings? I think this is akin to price gouging in some ways as they track you around and decide who is going to pay what depending on who you are.

Mr. MEADOR. Thank you. Senator. I can commit, if confirmed, to working with the staff to get up to speed on this issue and understand what investigative efforts they have undertaken to look into it, getting up to speed on the record and then working collaboratively with the Commission to find the best path forward.

Senator ROSEN. Because like you said, you are a father of six, and I bet you buy a lot of cereal in your home. And that you don’t want to—suddenly you go in and the price of cereal is double the price for—I am an empty nester. Double the price or triple the price it is for me.

Mr. MEADOR. We would be target number one.

Senator ROSEN. You would be target number one. I hope not. I hope not. Thank you. I want to move now to talking about DeepSeek and China. So, Mr. Kratsios, in your role as Director of OSTP, you will be required to develop and lead the Nation’s AI strategy.

We have seen huge and alarming AI advancements in China, with more efficient models like DeepSeek and investments in advanced data centers. With this innovation comes serious threats. I am concerned about the possibility of new AI platforms like DeepSeek being used to extract sensitive data from users.

Additionally, DeepSeek is open source. The loopholes in its code could easily be copied into other platforms. I am the only former computer programmer in the U.S. Senate. This can happen pretty darn easily. And recent reports also indicate a DeepSeek unintentionally exposed sensitive data, including chat history on publicly accessible databases.

So, Mr. Kratsios, how do you plan to collaborate with the private sector to ensure that our AI models have minimum security requirements, so they don’t create a backdoor or allow public access to user data, to private data? And how should Congress be thinking about this challenge with respect to the models coming out of our adversary nations?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I think those are all excellent points, and I think it is critical, at least for the Government, to be thinking very carefully on how to work with these individual model developers to think through some of these issues. I think a lot of them are very technical and scientific in nature.

And one most important—or one of the most important things that the Federal Government can do is support the measurement science necessary in order to be able to test and evaluate these

models. And an agency like NIST is a great place to refine the measurement science around model evaluation.

I think the CEO of Anthropic was here in the Senate just two years ago, and when he was discussing some of the challenges he is facing was that the technological methodologies necessary to actually evaluate these models still did not exist.

This is a great opportunity for standards making agencies like NIST to do the appropriate work on how you measure these models, and then they can be tested for all the variety of things that you discussed.

Senator ROSEN. Thank you. And before I close it out, I am just going to say I hope you would agree that we need a highly technical and skilled workforce in order to do this and protect America. And I hope that you would support keeping the skilled workforce that you have and not supporting these willy, nilly cuts. Thank you.

Mr. KRATSIOS. A skilled workforce is absolutely critical.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Duckworth.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS**

Senator DUCKWORTH. I was this close to the gavel, Mr. Chairman. This close.

[Laughter.]

Senator ROSEN. I know.

Senator DUCKWORTH. It was right here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Meador, welcome. On February 12, 2025, Acting Solicitor General Sarah Harris notified Senator Dick Durbin, the Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee that the Department of Justice has determined that the statutory tenure protections for members of FTC are unconstitutional.

Chairman Ferguson also publicly stated his agreement with this position. I know Senator Luján asked about FTC independence. Mr. Meador, do you believe that the President should be able to fire FTC Commissioners at will?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I believe that Americans are concerned about high prices and the cost of living, and that the President is committed to improving their condition. I believe that is why I was nominated to this position. And what I can commit to is that if confirmed, that is what I will work to do every day, is to serve the American people by helping improve the cost of living and of markets and protecting them from unfair and deceptive practices.

Senator DUCKWORTH. That is good sucking up to the President, but you didn't answer my question.

Mr. MEADOR. Senator—

Senator DUCKWORTH. Do you believe that the President of the United States should be able to fire FTC Commissioners at will? It is a simple question, yes or no?

Mr. MEADOR. It is a simple question that is subject to litigation in which the FTC is currently involved. I can't speak to that. What I can commit to and comment on is what I would do if confirm which, again, Senator, would be to faithfully serve the American people.

Senator DUCKWORTH. If the President gave you an illegal order, would you carry it out?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, what I would do, if confirmed, is show up every day to enforce the law—

Senator DUCKWORTH. If the President gave you an illegal order, would you carry it out? It is very simple—or unconstitutional?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I would enforce the law without fear or favor.

Senator DUCKWORTH. So will you carry out an illegal order if President Trump gave you an illegal order to carry out?

Mr. MEADOR. I would enforce the law without fear or favor to any party.

Senator DUCKWORTH. So you are not answering me. OK. Mr. Meador, do you believe the FTC has any independence from the President?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I think this falls under the same category we discussed a moment ago.

Senator DUCKWORTH. OK, you are not being willing to answer. Mr. Meador, do you believe the President can zero out the FTC's budget without any action from Congress?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I believe that Congress has the power of the purse and works closely with the Congress—with the President to determine funding for the Executive—

Senator DUCKWORTH. Is the President allowed to zero funding for the FTC, yes or no?

Mr. MEADOR. I have not looked into that. I am not aware of what the legal precedents are there.

Senator DUCKWORTH. OK. I will submit the question for the record. Please respond to me within 30 days.

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. Over the past few years, I have worked closely with FTC on addressing shortages of infant formula, which have affected families across the country.

Last year, the FTC issued its report on infant formula supply chain disruptions, which came after a multi-year investigation.

Mr. Meador, would you commit to supporting investigations by the FTC that highlight markets where there has been a lack of competition, such as in the infant formula market?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator. I think it is important we focus our enforcement efforts where there are the most competitive harms. I would be very eager to work with staff to achieve that.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. Do you believe that the FTC has a role to play in investigating practices that may be increasing the cost of living for Americans?

Mr. MEADOR. Absolutely. Where we have a reason to believe that those practices violate Section 5 of the FTC Act or another statute that we enforce, we should proceed with an investigation.

Senator DUCKWORTH. OK. As you may know, Illinois has one of the strongest biometric privacy laws in the country, the Illinois Biometric Information Privacy Act. Many Americans are concerned about the use of their biometric data, like face and eye scans, fingerprints, or voice patterns for unauthorized purposes.

For example, in 2023, the FTC and DOJ charged Amazon with violating children's privacy laws by keeping children's voice data

from Alexa recordings in order to make their AI smarter. In 2023, the FTC issued a Commission policy statement about the use of biometric information.

Mr. Meador, do you agree with the principles of that FTC statement, the Commission policy statement about the use of biometric information?

Mr. MEADOR. Senator, I have not had an occasion to review that policy statement, but if confirmed, I would look forward to getting up to speed on those matters.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Will you report back to me?

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Senator.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. How would you, Mr. Meador, work with states like Illinois to protect biometric information?

Mr. MEADOR. So I think cooperation between the FTC and states is one of the most important things we can do. We do it a lot on the antitrust side. I think it would be a benefit on the consumer protection side as well.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Just on background, for your information, the FTC's 2023 Commission policy statement about the use of biometric information raised significant concerns around the misuse of biometric data, such as discrimination against protected classes, AI applications like deepfakes, and unauthorized disclosure leaks of biometric data.

So I hope you will keep that in mind. I am going to yield back 24 seconds, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Meador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you to both our nominees, Mr. Kratsios and Mr. Meador. My final question is required of all nominees. If confirmed, do you pledge to work collaboratively with this committee to provide thorough and timely responses to this committee's request and to appear before this committee when requested?

Mr. KRATSIOS. I do.

Mr. MEADOR. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I have 17 various letters of support from multiple organizations for Mr. Kratsios's nomination and Mr. Meador's nomination that I ask unanimous consent to be inserted in the hearing record. Without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to follows:]

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader, United States Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
167 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination Endorsement for White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Leadership

Dear Majority Leader Thune and Chairman Cruz:

We, the undersigned right-of-center groups and individuals, write to express our support for the nomination of Michael Kratsios as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

Mr. Kratsios' exemplary record in the public and private sector make him uniquely qualified to lead OSTP. As Chief Technology Officer of the United States, as well as the Managing Director of Scale AI, he consistently supported initiatives to support American technological power and progress, such as the American AI Initiative and the National Quantum Initiative Act, respectively. His vision and expertise are critical to advancing America's technological preeminence in an era of global competition.

With the Trump administration working to promote government efficiency, diffuse AI-enabled technology among federal agencies, and lay the groundwork for continued American economic and strategic power in key technologies, leadership is of the utmost importance. Mr. Kratsios is the right person to coordinate such efforts and should be confirmed post haste.

From AI and crypto to outer space and cutting edge research, OSTP is in charge of coordinating policy around numerous issues of utmost importance to President Trump and the broader cause of promoting American dynamism. The sooner Mr. Kratsios is confirmed, the sooner the Trump administration can get to work on these priorities. As such, we strongly urge the Senate to take up his nomination post haste. Once confirmed, Mr. Kratsios will champion policies that solidify U.S. technological leadership, empower American innovators, and promote prosperity and stability for all Americans.

There is no better choice to lead OSTP than Michael Kratsios. We strongly urge this committee to recognize his qualifications and unanimously support his nomination, securing a brighter, more innovative future for our nation.

Sincerely,

Chris Koopman, Executive Director, Abundance Institute
Brian Chau, Executive Director, Alliance for the Future
Nick Solheim, Chief Executive Officer, American Moment
Jon Scheppe, Policy Director, American Principles Project
Grover Norquist, President, Americans for Tax Reform
Aiden Buzzetti, President, Bull Moose Project
Bill Drexel, Fellow, Center for New American Security
Nathan Leamer, Executive Director, Digital First Project
James Erwin, Director, Digital Liberty
Neil Chilson, Fmr. Chief Technologist, Federal Trade Commission
Zach Graves, Executive Director, Foundation for American Innovation
Michael Toscano, Executive Director, Institute for Family Studies
Nate Fischer, CEO, New Founding
Tom Hebert, Director, Open Competition Center
Dan Savickas, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, Taxpayers Protection Alliance

**Organization is listed for identification purposes only.*

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 511
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader, United States Senate
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 322
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 554
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 254
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination Endorsement for White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Leadership

We, the undersigned founders, investors, executives, and technologists, write to express our strong support for Michael Kratsios's nomination as Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). His exceptional qualifications and proven leadership uniquely position him to address the critical scientific and technological challenges facing the United States.

As Chief Technology Officer of the United States, Mr. Kratsios led transformative initiatives such as the American AI Initiative and the implementation of the National Quantum Initiative Act. His leadership in these efforts demonstrated a forward-thinking approach to fostering innovation, aligning technological progress with national priorities. This expertise is especially valuable as entrepreneurs and investors navigate evolving opportunities and regulatory landscapes in artificial intelligence, climate technology, and decentralized finance.

The little tech ecosystem depends on leaders who understand the intersection of technology, policy, and economic strategy. Mr. Kratsios has consistently championed innovation while prioritizing national competitiveness. His work on critical emerging technologies—from drones to high-performance computing—underscores his holistic vision for leveraging technology to strengthen economic growth and bolster national security.

In a time when American leadership is needed, Mr. Kratsios's experience and vision make him an outstanding candidate to lead OSTP. His track record of supporting entrepreneurial ecosystems, driving innovation, and enhancing U.S. global competitiveness demonstrates his readiness to serve in this critical role.

We respectfully urge the Committee to advance his confirmation. We are confident that Mr. Kratsios will drive essential technology initiatives that bolster U.S. leadership, support the workforce, and secure long-term prosperity for entrepreneurs and the broader economy.

Sincerely,

Zak Kukoff, Chair, Tech Practice, Lewis-Burke Associates
Joshua Steinman, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Michael Gibson, Co-Founder, 1517 Fund
Zak Slayback, Partner, 1517 Fund
Anitha Vadavatha, Founder, AB Plus Ventures
Shivdev Rao, CEO, Abridge AI INC
Bala Chandrasekaran, Partner, Alt Capital
Jack Altman, Managing Partner, Alt Capital
Patrick Blumenthal, Founder, Anomaly Fund
Jordan Bramble, CEO, Antares
Jack Clark, Co-Founder and Head of Policy, Anthropic
Nathaniel Blake Scholl, Founder / CEO, Boom Supersonic
Brandon Yan, Treasury Manager, Elastic
Blake Pierson, Co-Founder & CEO, Fathom
Dylan Field, CEO, Figma
Nick Allen, President, Frontier Foundation
Teresa Carlson, President, General Catalyst Institute
Stuart Buck, Executive Director, Good Science Project
Christopher Power, CEO and Founder, Hadrian
Joseph Malchow, General Partner, Hanover
Peter Chandler, Executive Director, Internet Works
Austin Bishop, CEO, New American Industrial Alliance
Richard Fuisz, CEO, Nonfiction Labs
Jacob DeWitte, CEO, Oklo
Camilo Acosta, Managing Director, Perceptive Ventures
Garry Tan, Y Combinator, President and CEO
Christopher Grieco, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer, Rain
Charles Lindsay, Artist, SETI Institute
Ron Conway, Founder and Managing Partner, SV Angel
Austin Bishop, General Partner, Tamarack Global
Kempton White, Founder & CEO, The Emissions Capture Company Group Limited
Brandon Palumbo, Director of Policy & Government Relations, Travel Technology Association
Andrew Antar, Founder, Tune.FM
Ash Shrivastav, Managing Partner, Uma Ventures
Laurent Crenshaw, President, Visionary Strategic Advisors
Jennifer Pahlka, Author, Recoding America; Fmr. US Deputy CTO
Delian Asparouhov, Co-Founder and President, Varda Space Industries; Partner, Founders Fund



January 23, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The [Quantum Industry Coalition](#) (QIC) is a group of companies dedicated to maintaining the United States' leadership in the development and commercialization of quantum technologies. Our members range from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies focusing on a variety of aspects of quantum technology, including hardware, software, and application development.

We write in strong support of President Trump's nomination of Michael Kratsios' to be the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Science Advisor to the President. Mr. Kratsios served admirably in the first Trump Administration in a variety of key technology-related roles. In particular, he led the implementation of the National Quantum Initiative Act, including organizing the National Quantum Coordination Office.

U.S. quantum leadership depends on successfully expanding from quantum research to applying quantum technology. Federal departments and agencies have the opportunity to begin using quantum computers, sensors, networks, and cryptography to advance their missions. Mr. Kratsios is well-positioned to help catalyze this transition.

Quantum technology has important military and civil implications. Mr. Kratsios' senior leadership experience at both OSTP and the Department of Defense enables him to guide U.S. research, development, and application of quantum technologies in both areas in ways that are mutually reinforcing, leading to more rapid and efficient progress. His understanding of how quantum will work with other technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence will be critically important to ensuring U.S. leadership at the intersection of these technologies.

We urge that the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee move quickly to place Mr. Kratsios' nomination before the full Senate, where we trust his nomination will be confirmed.

Sincerely,


Paul Stimers
Executive Director
Quantum Industry Coalition
www.quantumindustrycoalition.com



OFFICE of the PRESIDENT

January 24, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz, Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building 254
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
Dirksen Senate Office Building 554
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the confirmation of Michael Kratsios as the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Given his extensive background in technology policy, his leadership experience, and his commitment to fostering innovation, I believe he is exceptionally qualified to guide OSTP at this critical inflection point.

Michael has a proven track record in both public and private sectors, which positions him to serve in this vital role. His tenure as the Chief Technology Officer of the United States showcased his ability to integrate technology policy with national priorities, resulting in initiatives that not only advanced scientific research but also facilitated dynamic collaboration between government, academia, and industry. I had the pleasure of working with him during the previous Trump administration and under his leadership, significant strides were made in areas such as artificial intelligence, robotics, quantum computing, and advanced manufacturing.

Moreover, Michael has demonstrated a deep understanding of the ethical implications of emerging technologies. His commitment to ensuring that technology serves all Americans is crucial as we navigate an increasingly complex technological landscape. In addition, he recognizes the imperative to expand the footprint of innovation to regions across the nation.

Under your leadership this Committee hosted the first major Senate hearing on Artificial Intelligence. I am grateful for the work of this Committee in supporting our nation's researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs. Michael Kratsios will help ensure that our nation seizes the moment for breakthroughs in AI, robotics and emerging technologies to ensure economic vitality and leadership in the 21st century.

Thank you for considering my recommendation for his confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Farnam Jahanian".

Farnam Jahanian
President
Henry L. Hillman President's Chair

Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890

Farnam Jahanian
President
Henry L. Hillman President's Chair

Phone: 412.268.2200
Fax: 412.268.2330
Email: president@cmu.edu



ORDER OF AHEPA
SUPREME LODGE HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION

January 27, 2025

Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support Letter for Michael Kratsios

Dear Chairman Cruz:

It is with great pleasure that we show our strong support for President Donald J. Trump's appointee to be Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Michael Kratsios.

We are extremely proud Mr. Kratsios has been an active member of the Order of AHEPA, serving our community in Palmetto Chapter 284, Columbia, S.C. The Order of AHEPA is the leading service association for millions of Americans of Greek heritage and Philhellenes.

During his time as an AHEPA member, Mr. Kratsios' commitment to our mission demonstrates his appreciation for the ancient Greek principles of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence. We strongly contend his understanding of these principles—ideals that have guided mankind's greatest philosophers, statesmen, and academicians—and have led to the birth of Western civilization and democracy—will be an asset in service to our great nation.

Set to lead our nation's technology policy in an era of great advancement, particularly concerning AI, we are confident that Mr. Kratsios would be an excellent addition to the Trump administration. We support his appointment and look forward to his confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

Thank you for your time and for taking our support of Mr. Kratsios into consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Savas C. Tsivicos
National President



January 27, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
 Majority Leader, United States Senate
 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 511
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
 Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 554
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Russell Senate Office Building, Room 254
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune, Senator Cruz and Senator Cantwell:

I write in strong support of the nomination of Michael Kratsios as director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in the White House. Filling the position of OSTP director is a matter that is timely and even urgent. It is critical that the OSTP director be in place as soon as possible to provide guidance to the President and others in the Executive Office of the President on science and technology matters—new and ongoing—that have national impact. In particular, quantum technologies are critical and emerging technologies and an area that is increasingly important for US national and economic security. The United States is in a race with China, which has demonstrated significant capabilities in quantum computing and quantum communications. Government priorities in this area should include continued investments in basic research and workforce development, promotion of practical applications for quantum technologies that provide technological advantage as well as economic benefits, and implementation of appropriate controls when necessary to protect national security.

The Quantum Economic Development Consortium (QED-C), was established by the National Quantum Initiative Act and is managed by SRI International. The NQI Act was passed with bipartisan support and signed by President Trump in 2018. QED-C's mission is to enable and grow the U.S. quantum industry, in part by identifying use cases for the emerging technology and gaps that need to be filled. The consortium has published dozens of reports on uses of quantum for everything from biomedicine and GPS-free navigation to logistics and securing the electric grid ([available online](#)). Today, QED-C is the premier quantum industry consortium with approximately 260 members, and partners representing more than 40 government agencies including the National Quantum Coordination Office (NQCO) located within OSTP. To achieve the QED-C mission to enable and grow the U.S. quantum industry, the consortium works closely with OSTP, the NQCO, and the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) interagency subcommittees on Quantum Information Science and on Economic and Security Implications of Quantum.

Mr. Kratsios has a deep understanding of policies and priorities related to quantum technologies thanks to his previous role as Chief Technology Officer at OSTP and his tenure

as acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering during the first Trump administration. In addition, he has experience in the private sector and appreciates the competing interests and factors that must be considered when setting policy. Kratsios is skillful at bringing together teams of experts to accomplish priorities and will be an effective OSTP leader.

On behalf of the quantum community, I look forward to working with Michael Kratsios upon his confirmation.

Sincerely,



Celia Merzbacher
Executive Director
Quantum Economic Development Consortium
SRI International

cc:
Chance Costello
Alex Sachtjen
Brad Grantz
Omri Ceren
Daniel Taylor
Lila Helms

January 27, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 554
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 254
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

We, the undersigned associations and groups, write to express our strong support for the nomination of Mr. Michael Kratsios to serve as Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

Mr. Kratsios possesses extensive experience and a profound understanding of the pivotal role innovation plays in maintaining and advancing America's global leadership. As Chief Technology Officer of the United States during the previous administration, he spearheaded the development of critical policies aimed at ensuring American dominance in emerging industries. His tenure was marked by a commitment to fostering technological advancements that enhance U.S. competitiveness and by a demonstrated capacity for collaborative, bipartisan engagement.

Notably, Mr. Kratsios led national initiatives in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and broadband, including efforts to drive the next generation of connectivity. He was the architect of the American AI Initiative, the national strategy for promoting American leadership in AI, and oversaw the implementation of the bipartisan National Quantum Initiative Act, including the establishment of a new National Quantum Coordination Office in the White House. Additionally, he led efforts to integrate drones into the national airspace system and launched the COVID-19 High Performance Computing Consortium to accelerate scientific discovery in the fight against the virus.

Upon confirmation, we are confident that Mr. Kratsios will continue to drive essential technology initiatives that bolster U.S. leadership, support the American workforce, and secure prosperity and security for all citizens.

At this pivotal moment for emerging technologies, Mr. Kratsios stands out as an exemplary choice to lead OSTP. We respectfully urge the Committee to expedite his review and confirmation for this vital role.

Sincerely,

Morgan Reed
President
ACT | The App Association

Susan Miller
President and CEO
ATIS | Alliance for Telecommunications
Industry Solutions

Brian Darmody
Chief Strategy Officer
AURP | Association of University
Research Parks

Victoria Espinel
CEO
Business Software Alliance

The Honorable Deborah L. Wince-Smith
President and CEO
Council on Competitiveness

Matt Schruers
President and CEO
Computer & Communications Industry
Association

Gary Shapiro
CEO and Vice Chair
Consumer Technology Association

Meredith Attwell Baker
President and CEO
CTIA

Zach Graves
Executive Director
Foundation for American Innovation

Christian Dawson
Executive Director
Internet Infrastructure Coalition

The Honorable Chip Pickering
CEO
INCOMPAS

Jason Oxman
President and CEO
Information Technology Industry Council

Coach Kathy Kemper
Founder and CEO
Institute for Education

Paul Sanberg
President
National Academy of Inventors

Bobby Franklin
CEO
National Venture Capital Association

Julius Krein
Chair of Board of Directors
New American Industrial Alliance

John Neuffer
President and CEO
Semiconductor Industry Association

Linda Moore
President and CEO
TechNet

Elizabeth A. Hyman
CEO
XR Association

Chair
Mr. Brian T. Moynihan
Bank of America

Business Vice-chair
Mr. Dan Helfrich
Deloitte Consulting LLP

University Vice-chair
Ms. Joan T.A. Gabel
University of Pittsburgh

Labor Vice-chair
Mr. Kenneth W. Cooper
IBEW

Chairman Emeritus
Mr. Charles O. Holliday, Jr.

President & CEO
The Honorable Deborah L. Winco-Smith
Council on Competitiveness

Executive Committee
Mr. William H. Bolmelt
Whitcap Investments

Mr. Walter (Ted) Carter, Jr.
Ohio State University

Dr. Mung Chiang
Purdue University

Dr. James Clements
Clemson University

Mr. Jim Clifton
Gallup, Inc.

Dr. Michael M. Crow
Arizona State University

Dr. Sheryl Handler
Ab Initio

Dr. Farnam Jahanian
Carnegie Mellon University

Dr. Mehmood Khan
Revolution Foundation

Dr. Pradeep Khosla
University of California, San Diego

Dr. Gary S. May
University of California, Davis

Mr. John May
Deere & Company

Dr. Santa J. Ono
University of Michigan

Mr. Nicholas T. Pinchuk
Snap-On Incorporated

Dr. Donda Plowman
University of Tennessee

Ms. Randi Weingarten
American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

Dr. David Kwabena Wilson
Morgan State University

Dr. W. Randolph Woodson
North Carolina State University

Mr. Paul A. Yarossi
HNTB Holding Ltd.

Founder
Mr. John A. Young
The Hewlett Packard Company



January 28, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 554
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 254
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

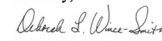
I write to you to express my strongest possible support for the nomination of Mr. Michael Kratsios to serve as Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

Michael is a tremendous leader, and his experiences both in the public and private sectors to shape and help navigate a constantly evolving and transforming science, technology, and innovation landscape would serve well the citizens of the United States and the President.

After leaving the first Trump Administration, Michael served up until his nomination as a Distinguished Fellow with the Council on Competitiveness providing invaluable guidance and expertise on critical science and technology issues impacting U.S. productivity and economic growth, prosperity, and national security. His expertise and knowledge of the cutting-edge of emerging and converging technology frontiers such as AI, quantum and cyber security are built upon both significant business experience, as well as deep policy engagement. During the first Trump Administration, he led national efforts such as the quantum initiative, and demonstrated his ability to work across all relevant agencies to optimize U.S. investments in research and development. And, in his work as Undersecretary of Defense, he understood and anticipated the growing connectivity between economic and national security, and the need for the Department to partner proactively with America's hyper-innovative private sector on technologies with increasing dual-use applications.

As the Council's private sector leadership and members undertake important new initiatives on the future of U.S. innovation, leadership in advanced computing to support the AI revolution, and the power and potential of the bioeconomy, we look forward to working with the new Administration in partnership with leaders like Michael Kratsios in his role as Director of OSTP.

Sincerely,


Deborah L. Winco-Smith
President & CEO
Council on Competitiveness



January 29, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, District of Columbia 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

ACT | The App Association supports the nomination of Michael Kratsios to serve as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in the White House. Mr. Kratsios has a track record of success in unifying a sprawling federal government around pro-growth policies that will benefit small business innovators.

The App Association is the leading trade group representing small business application developers and connected device companies in the United States and around the world. These companies drive a global app economy worth \$6.3 trillion, which supports 6.1 million American jobs. App Association members leverage the connectivity of smart devices to create innovative solutions that introduce new efficiencies across consumer and enterprise use cases. They rely on forward-thinking government that prioritizes unleashing small business growth and success in the app economy.

During the first Trump Administration, Mr. Kratsios led several initiatives that make him uniquely qualified for the OSTP Director role. He designed the first national artificial intelligence (AI) strategy, oversaw implementation of the National Quantum Initiative Act, and led a billion-dollar investment in research institutes to advance quantum and AI research and development in the United States. Notably, he undertook these major governmental actions, establishing the United States as a leader in AI governance, while avoiding saddling emerging technologies with unnecessary and costly regulation or liability. This kind of balance is crucial to protecting the incentive for private sector competitors to develop, deliver, and improve on AI services and quantum technologies. Small businesses reap the benefits when incentives to invest soar—and they are disproportionately harmed when investment dries up and capital-intensive technologies stagnate. Mr. Kratsios's approach would serve small business innovators' interests well.

We urge this Committee to quickly confirm Mr. Kratsios and look forward to working with you on related issues that affect App Association members in the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,

Morgan Reed
President

ACT | The App Association



America's Leading Research Universities

- Arizona State University
- Boston University
- Brandeis University
- Brown University
- California Institute of Technology
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Casa Western Reserve University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Dartmouth College
- Duke University
- Emory University
- The George Washington University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- The Johns Hopkins University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- McGill University
- Michigan State University
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- The Ohio State University
- The Pennsylvania State University
- Princeton University
- Purdue University
- Rice University
- Rutgers University – New Brunswick
- Stanford University
- Stony Brook University
- State University of New York
- Texas A&M University
- Tufts University
- Tulane University
- University at Buffalo
- State University of New York
- The University of Arizona
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Irvine
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, Riverside
- University of California, San Diego
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- The University of Chicago
- University of Colorado Boulder
- University of Florida
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- The University of Iowa
- The University of Kansas
- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Miami
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- University of Missouri, Columbia
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Oregon
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Rochester
- University of South Florida
- University of Southern California
- The University of Texas at Austin
- University of Toronto
- The University of Utah
- University of Virginia
- University of Washington
- The University of Wisconsin - Madison
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Yale University

February 7, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
 Chair
 Committee on Commerce, Science, and
 Transportation
 U.S. Senate

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
 Ranking Member
 Committee on Commerce, Science, and
 Transportation
 U.S. Senate

Dear Chair Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

I write to urge your support for the appointment of Michael Kratsios as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Mr. Kratsios provides an experienced hand given his previous service at the highest levels of U.S. science and technology (S&T) policy. He is well-positioned to shepherd a bold S&T policy agenda that will advance U.S. competitiveness and innovation, and ensure the national security interests required to make America great.

In his roles in the previous Trump Administration, including Chief Technology Officer of the United States and Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Research & Engineering, he helped to drive several consequential initiatives in vital areas like STEM education, critical minerals, planetary defense, high-performance computing, and Industries of the Future. As a senior leader within OSTP, Mr. Kratsios stood up the American Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiative and the National Quantum Coordination Office, which brought universities, industry, and national labs together to foster world-class research in these critical areas.

His nomination comes at a critical time for the country. Global competition is fierce in several areas of S&T under the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee's purview – including astronautics and aeronautics, advanced manufacturing, and basic science in all fields. Washington needs to empower our scientists and engineers to make the discoveries that will lay the groundwork for future growth, while encouraging the next generation of innovators.

Mr. Kratsios possesses the knowledge and vision to advance the U.S. research enterprise and American science. We look forward to working with him again to ensure America remains at the forefront of global S&T. We encourage the Committee to expeditiously advance his nomination.

Sincerely,

Barbara R. Snyder
 President

February 7, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation United States
254 Russel Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Nomination Endorsement for Commissioner for the Federal Trade Commission

Dear Chairman Ted Cruz,

We are a group of conservative organizations and thought leaders who support expediently confirming Mark Meador as a commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). On November 5, 2024, the American people gave our government an unprecedented and powerful mandate when electing President Donald Trump. They gave him a clear mission: fix our broken political system and take our country back from the elites, liberal mobs, and deep state directing our country towards certain disaster.

President Trump is currently positioning himself to fulfill that mandate by assembling an administration aimed at relinquishing the Herculean grip these corporate factions have on our society at an elemental level.

In that vein, we believe Mr. Meador is essential to realizing the President's goal because of the important role the FTC plays in regulating markets and consumer protection. Indeed, the FTC is one of our premier competition regulators. It evaluates predatory pricing and can bring suit against unlawful cartels that manipulate food prices, our rent, and distortions in the market caused by investors' DEI and ESG agendas. What's more, the prevalence and undue influence of these coordinated corporate coterie also requires its primary consumer protection agency to give parents a fighting chance by fighting for them.

President Trump has signaled that he plans on continuing the fight in his second term. And for good reason as these companies have the capacity to bend markets and even facts to their will.

Big Tech, in particular, has an incredible amount of influence over what see and do. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) stated that social media is "destroying lives" and "threatening democracy itself." Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) aptly lamented that Big Tech "has consumed too much power, and they are going to use it to censor [us]."

They are especially hurting our children. As you, Senator Cruz, rightly said that "[e]very parent with a young child or a teenager either worries about, or knows first-hand, the real harms and dangers of addicted and anxiety-inducing social media."

But Big Tech is only part of the issue as there are other corporations working to exert influence in the background. Index funds, like BlackRock or Vanguard, have been linked to using their

influence over companies to promote ESG movements,¹ advance DEI,² and may even be behind debanking efforts against conservatives.³ Without strong leadership at the FTC, these issues will only exacerbate.

Worse, large pharmaceutical companies have leveraged deceptive advertising to push harmful puberty blockers on children. Big Pharma consistently and blatantly misrepresents the permanent effects these drugs have on kids. And, yet, we continue to see no federal enforcement, especially at the FTC.

Since the Trump Administration's first term, we have seen a complete lack of federal leadership under the Biden Administration on these key issues impacting families. States have had to bear the sole burden in protecting consumers from these anticompetitive and deceptive practices. On the competition front, for instance, Texas's Attorney General sued BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street for conspiracy to artificially constrict the coal market, which "increased the cost of electricity for Americans...."⁴

Even when it comes to enforcing basic consumer protection laws, Biden's FTC—again, the U.S.'s primary consumer protection enforcer—was noticeably absent. State AG offices operating on shoestring budgets were the ones left alone to carry the cross. Texas AG, not the FTC, is investigating how Big Pharma may be misleading parents through deceptive advertising by failing to disclose the true (and potentially irreversible) side effects of puberty blockers.⁵ To prevent the addictive effects social media has on kids, the Virginia's AG, not the FTC, sued TikTok for "intentionally [pushing its] addictive [products on]...adolescents, deceiv[ing] parents" about content suitability for children over 12, and misrepresent[ing] the risk of Chinese government access to user data.⁶ And Texas, not the FTC, is suing TikTok for "deceptively

¹ Montana Dept. of Justice, *Attorney General Knudsen Demands Answers from Wells Fargo for Debanking Practices*, Press Release (Mar. 7, 2024), <https://dojmt.gov/attorney-general-knudsen-demands-answers-from-wells-fargo-for-debanking-practices/>.

² U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, *New Banking GOP Report Reveals How Asset Managers Use Proxy*, Press Release, [https://www.banking.senate.gov/newsroom/minority/new-banking-gop-report-reveals-how-asset-managers-use-proxy-voting-power-to-advance-liberal-policies#:~:text=The%20staff%20report%2C%20titled%20%E2%80%9CThe,%2C%20and%20governance\)%20and%20DEI%20](https://www.banking.senate.gov/newsroom/minority/new-banking-gop-report-reveals-how-asset-managers-use-proxy-voting-power-to-advance-liberal-policies#:~:text=The%20staff%20report%2C%20titled%20%E2%80%9CThe,%2C%20and%20governance)%20and%20DEI%20).

³ Fox News, *House Oversight Chairman Says There's Evidence of Conservative Debanking, Hints at Investigation*, (Jan. 26, 2025), <https://www.foxnews.com/media/house-oversight-chairman-says-theres-evidence-conservative-debanking-hints-investigation>.

⁴ The Office of Ken Paxton Attorney General of Texas, *Attorney General Ken Paxton Sues BlackRock, State Street, and Vanguard for Illegally Conspiring to Manipulate Energy Markets, Driving Up Costs for Consumers*, Press Release (Nov. 27, 2024), <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/attorney-general-ken-paxton-sues-blackrock-state-street-and-vanguard-illegally-conspiring-manipulate>.

⁵ Office of the Attorney General of Texas Consumer Protection Division, *Civil Investigative Demand* (Apr. 14, 2022), [https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/images/executive-management/CTD_Abbvie.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term="](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/images/executive-management/CTD_Abbvie.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=).

⁶ DataGuidance, *Virginia: AG Sues TikTok for Violations of State Consumer Protection Laws*, (Jan. 22, 2025), <https://www.dataguidance.com/news/virginia-ag-sues-tiktok-violations-state-consumer>.

marketing its app as safe for minors, despite regularly showing inappropriate and explicit material to children.⁹⁷

If we want to make any headway on any of these important issues, we need a strong FTC; these AGs cannot do it alone.

The great news is that President Trump is poised to reverse the trend and fight for our families and democracy. This is made evident by him selecting Mark Meador as commissioner of the FTC. Mr. Meador has been a long-time advocate for strong, yet targeted, antitrust and consumer protection enforcement. He is a well-regarded and influential antitrust scholar. He also has the resume to back it up spanning across both antitrust agencies and as a staffer on Capitol Hill. President Trump could not have chosen a better champion to assist him in ushering in America's golden age.

To be sure, the FTC will be an essential agency to ensure President Trump's vision becomes reality. We have less than 4 years to get our country back. Every day one of President Trump's nominees sit on the sidelines is another day lost in our golden age's realization. Mr. Meador is integral to that plan. It's why the Senate confirming Mr. Meador expeditiously is paramount.

Thus, we respectfully request that the Senate Commerce Committee expedite Mr. Meador's confirmation, so that we can get America back on track.

Sincerely,

Aiden Buzzetti
President
The Bull Moose Project

Terry Schilling
President
American Principles Project

Julius Krein
Editor
The Journal of American Affairs

Josh Hammer
Senior Counsel
Article III Project

⁹⁷ The Office of Ken Paxton Attorney General of Texas, *Attorney General Ken Paxton Sues TikTok for Deceptively Promoting Its App as Safe for Children Despite Proliferation of Inappropriate and Explicit Content*, Press Release (Jan. 9, 2025), <https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/attorney-general-ken-paxton-sues-tiktok-deceptively-promoting-its-app-safe-children-despite>.

Oren Cass
Founder & Chief Economist
American Compass

Nathan Leamer
Executive Director
Digital First Project

Clare Morell
Fellow
Ethics and Public Policy Center*

Ryan Williams
President
Claremont Institute

Rachel Bovard
Vice President of Programs
Conservative Partnership Institute*

Ryan Walker
Executive Vice President
Heritage Action for America

Nick Solheim
CEO
American Moment*

** Organization shown for identification purposes only. No endorsement by the organization is implied.*



February 18, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Commercial Drone Alliance ("CDA")¹ strongly supports the nomination of Michael Kratsios as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Mr. Kratsios is a longtime champion for safe and secure commercial unmanned aircraft system (UAS, or drone) integration. We urge the Committee to swiftly consider and advance Mr. Kratsios' nomination to this very important role at this critical time for the drone industry.

The commercial drone industry is delivering significant economic and societal benefits for millions of Americans. Commercial drone operations stretch across several industries, from commercial package delivery to inspections of critical infrastructure and utilities, generating millions of dollars in revenue and creating thousands of jobs. The drone industry is projected to contribute billions of dollars to the global economy over the next decade, with some projections as high as \$90 billion by 2030.² Indeed, Congress has repeatedly and rightly emphasized the tremendous potential of expanded UAS operations to enhance commercial and academic use, spur economic growth, and improve emergency response. With the right leadership and support, the UAS industry can play a critical role in re-establishing America's leadership position in global aviation and automation technologies. The maturation of this domestic industrial base is critical to our current and future economic and national security interests. This is a national imperative.

¹ The CDA is an independent non-profit organization led by key leaders in the commercial drone industry. The CDA has actively participated in rulemakings and policy efforts to facilitate the safe and secure development and expansion of commercial drone operations. The CDA works with all levels of government to collaborate on policies for industry growth and seeks to educate the public on the safe and responsible use of commercial drones to achieve economic benefits and humanitarian gains. We bring together commercial drone end-users, manufacturers, service providers, advanced air mobility companies, drone security companies, and vertical markets including oil and gas, precision agriculture, construction, security, communications technology, infrastructure, newsgathering, filmmaking, and more. Learn more at <https://www.commercialdronealliance.org/>.

² Levitate Capital, *The Future of the Drone Economy: A Comprehensive Analysis of the Economic Potential, Market Opportunities, and Strategic Considerations in the Drone Economy 1* (Dec. 2020), <https://levitatecap.com/levitate/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Levitate-Capital-White-Paper.pdf>.



February 19, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Support for the nomination of Mr. Michael Kratsios for Director of White House OSTP

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

Please accept this letter as an indication of our support for the nomination of Mr. Michael Kratsios for Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) within the White House. **Mr. Kratsios' background and experience make him an ideal candidate for this position.** His previous experience as the U.S. Chief Technology Officer and Deputy Director of OSTP demonstrated his business acumen, his grasp of the complexities of technology-based economies, and his understanding of the broad areas of advanced technology. In short, Mr. Kratsios is the ideal person at the right time to provide critical technology leadership for our nation as we face unprecedented global economic threats and challenges.

The Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub (TSTH) is one of 31 federally-designated tech hubs focused on growing economic opportunities for the United States and strengthening our domestic technology industries. In particular, the TSTH is focused on strengthening our domestic semiconductor chip manufacturing industry in the North Texas (Texoma) region. Strengthening our domestic semiconductor manufacturing base is critical to our economic and national security. Congress has recognized the urgency and previously enacted the CHIPS Act. The State of Texas followed with state-level support and initiatives for the semiconductor manufacturing industry. Texas and the Texoma region have much to offer and the future of the semiconductor industry in the Texoma region is very bright.

Time is of the essence. Mr. Kratsios understands the technical and policy aspects of technology and the need for a regulatory regime that complements—not constrains—large-scale growth of our domestic technology industries for the benefit of the American public. The TSTH urges the swift confirmation and designation of Mr. Kratsios to this important role and we look forward to



partnering with him to uphold the United States as the global leader in technology into a new era of economic opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Grimsley".

James Grimsley
Regional Innovation Officer / Texoma Semiconductor Tech Hub
grimslevj@smu.edu / 405-514-7365



February 21, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Supporting the Nomination of Michael Kratsios

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The Small UAV Coalition¹ ("Coalition") respectfully submits this letter of support for President Trump's nomination of Michael Kratsios to serve as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy ("OSTP") in the Executive Office of the President. Members of the Small UAV Coalition share an interest in advancing legislative, regulatory and policy reforms to allow the UAS industry to scale operations of commercial drones beyond the visual line of sight, with varying degrees of autonomy, to deliver manifold benefits to individuals and businesses through the country and around the world. As your Committee has recognized, commercial drone operations save lives, time, and money while reducing the transportation sector's carbon footprint.

Mr. Kratsios was a significant force in the first Trump administration in advancing development of new technologies, including aviation technologies. As OSTP's Chief Technology Officer, he was

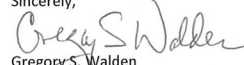
¹ Members of the Small UAV Coalition are listed at www.smalluavcoalition.org.

a strong advocate for the safe integration of drones in the national airspace. Mr. Kratsios was critical in establishing the Federal Aviation Administration's UAS Integration Pilot Program ("IPP"), which was mandated by Presidential Memorandum of October 25, 2017, and subsequently codified in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018. His knowledge, experience, and judgment make him very well qualified to lead OSTP in supporting safe and secure innovation across various technology sectors.

The Coalition commends the Committee's leadership in enacting the forward-leaning FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024. While many of the Act's deliverables of greatest interest to the Coalition and its members are directed to the Department of Transportation ("DOT") and FAA, support from the White House as a general matter, and OSTP in particular, will be critical to ensure that DOT and FAA comply, fully and in a timely manner, with the provisions in the Act.

We therefore support without qualification the nomination of Mr. Kratsios for the position of OSTP Director and urge his expeditious confirmation.

Sincerely,



Gregory S. Walden
Counsel
Small UAV Coalition
202-403-9904
gregory.walden@dgagroup.com



February 24, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 554
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 254
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

On behalf of the Software and Information Industry Association (SIIA), I am writing to express our support for the nomination of Michael Kratsios to serve as Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). SIIA is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industries, representing global leaders in technology, data, and innovation.

The role of the Director of OSTP is a critical one for the issues that matter to our membership. Our members rely on OSTP to advance sound policy guidance for emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) and to lead in coordinating key science and technology efforts across the interagency. OSTP has an important role in advancing U.S. interests in the global tech competition and ensuring that the United States continues to lead in AI and other critical and emerging technologies.


We believe Mr. Kratsios is uniquely situated to lead OSTP owing in part to his significant experience both in the federal government – including as Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at OSTP – and in the technology industry. Notably, as CTO during the previous Trump administration, Mr. Kratsios led initiatives to foster U.S. leadership in AI and other emerging technologies, such as quantum computing. His role in advancing AI is particularly noteworthy. During his tenure, President Trump laid the groundwork for national AI policy through the first executive order on AI and passage of the National AI Initiative Act of 2020. Mr. Kratsios led the establishment of the National AI Initiative Office within OSTP and oversaw the American AI Initiative - a comprehensive approach to advancing AI innovation, investing in AI research and development, tackling challenges around data and compute resources, and more. Mr. Kratsios

also negotiated bilateral agreements to harmonize AI policy with key allies and partners, recognizing the importance of alignment for U.S. economic and national security interests.

We urge the Committee to favorably report Mr. Kratsios' nomination. We believe his leadership will strengthen OSTP's ability to advance U.S. innovation, secure global competitiveness, and support science and technological policy to drive economic progress.

Thank you for considering our views.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher A. Mohr
President
Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)



February 24, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

As president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), I am pleased to express my support for President Trump's nomination of Michael Kratsios as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). I urge the Senate Commerce Committee and U.S. Senate to advance the nominee.

APLU is a membership organization that fosters a community of university leaders collectively working to advance the mission of public research universities. The association's U.S membership consists of more than 230 public research universities and systems across all 50 states. The association and its members collectively focus on student success and workforce readiness; promoting pathbreaking scientific research; and bolstering economic and community engagement.

Mr. Kratsios brings a wealth of experience in senior science and technology roles in the U.S. government and private sector, including at OSTP and the Department of Defense. As Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy U.S. Chief Technology Officer under the previous Trump administration, Mr. Kratsios led important national strategic planning in fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advanced manufacturing. APLU appreciates Mr. Kratsios' recognition that our nation's public universities are essential partners in maintaining U.S. leadership in these critical technologies, especially at a moment of intense global competition.

Mr. Kratsios' continued service with OSTP will ensure strong science and technology advice is available to the Office of the President. I hope Mr. Kratsios will be able to serve as a vital bridge between the administration, federal research agencies, and the academic research community as we collectively work to maintain U.S. scientific leadership.

I urge the Commerce Committee and U.S. Senate to confirm Mr. Kratsios as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Mark Becker, President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

CC: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



JONATHAN SPALTER
President and Chief Executive Officer

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
554 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Senate Commerce Committee
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell,

On behalf of USTelecom – The Broadband Association, I write to express strong support for the nomination of Michael Kratsios as Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). USTelecom represents our nation's broadband providers whose digital infrastructure forms the backbone of the technological revolution. We are confident that Mr. Kratsios' proven leadership across various government roles and his forward-thinking approach to emerging technologies will prepare him well for this position.

As Chief Technology Officer of the United States, Mr. Kratsios was deeply engaged in nationwide initiatives on broadband, 5G and artificial intelligence. In this new role, his leadership will be essential in fostering economic growth, accelerating American innovation leadership, achieving universal broadband access, and strengthening our nation's security. Mr. Kratsios' experience in balancing innovation with governance will help ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of technological leadership while maintaining the resilience of our technology ecosystem.

We look forward to working with Mr. Kratsios and his team to ensure that our nation's broadband networks continue to drive economic and technological progress. Collaboration is key to advancing broadband deployment and other technological innovations and USTelecom supports strengthening public-private partnerships to drive meaningful progress together.

We urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Kratsios' nomination swiftly so that he may continue his work in shaping policies that drive innovation, security, and connectivity for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Spalter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being particularly prominent.

Jonathan Spalter

The CHAIRMAN. Senators will have until the close of business on Thursday, February 27 to submit questions for the record.

The nominees will have until the close of business on Monday, March 3, to respond to those questions. That concludes today's hearing. The Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JOHN THUNE TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. Advanced artificial intelligence (A.I.) is a revolutionary technology that has the potential to improve health care, agriculture, logistics, supply chains, and countless other industries. How would you approach A.I. regulation to protect consumers, harness major advancement, and limit government intervention?

Answer. I share your view that artificial intelligence holds immense promise for innovation across sectors. If confirmed, I would work with stakeholders in government, industry, and academia to ensure we take a balanced approach: protecting consumers and national interests while maintaining an environment where innovation can thrive.

Question 2. Will you commit to working with this committee on a light-touch, pro-innovation legislative framework for A.I.?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to forward a legislative framework for AI that will ensure continued American leadership in AI and public trust in the development and use of AI systems.

Question 3. Coordination across Federal agencies is essential to ensuring the economic benefits of licensed and unlicensed spectrum do not compromise national security efforts. Can you commit to working with your counterparts across the administration and members of this committee to expand access to licensed and unlicensed spectrum without compromising national security?

Answer. Yes. I believe effective interagency coordination can help ensure that expanded access to spectrum provides economic benefits to the American people without compromising our national security.

Question 4. As a member of Secretary Burgum's National Energy Dominance Council, will you commit to helping the President's administration achieve an all-of-the-above energy strategy that will help the U.S. achieve global energy dominance?

Answer. Yes. American energy dominance is critical to our plans to lead the world in the development and deployment of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and quantum information science. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the work of the Council.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. Mr. Kratsios, during Congress's development of the CHIPS and Science Act, I advocated for increased funding to states that have historically received a very small fraction of the Federal research and development resources. Efforts to increase such funding in the CHIPS and Science Act include provisions raising the percentage of NSF research funding to EPSCoR states like Kansas from 13 percent to 20 percent. I believe engaging researchers across the country is critical for U.S. competitiveness in key technology areas, including advanced manufacturing and biotechnology.

- If confirmed, how do you plan to support policies that increase scientific and technological development in states like Kansas?

Answer. I recognize the importance of broadening our national research base so that every region can contribute to—and benefit from—U.S. innovation. If confirmed, I would work with Federal departments and agencies and Congress on programs like EPSCoR, in an effort to continue expanding research opportunities, foster partnerships with local universities and businesses, and strengthen our Nation's overall scientific capacity.

Question 2. Congress is concerned about intellectual property theft and the transfer of sensitive technologies to China through U.S. universities.

- Mr. Kratsios, what steps would you take as OSTP Director to mitigate these risks without stifling academic research?

Answer. I recognize the importance of protecting sensitive technologies while maintaining an open, collaborative research environment. If confirmed, I would work with Federal agencies, universities, and industry to ensure research and innovation thrives while safeguarding our national interests.

- Mr. Kratsios, how would you address participation by U.S. academics in Chinese talent recruitment programs, such as the Thousand Talents Program?

Answer. Chinese talent recruitment programs may pose serious risks to national security and may violate conflict-of-interest policies at educational institutions receiving Federal funding. If confirmed, I would work with relevant Federal agencies, universities, and industry to ensure there is transparency, as provided by relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.

- Mr. Kratsios, what specific policies or guidelines would you propose to universities to ensure transparency regarding foreign funding, particularly from Chinese sources, without imposing overly restrictive regulations?

Answer. I believe in a balanced approach that enhances visibility into foreign contributions without creating excessive burdens on legitimate research. If confirmed, I am happy to work with Congress on proposals that may bring more transparency.

- Mr. Kratsios, given your experience with emerging technologies, how would you leverage OSTP's authority to strengthen U.S. academic resilience against Chinese influence in fields like AI, quantum computing, and 5G?

Answer. If confirmed, I would encourage coordinated interagency strategies—partnering with institutions on best practices to protect sensitive research and facilitate safe, productive international partnerships where appropriate.

Question 3. Mr. Kratsios, how do you see the commercialization of space exploration shaping the future of U.S. leadership in space, and what role should OSTP play in advancing this agenda?

- Mr. Kratsios, during your time as U.S. Chief Technology Officer, you championed emerging technologies. How would you apply that experience to accelerate the growth of the commercial space sector?

Answer. Commercial space exploration significantly shapes America's leadership. If confirmed, I would encourage a strong ecosystem that involves government, industry, and academia, ensuring we stay at the forefront of space innovation and economic growth.

- Mr. Kratsios, NASA has increasingly partnered with companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin. How would you strengthen public-private partnerships to ensure they benefit both U.S. taxpayers and the commercial space industry?

Answer. During my time as U.S. CTO, I worked to prioritize emerging technologies and streamline regulations. If confirmed, I would build on these efforts, partnering with NASA, the FAA, and other agencies to create a supportive environment for commercial space ventures.

- Mr. Kratsios, what policies would you advocate for to encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to enter the commercial space market, beyond the dominance of major players?

Answer. I believe a dynamic space sector requires diverse participants. If confirmed, I would advocate for simplified regulations and Federal opportunities that encourage smaller innovators to compete and thrive.

- Mr. Kratsios, how would OSTP under your leadership coordinate with agencies like NASA, the FAA, and the Department of Commerce to streamline regulations for commercial space activities?

Answer. Interagency coordination is key to creating a predictable regulatory environment. If confirmed, I would champion collaborative efforts to align Federal policy, ensuring our space industry remains agile and competitive.

- Mr. Kratsios, how would you encourage private investment in high-risk, high-reward space technologies that may not yield immediate commercial returns?

Answer. High-risk, high-reward research has the potential to generate significant technological breakthroughs. If confirmed, I would explore ways to ensure private capital is not deterred from supporting next-generation space capabilities.

Question 4. Mr. Kratsios, you have been a strong advocate for American leadership in aviation innovation, especially under the first Trump Administration. Our global adversaries, particularly China, are investing in Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and drones, and President Trump has spoken of the need to lead the world in AAM. What do you plan to do make certain the U.S. leads in this technology, and would you support an Executive Order to make AAM a national priority?

Answer. Advanced Air Mobility is poised to reshape aviation. If confirmed, I would collaborate with industry and agency partners to identify key research areas, workforce needs, and regulatory challenges facing the industry. As for an Executive Order, I would offer any insights requested by the President to prioritize AAM.

- How would you define ‘aerospace dominance’ in the context of U.S. national interests, and what role should OSTP play in securing it over the next decade?

Answer. Aerospace dominance entails sustained leadership in technology, manufacturing, and operational capabilities across the aerospace sector. OSTP can help set research priorities, coordinate policy across agencies, and foster international partnerships that keep the U.S. at the forefront of aerospace innovation over the next decade.

- Given your experience as U.S. Chief Technology Officer, what do you see as the greatest threats to U.S. aerospace dominance today, and how would you address them?

Answer. Factors include global competition, supply chain vulnerabilities, and talent shortages. If confirmed, I would work through the policy coordination process with relevant agencies to craft a coordinated Federal strategy to ensure U.S. aerospace dominance.

- How would you ensure that U.S. advancements in aerospace technology continue to set the global standard, particularly in the face of rising competition from China and Russia?

Answer. I believe coordinated Federal R&D efforts, strong private sector partnerships, and active international engagement help shape global norms. If confirmed, I would work with agencies and industry to maintain our competitive edge.

- What policies would you propose to bolster the U.S. aerospace supply chain, particularly in light of recent disruptions and dependencies on foreign components?

Answer. Recent disruptions highlight the need for resilient supply chains. If confirmed, I would consult with stakeholders and agencies on potential strategies—like diversifying suppliers and supporting domestic manufacturing—to reduce dependencies on foreign sources.

- Aerospace dominance relies on a skilled workforce. How would you work to strengthen STEM education and training programs to meet the demands of the aerospace industry?

Answer. A robust pipeline for STEM and STEM-adjacent occupations is essential. If confirmed, I would advocate for collaborative programs among government, academia, and industry that expand access to aerospace-related fields at all education levels.

- What strategies would you pursue to retain top aerospace talent in the U.S. and prevent brain drain to competitor nations?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support policies that promote aerospace innovation here in the United States, such as advanced research opportunities and competitive career prospects, encouraging top talent to build and work domestically.

- How would you streamline regulations to encourage innovation in the aerospace sector without compromising safety or security?

Answer. If confirmed, I would engage industry experts to identify potential barriers to innovation, and would work with regulatory agencies to identify policies that remove those barriers where appropriate, while upholding aviation’s high safety standards.

- What long-term investments in aerospace infrastructure—such as launch facilities or testing grounds—would you prioritize to keep the U.S. ahead?

Answer. If confirmed, I would engage agencies and industry experts to identify policies that support strategic projects that strengthen America’s aerospace foundation.

Question 5. The development and use of emerging technology like artificial intelligence must continue to be promoted, rather than suppressed, by the U.S. intellectual property system. Existing U.S. IP law is capable of addressing issues related to artificial intelligence and serves to promote creative activity in AI technology. While unique issues might arise in the future that may require additional legislation or regulation, the technology-neutral nature of the U.S. Copyright Act is sufficient to address present issues regarding AI and copyright.

- Mr. Kratsios, in order for the United States to continue to lead on artificial intelligence, will you commit to promoting U.S. intellectual property law, including limitations and exceptions to U.S. copyright law like the fair use doctrine, abroad?

Answer. U.S. laws around intellectual property protections and fair use are cornerstones of American innovation. If confirmed, I would collaborate with diplomatic and trade partners to defend U.S. law internationally and ensure continued global U.S. leadership in AI.

- Can you speak to the importance of a risk-based, flexible, and technology-neutral regulatory approach when considering the intersection between emerging technology and copyright?

Answer. Having regulatory approaches that are risk-based, flexible, and technology-neutral, including for copyright law, ensure that regulation can keep pace with technological innovation. If confirmed, I would work with relevant agencies to ensure that regulatory frameworks can handle new technological developments and provide clarity to innovators.

Under the previous Trump administration, you played a key role in advancing the first-ever OECD Principles on AI. Although the Biden Administration carried forth much of that work, the threat of regulatory fragmentation, driven by markets like the EU eager to embed their vision of prescriptive governance, is a growing threat.

- Mr. Kratsios, what is your vision for U.S. leadership on AI governance among like-minded states through forums such as the OECD and G7?

Answer. Building upon prior initiatives, I believe that the United States should champion pro-innovation policies that uphold American values. If confirmed, I would work closely with allies and like-minded states to prevent regulatory fragmentation and defend American interests on the international stage.

- What specific principles can the U.S. advance to ensure that leading U.S. firms maintain consistent, fair access to foreign markets?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with relevant agencies to combat barriers that limit U.S. competitiveness, including advocating against forced technology transfer and harmful IP-related practices as a condition of entering a foreign market.

Question 6. Mr. Kratsios, I am the chairman of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee that provides funding to OSTP and several science agencies, including NASA, NOAA, and NIST.

- If confirmed, how will you work with Congress to secure the funding necessary to support long-term research and development priorities?

Answer. Collaboration between appropriators and Federal agencies is key. Every Fiscal Year, the OSTP Director partners with the OMB Director to author a memorandum on the Federal government's research and development priorities. If I am confirmed, I intend to work with OMB to set the Administration's R&D budget priorities and to work in partnership with Congress to fund those priorities to ensure American leadership in emerging technologies.

Question 7. Mr. Kratsios, given your background is primarily in technology policy, how do you plan to address the scientific research components of the job?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to assembling a team of subject matter experts with varied technical expertise across Administration priorities on scientific research.

Question 8. Mr. Kratsios, in 2019 in your role as Chief Technology Officer of the United States, you helped lead the White House's Summit on America's Bioeconomy, where the importance of the bioeconomy as a national strategic research and development priority was discussed. During the summit you also highlighted the Administration's commitment to ensuring American leadership in emerging technologies, which includes investment in R&D, the workforce, and removing regulatory barriers to growth.

That commitment is more important than ever in helping encourage domestic bio-manufacturing in states like Kansas. Corn and soy farmers in Kansas benefit from market demand created by the manufacture of biobased products. According to USDA's estimates, over 11,570 direct jobs and over 10,680 spillover jobs in Kansas are supported by the biobased chemicals, biorefining, enzyme, forest products, and biobased plastic sectors. These activities generate over \$782 million in direct economic value and nearly \$836 million in spillover economic value to Kansas's economy.

- Given the importance to our economic growth and the implications for national security, do you and the Trump Administration remain committed to growing the bioeconomy's talent, data, and infrastructure?

Answer. I remain committed to ensuring continued American innovation in biotechnology and encouraging domestic biomanufacturing, recognizing the importance of the bioeconomy to our economy and national security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with relevant stakeholders and agencies to realize these goals.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. DAN SULLIVAN TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. With Huawei, we have a recent grave example of the CCP utilization of preferential policies and financing to enable the expansion of its telecommunications equipment globally, imbedding itself in networks capable of espionage or sabotage of U.S. and global networks.

In reaction, Congress and the Administration created restrictions on the use of Huawei equipment, funded the removal of the equipment from U.S. networks, and enacted restrictions on exports of U.S. tech to ensure that Huawei cannot benefit from U.S. innovations.

We have a new profound risk with AI, as we can anticipate that the CCP will take similar interest in exporting Chinese developed large language models around the world that can be the basis to provide citizen facing basic government services (taxes, healthcare, benefits).

- What can the U.S. government be doing to ensure U.S. tech companies are globally competitive against foreign rivals?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and relevant agencies on a robust, two-pronged policy agenda to both promote and protect American innovation, ensuring that we develop the best technologies here at home and defend our technologies domestically and globally from malign influence.

- Are our global development agencies positioned to support the export of American technology and software?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with our global development agencies to craft a coordinated strategy to support the export of strategically important American technology abroad.

Question 2. As Director of OSTP, pursuant to the President's AI E.O. on January 23rd, you will be one of the chief architects charged with developing an AI policy "action plan" by July 22, 2025. At OSTP, you have purview to advise the President on science and technology across all Federal programs and activities.

- How do we ensure that our agencies across the Federal government are spending research and development funds on the most important areas of AI? What do you see as the current priority?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to evaluating existing national AI research and development strategic plans to identify research priorities, such as the measurement science which underpins large language model testing and evaluation. I will plan to work with research agencies to better understand their R&D priorities and facilitate interagency AI R&D coordination through the National Science and Technology Council.

Question 3. During the Biden Administration, I was concerned that the Biden Executive Order on AI created uncertainty over regulating potential harms associated with generative AI that could stifle U.S. competitiveness and ability to innovate. For example, during the unveiling of the AI Safety Institute in London VP Harris made statements at the unveiling trying to redefine an existential threat to include the "full spectrum" of threats, including bias, discrimination and the spread of disinformation. Some of the identified harms extend beyond scientific concerns and delve into social policy realms.

- How do we ensure that the U.S. is pursuing risk-based guidance to industry that ensures U.S. leadership and competitiveness?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with agencies to coordinate a use-case and sector-specific, risk-based policy approach across sectors and ensure that the private sector can support continued U.S. AI leadership.

Question 4. The CHIPS and Science Act directed the Office of Science and Technology Policy to establish and lead the interagency Subcommittee on Microelectronics Leadership. This group is intended to coordinate the national strategy on microelectronics research across the government's science investments to ensure U.S. leadership in this critical technology.

- How will the Office of Science and Technology Policy—under your leadership—ensure that the portfolio of research investments made by the U.S. outpaces other nations who are ramping their innovation programs to try to capture market leadership?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Subcommittee on Microelectronics Leadership and relevant agencies to align R&D priorities, avoid duplication of effort, and capitalize on the creativity of American industry and academia.

Question 5. The formidable leaps in the capability of today's AI systems rests on many decades of academic research supported by Federal science programs such as the DOE Office of Science and the National Science Foundation. And these offices

continue to support development of AI algorithms and information processing science that will extend the capabilities of AI far beyond what is possible today.

- What actions will the Office of Science and Technology Policy—under your leadership—take to ensure that upstream research is fully supported in areas such as mathematics, materials science, chemistry, physics, etc. to secure AI leadership for the U.S.?

Answer. Foundational research forms the bedrock of tomorrow's breakthroughs. If confirmed, I will champion support for fundamental science at agencies like NSF and DOE, as well as interagency initiatives that drive cross-agency collaboration. These efforts will be central to America's continued AI leadership.

Question 6. In addition to incentivizing the construction of fabs in the U.S., the CHIPS Act also makes substantial investments in more applied research for piloting and prototyping in the semiconductor industry. Since passage of the CHIPS Act, companies have partnered with the Departments of Commerce and Defense to inform these R&D programs to ensure they meet the industry's needs.

- What role will OSTP play in maximizing continuity and efficiency of these programs to ensure the private sector can meet their R&D and innovation timelines and maintain U.S. leadership in microelectronics?

Answer. A close, iterative dialogue between Federal program managers and industry is vital. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about how these programs are being facilitated and how OSTP can support the Departments of Commerce and Defense.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. TIM SHEEHY TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. Holmium Copper II (HoCu2) is required for every quantum computer, but its development is currently dominated by a Chinese company. The Critical Resources Summit (CRS3.0) in Bozeman, Montana, on April 8–9th will address this underexamined issue and other critical materials vulnerabilities. Will you attend CRS3.0 and engage on these issues?

Answer. I appreciate the importance of critical materials to our emerging technologies. While I cannot confirm my schedule at this point, I value these discussions and, if confirmed, will ensure OSTP representation engages with experts and stakeholders to address critical supply chain vulnerabilities.

Question 2. Will you review the importance of the National Quantum Initiative Advisory Committee to ensure effective representation of expertise on the quantum supply chain?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will review the Committee's composition to ensure it includes the necessary technical and industry expertise. This input is crucial to fortifying our quantum ecosystem and maintaining U.S. leadership in this field.

Question 3. Should Congress give the Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute (AISI) an export promotion mandate, and make it an independent arbiter charged with conducting evaluations of American and foreign AI models to detect security threats, political bias, and censorship?

Answer. I look forward to working with the Commerce Department and interagency partners to better assess the AISI and help chart the best path forward for the institute to ensure continued American leadership in artificial intelligence.

Question 4. What is your overall vision for AISI?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department of Commerce and interagency partners to better assess the AISI and help chart the best path forward for the institute to ensure continued American leadership in artificial intelligence.

Question 5. If Federal support for science is frequently upstream of private sector innovation, how can Congress support the administration's efforts to reduce bureaucracy and ensure Federal science dollars get more bang for their buck?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and agencies to further study existing administrative research burdens and address them directly. Federally funded scientists should be empowered to spend less time on administrative requirements and more time on scientific research.

Question 6. How can Congress support the development of critical infrastructure, such as high-performance computing and secure data centers, to maintain the U.S.'s leadership in AI and ensure resilience against cyber threats?

Answer. Advanced computing infrastructure is essential to accelerate AI research and maintain our competitive edge. If confirmed, I look forward to working with DOE, NSF, and other relevant agencies on their computing initiatives.

Question 7. What can Congress do to help unlock the large, scientific datasets at DOE, HHS, NSF and elsewhere to enable open, AI-driven research platforms?

Answer. Federal datasets are a valuable national resource. If confirmed, I would work with agencies to encourage secure data sharing and standardized formats that can help unlock research breakthroughs across multiple disciplines.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. MARIA CANTWELL TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Scale AI. After leaving the first Trump Administration, you joined the startup company Scale AI as its first-ever Managing Director. A core component of Scale AI's business is using independent contractors—often known as “taskers”—to review and label data sets that train AI models.

Scale AI has been accused of mistreating its workers and outsourcing much of its work to countries with weak labor practices. For example, an August 2023 Washington Post report documented how Scale AI set up shop in the Philippines, where labor protections are notoriously lax. Once there, the company allegedly delayed and canceled payments to workers, and often paid below the minimum wage.

More recently, Scale AI has faced multiple lawsuits in the United States, alleging, among other things, that the company misclassifies its workers to withhold pay and other benefits. Alarming, one recent lawsuit claims the company also required some workers to view disturbing images of traumatic events, such as assaults on children, murders, and fatal car accidents, without proper safeguards, which resulted in psychological distress.

My Office has also received complaints from multiple whistleblowers regarding Scale AI. These former Scale AI workers detail concerning labor practices, including wage theft and other broken promises on compensation. I take whistleblower complaints like these very seriously.

Question 1. Mr. Kratsios, as Managing Director of Scale AI, what steps did you take to ensure Scale AI's workers were fairly compensated?

Answer. While at Scale AI, I did not work on the part of the business the dealt with taskers, which Scale calls contributors.

Question 2. How did you ensure that Scale AI workers were not put into an unsafe position with respect to reviewing traumatic prompts and other materials?

Answer. While at Scale AI, I did not work on the part of the business the dealt with taskers, which Scale calls contributors.

Question 3. You have spoken about the importance of American leadership in AI. How is Scale AI's apparent business model of outsourcing work to foreign countries with weak labor protections consistent with this goal?

Answer. While at Scale AI, I did not work on the part of the business the deals with taskers, which Scale calls contributors. I do believe in strong American leadership in AI. If confirmed, I would work with stakeholders to encourage responsible supply-chain practices that uphold American values and maintain our competitive edge.

Question 4. If confirmed, will you advocate for and prioritize fair and ethical standards for the AI workforce?

Answer. While I was not involved in the Scale business related to contributors, I remain firmly committed to promoting policies that protect workers, advance innovation, and uphold American values.

President Trump Attacks on NSF Funding. Mr. Kratsios, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is responsible for coordinating with OMB to drive funding decisions for U.S. science and technology priorities. As you know, Federal R&D spending occurs across 15 agencies, including the Department of Defense (DOD), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF). If confirmed, you would play a critical role in driving these funding decisions.

A recent Science article reports that the Trump Administration is considering slashing NSF's annual budget by up to 66 percent. In addition, universities across the country, including in my state such as the University of Washington School of Public Health, are pausing offers to PhD students as well as offers of financial support to current graduate students. This would have devastating impacts on U.S. national and economic security interests. The United States cannot afford to retreat in the global race for critical next-generation technologies, like AI and quantum computing.

Question 5. Mr. Kratsios, do you think cutting NSF's budget by two-thirds would further American leadership in emerging technologies?

Answer. The Trump Administration has not yet made a Budget request to Congress. If I am confirmed, I intend to work with OMB to set the Administration's R&D budget priorities and to work in partnership with Congress to fund those priorities to ensure American leadership in emerging technologies.

Question 6. If confirmed, will you commit to protecting NSF's budget from the indiscriminate cuts we are seeing elsewhere across the Federal government?

Answer. During my tenure as Chief Technology Officer of the United States, the National Science Foundation received record funding. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing an R&D agenda, including NSF funding, that ensures that the United States leads the world in fundamental scientific and technological advances to improve the lives of all Americans.

Space Commercialization. Mr. Kratsios, you have stressed the importance of leveraging innovation through partnerships between government, academia, and the private sector. Given the rapid evolution in space technology and the growing role of commercial entities, understanding your vision on public-private collaboration in space is critical for maintaining U.S. leadership.

Question 7. How do you envision OSTP facilitating public-private partnerships specifically to drive innovation and economic growth in the commercial space sector?

Answer. I see public-private collaboration as a key component of the innovation ecosystem. If confirmed, I would encourage interagency coordination and stakeholder engagement to advance growth and competition in the commercial space sector.

Question 8. What policy or strategy reforms would you recommend to the President to ensure that the commercial space industrial base continues to include new entrants with innovative approaches to providing space services and capabilities to maintain U.S. international competitiveness and avoid over-reliance on a small number of providers?

Answer. I support maintaining an environment that fosters competition and innovation. If confirmed, I would advise the President on measures that lower barriers to entry, encourage investment, and diversify participation in the space market.

Space System Resiliency and Sustainability. During your time at DOD, you focused broadly on technological leadership to protect our Nation against malign actors and adversarial practices. The security of space assets such as satellites and associated communication and IT systems are an integral part of maintaining our economic and national security leadership in space. Understanding your recommended strategy on protecting these critical assets is essential.

Question 9. What measures do you propose to enhance the resilience of U.S. space infrastructure, particularly to ensure that we do not become overly reliant on any single space company or single point of failure?

Answer. I believe resilience depends on robust R&D, diversified suppliers, and close public-private collaboration. If confirmed, I would promote a strategic approach that balances innovation with national security and avoids single points of failure.

International Science & Technology Cooperation. Mr. Kratsios, we have all observed how the Administration's focus in the early weeks on tariffs and trade have produced mixed responses from many of our traditional allies. Many of our greatest scientific achievements have benefited from robust international partnerships.

Question 10. What recommendation do you intend to provide the President regarding the value of future large research and development projects with international partners and allies?

Answer. The United States has a strong history of leadership in global research and innovation. If confirmed, I will provide the President with assessments that prioritize national interests, scientific excellence, and strategic partnerships while ensuring that any international collaboration aligns with our economic and security priorities.

Artificial Intelligence. As Chief Technology Officer, you built the American AI Initiative that included five key lines of effort designed to advance AI research investment and build America's AI workforce. Congress codified the American AI Initiative in 2020.

Building upon this work, last Congress I introduced legislation to support the development of standards and testing for the most advanced AI models, as well as supporting education and training efforts on AI at NSF and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Question 11. Mr. Kratsios, do you support the development of standards and testing for the most advanced AI models?

Answer. Yes, in general I support a framework that provides standards and testing without imposing excessive regulatory burdens.

Question 12. If confirmed, will you work with me on workforce development, education, and training for AI to ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of AI innovation?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is the agency charged with partnering with industry and experts to develop standards that foster innovation.

- There are public reports that the Administration is planning to fire probationary employees at NIST, many of whom are new hires in AI. How will firing many of the AI experts the government has recently hired affect the government's ability to keep up with fast-moving developments in AI?
- If confirmed, will you commit to opposing the firing of these AI experts?

Answer. OSTP does not have hiring power over government agencies. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing an agenda that maintains American leadership in artificial intelligence, including expanding world-leading AI expertise here in the United States. I intend to leverage all resources—federal and nonfederal—to ensure America remains the unchallenged leader in technological development.

Question 2. We're facing a projected workforce shortfall in STEM fields—300,000 engineers and 90,000 skilled technicians in the U.S. by 2030. Minnesota faces a shortage of 18,000 workers in high-demand tech professions.

- How will you work to equip veterans and their spouses with the skills they need to pursue careers in high-demand fields?
- If confirmed, will you work to reduce barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and success of women in academic and government STEM research careers?

Answer. Ensuring that all individuals, including veterans, their spouses, and women, have the opportunity to excel in STEM fields is essential for innovation. If confirmed, I will support efforts to identify and address barriers to recruitment, retention, and success in STEM careers, ensuring that the best talent has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from these high-demand fields.

Question 3. I am working to make sure we have stronger rules of the road in place when it comes to AI use. My bill with Majority Leader Thune—the *AI Research, Innovation, and Accountability Act*—for example, would improve testing and evaluation for critical-impact AI systems used to make decisions about critical infrastructure.

- In the past you've supported developing thoughtful Federal standards that can help drive the widespread adoption of AI technologies across industries. If confirmed as OSTP Director, how do you plan to build on your previous work?

Answer. Establishing clear and robust AI standards is essential for widespread AI adoption across industries. Such standards, when not overly burdensome, provide a common framework that enables organizations to integrate AI solutions in a way that accelerates innovation and economic growth. I continue to believe in the importance of AI standards for innovation, and, if confirmed, will build on my past work to ensure continued progress.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. BRIAN SCHATZ TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

On February 18, 2025, President Trump announced an Executive Order (EO) entitled, "Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies." The EO institutes an unprecedented requirement for direct presidential oversight over actions, regulations, and strategic plans by independent agencies, including the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Question 1. With the jurisdiction of the FTC, FCC, and SEC extending into science and technology related matters, how will OSTP be involved in the presidential oversight established by the EO?

Answer. I have not spoken to White House Counsel about this Executive Order. However, under the previous Trump Administration, I worked in partnership with many agencies to advance the President's vision. I intend to again work with Federal and non-federal actors to ensure the United States maintains "unquestioned and unchallenged global technological dominance," as the President has said.

As Chief Technology Officer during President Trump's first administration, you played a key role in crafting the administration's original AI policies, such as the 2019 Executive Order entitled, "Maintaining American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence," where you highlighted how developing Federal standards can drive the widespread adoption of AI systems throughout industry.

Question 2. How do you plan to build on this work during your tenure?

Answer. Establishing clear and robust AI standards is essential for widespread AI adoption across industries. Federal standards provide a common framework that enables organizations to integrate AI solutions in a way that accelerates innovation and economic growth. I continue to believe in the importance of AI standards for innovation, and, if confirmed, will build on my past work to ensure continued progress.

Question 3. If confirmed, will you advocate for the hiring or rehiring of technologists and AI experts at the National Institute of Standards and Technology to help develop standards in alignment with these goals?

Answer. NIST plays a critical role in developing AI standards that support innovation and competitiveness. If confirmed, I will look forward to assessing NIST's current efforts to ensure NIST has the necessary expertise and resources to fulfill its mission effectively.

Question 4. Will you commit to ensuring that AI adoption prioritizes public safety and consumer protection?

Answer. Public safety and consumer protection are important considerations in AI adoption. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess how to best incorporate these priorities into policies that further innovation and economic growth.

According to reporting this week from the Pew Research Center, about half of U.S. workers are worried about the future impact of AI in the workplace.

Question 5. How will you approach the challenge of preparing the American workforce for AI impacts?

Answer. AI is transforming the workforce, and it's important to assess its impact on jobs and skills development. If confirmed, I will support efforts to explore strategies that help workers adapt to technological changes, including education, training, and workforce development initiatives.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education

Education in core skills needed to develop and deploy critical emerging technologies in the U.S. is lagging behind our international counterparts, and could jeopardize our future economic competitiveness and national security. Relative to other countries, U.S. students' performance is declining in real-world math skills and computational thinking. In the field of quantum computing specifically, the U.S. is already facing a severe talent shortage due to an insufficient pipeline of talent.

Question 6. How will you advocate for improved STEM education in the U.S. today to strengthen our emerging technologies workforce of tomorrow?

Answer. STEM education is essential for maintaining U.S. leadership in emerging technologies. If confirmed, I will support efforts to assess and identify ways to enhance STEM education and workforce development to ensure a strong pipeline of talent for the future.

Under President Trump's first administration, concerns were raised about staffing levels at OSTP. In July 2017, it was reported that OSTP had just 35 staff compared to 135 under the prior administration. By April 2019, that number rose to just 58 staff.

Question 7. Given the critical national security and economic concerns under OSTP's jurisdiction, will you commit to ensuring consistent staffing levels at OSTP, and that staff have sufficient technological and science expertise?

Answer. Maintaining expertise in science and technology is critical for OSTP's mission. If confirmed, I will assess the needs of the office to ensure it is positioned to provide the President with effective guidance on science and technology priorities.

Question 8. Under President Trump's first administration, more than half of total OSTP staff were detailees, fellows, and IPAs. In light of the elimination of certain fellowship programs like the Presidential Management Fellowship, will you commit to hiring more full-time experts at OSTP to fulfill talent needs?

Answer. Ensuring OSTP has the necessary expertise to fulfill its mission is very important. However, given the limited OSTP budget, the use of detailees, fellows, and IPAs is essential for obtaining the critical science and technology expertise needed for OSTP to fulfill its mission. If confirmed, I will assess staffing needs and explore the most effective options to maintain a strong and capable team that supports the President's priorities.

In your testimony, you stated that "China has emerged as both our preeminent geopolitical rival and our most formidable technological and scientific competitor," and described how OSTP will be critical in the effort to compete against global competitors.

Question 9. Given the sensitivity of OSTP's mission, what steps will you take to ensure the physical and cybersecurity of OSTP's data and work?

Answer. If confirmed, I would prioritize robust security measures and consult with the relevant EOP components to maintain OSTP's integrity.

Federal funding for scientific research has undergirded the economic and technological supremacy of the United States. It has been instrumental in developing transformative technologies used in our day-to-day lives, from the Internet and GPS revolutionizing communication and navigation, to barcodes streamlining commerce, to MRI machines advancing medical diagnostics.

Question 10. Given the important role of the government in supporting early, pre-commercialized science and technology research work, how will you encourage Federal research investments?

Answer. Federal R&D investments are vital to sustaining America's edge. If confirmed, I would work with OMB and relevant agencies to review current Federal R&D investments and ensure these investments are efficient and effective.

Question 11. How will you ensure that Federal science and technology research is independent from potential conflicts of interest for members of the administration?

Answer. If confirmed, I would uphold conflict-of-interest guidelines and promote transparency in Federal research programs.

During your confirmation hearing, you expressed that the President has the right to evaluate, make changes to, and align his team with his administration's goals. In light of significant layoffs at agencies that drive scientific research and technological innovation and adoption, I am concerned these actions run contrary to our goals of American leadership and competitiveness on scientific and technological advancement.

Question 12. Do you agree that promoting technical and scientific expertise in government advances our national interests and competitiveness?

Answer. Yes. The President has appointed accomplished experts and leaders across governmental agencies to advise on matters of technical and scientific expertise.

Question 13. Will you commit to protecting the critical work of technical and scientific experts who are advancing our national science and technology interests as Federal employees?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with relevant agencies to better understand the scientific and technical work being administered and to promote an environment that values expertise and public service.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. EDWARD MARKEY TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. In your confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Commerce Committee you mentioned your support for artificial intelligence standards. Can you describe your plan for the creation of artificial intelligence standards?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the AI standards processes currently underway at NIST. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. approach to standards will likely be part of that policy process.

Question 2. If confirmed, will you commit to working with the National Institute of Standards and Technology to convene a consortium of stakeholders to identify

measurement needs and standards for artificial intelligence's environmental impacts?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the AI standards processes currently underway and discuss this approach with NIST. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. approach to standards will likely be part of that policy process.

Question 3. If confirmed, will you commit to working with the National Institute of Standards and Technology to create a system for entities developing or operating artificial intelligence to voluntarily report the full range of artificial intelligence's environment impacts?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the AI standards processes currently underway with NIST. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. approach to standards will likely be part of that policy process.

Question 4. What is OSTP's role in supporting AI's positive uses by protecting people, especially underrepresented communities, from the potentially harmful impacts of such technology?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. If confirmed, I look forward to working the interagency process on developing this plan and promoting the positive uses of AI.

Question 5. In 2022, OSTP issued a Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights. If you are confirmed, how would OSTP use that blueprint in the development of AI policy and requirements for the Federal government?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about previous work done on AI by OSTP and working with the interagency process on developing this plan.

Question 6. What guardrails should there be for the Federal government's use of AI tools and other technologies, and what is OSTP's role in the development of such guardrails?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with relevant agencies to ensure AI solutions in government meet high standards of accountability.

Question 7. If confirmed, what is your plan to improve the working conditions, wages, and benefits of AI data workers?

Answer. While labor policies involve multiple agencies, if confirmed, I look forward to learning about current policies that support responsible practices within any Federal AI-related initiatives.

Question 8. If confirmed, what is your plan to ensure new and emerging technologies do not continue to be implemented in ways that harm workers?

Answer. The President has outlined a vision of empowering American innovators and workers. If confirmed, I would look forward to learning further how current policies implemented by the Federal government impact workers and how these practices can better protect workers.

Question 9. OSTP has been deeply engaged in AI issues, and the office recently issued a Request for Information on AI. If confirmed, will you commit to formally incorporating these submissions from the public record received to the May 2023 RFI on Automated Worker Surveillance and Management in any related decision-making during your tenure?

Answer. If confirmed, I would ensure relevant public feedback is considered as part of the broader interagency decision-making on AI policy.

Question 10. There are reports that artificial intelligence and other technologies are being developed in order to determine where program funding should be cut and contracts should be cancelled. If confirmed, will you commit to providing transparency and publicly disclosing information around the use and development of these technologies?

Answer. I am not familiar with these reported AI use-cases, but if confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the use of AI in government from relevant agencies.

Question 11. There are reports that artificial intelligence and other technologies are being developed in order to determine which Federal workers should be laid off, terminated, furloughed, transferred, or otherwise adversely impacted. If confirmed, will you commit to providing transparency and publicly disclosing information around the use and development of these technologies?

Answer. I am not familiar with these reported AI use-cases, but if confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the use of AI in government from relevant agencies.

Question 12. Do you believe that bias and discriminatory artificial intelligence is a problem?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. policy approach to addressing these issues will likely be part of that policy process, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with interagency partners on it.

Question 13. If confirmed, what is your plan to address biased and discriminatory artificial intelligence, especially in critical areas such as health care, education, employment, and criminal justice?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. policy approach to addressing these issues will likely be part of that policy process, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with interagency partners on it.

Question 14. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to test, address, or measure its algorithms before deployment in order to determine whether it discriminates or is biased against protected characteristics?

Answer. Testing and evaluation are key components of any AI strategy. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. policy approach to addressing these issues will likely be part of that policy process, and I look forward to working with interagency partners on it.

Question 15. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to monitor its algorithms after deployment in order to determine whether it discriminates or is biased against protected characteristics?

Answer. Testing and evaluation are key components of any AI strategy. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. policy approach to addressing these issues will likely be part of that policy process, and I look forward to working with interagency partners on it.

Question 16. Do you support the Office of Technology Policy's Blueprint for an AI Bills of Rights?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about previous work done on AI by OSTP and working with interagency partners on developing this plan.

Question 17. Employers are increasingly relying on artificial intelligence in the selection and management of employees. However, time and time again it has been shown that AI can unlawfully discriminate. Do you support ensuring that artificial intelligence products utilized by employers are not discriminatory or biased? What steps would you take, if confirmed, to protect workers from the discriminatory impacts of AI related to the hiring and management of workers?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. The U.S. policy approach to addressing these issues will likely be part of that policy process, and I look forward to working with interagency partners on it.

Question 18. NIST's Face Recognition Vendor Test has been an important tool in informing our understanding of the impact, bias, and performance of facial recognition technology. Do you commit to maintaining the program, including its independence in its scientific and voluntary assessments?

Answer. The President directed the OSTP Director and the National Security Advisor to develop an AI Action Plan. I look forward to working with interagency partners on it, including learning more about NIST's current programs.

Question 19. When you worked at the Office of Science and Technology Policy during the first Trump administration, did you witness significant waste and excess of the workforce during your tenure?

Answer. I focused on building an effective policy infrastructure at OSTP, while ensuring the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. If confirmed, I would again work with interagency partners to address critical science and technology challenges to ensure American leadership.

Question 20. Do you think the Federal funding freeze will impact American research innovation?

Answer. It is important that the Federal government reviews grant programs so that funding may be deployed efficiently and without red tape. Our researchers and scientists cannot be consumed by bureaucratic compliance, but instead must focus on innovating. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing an agenda that ensures America remains a leader in technological innovation.

Question 21. Do you think the Federal workforce cuts will impact American research innovation?

Answer. OSTP does not have hiring power over government agencies. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing an agenda that maintains American leadership in emerging technologies, such as quantum, nuclear energy, and artificial intelligence. I intend to leverage all resources—federal and nonfederal—to ensure America remains the unchallenged leader in technological development.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. GARY PETERS TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. At your nomination hearing, you mentioned prioritizing “high impact” versus “high risk” use cases for AI inventories. What markers are you using to determine what “high impact” is and isn’t?

Answer. To assess if a use-case is high impact, a government agency could evaluate the scale of the problem it addresses, such as the number of people or resources affected. They could also estimate the magnitude of benefit and ensure it’s feasible with available resources. Use cases should also align with the agency’s mission and national priorities. Combining these factors can help identify efforts with the greatest potential impact.

Question 2. During President Trump’s first term, OSTP had open lines of communication with Congress. Do you commit to engaging with Congress, including the minority, this term?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. When you served as the U.S. Chief Technology Officer during the first Trump Administration, you helped launch the National Quantum Coordination Office. In your testimony at this hearing, you supported the reauthorization of the National Quantum Initiative Act. If confirmed, will you ensure that quantum initiatives supported and coordinated by OSTP are inclusive of the variety of quantum computing (annealing and gate model systems), quantum sensing, quantum communications, and networking technologies available today?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the quantum initiatives supported and coordinated by OSTP are aligned with the National Strategic Overview for Quantum Information Science and subsequent strategy documents on quantum sensing, communications, and networking authored by technical quantum experts across the Federal interagency.

Question 2. Sen. Blackburn and I previously introduced bipartisan legislation to establish a “sandbox-style” initiative for emerging technologies (quantum, AI, machine learning, autonomy, and more) aimed at developing applications quickly that help advance our domestic industrial base and provide small businesses access to emerging technologies. If confirmed, will you support this type of public-private partnership and other efforts to develop and accelerate near-term quantum applications?

Answer. I believe “sandbox-style” initiatives for emerging technologies that remove barriers to the development, testing, and evaluation of emerging technologies can help advance nascent industries and support the domestic industrial base for those technologies. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting innovative public-private partnerships that leverage the best of government, industry, and academia to develop and accelerate quantum technologies for the benefit of the American people.

Question 3. I represent two prestigious DOE national labs dedicated to advancing scientific discovery and protecting our national security. Do you commit to advocating for the National Labs and the resources necessary for them to continue their essential R&D and national security missions?

Answer. I believe the DOE National Laboratories are the crown jewels of the Federal research and development enterprise. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the National Labs to continue their R&D mission in support of our national security and scientific advancement.

Question 4. Should industry and government partners be investing in developing innovative technology to solve spectrum challenges of today and prepare for new challenges down the line?

Answer. Both industry and government have an important role to play in developing innovative technology to solve the spectrum challenges of today and the future.

Question 5. Do you believe improving interagency coordination is important to improving the Federal government's spectrum policy and strategy?

Answer. I believe interagency coordination is always important when multiple agencies have roles and responsibilities in the formulation of policy and strategy surrounding a particular technological issue. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting interagency coordination efforts on spectrum policy.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JOHN HICKENLOOPER TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Federal researchers deliver the scientific breakthroughs and key medical treatments our country relies on. Colorado is a state with a deep and historic scientific enterprise, with labs for the Department of Energy, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Reports of thousands of Federal researchers being laid off based on factors unrelated to their performance is deeply troubling. Our scientific enterprise strengthens our national security and propels our economy forward.

Question 1. Mr. Kratsios, when you look at these layoffs to researchers and scientists, what message do you believe this sends to the international community and young aspiring scientists? What is your strategic plan to strengthen STEM education programs across the Federal scientific enterprise to attract more K–12 students to pursue STEM pathways?

Answer. STEM Education is critically important to our Nation's continued leadership in science and technology. If confirmed, I will support efforts to promote and advance STEM education through multi-sector partnerships, ecosystem development, and the removal of barriers to participation in STEM pathways.

Question 2. While AI is already showing its potential for increasing productivity, there is also ongoing concern that AI will cause disruptions to our existing workforce. How will you approach the challenge of preparing the U.S. workforce for the AI-enabled economy, including through education, apprenticeships, and retraining programs?

Answer. AI is transforming the workforce, and it's important to assess its impact on jobs and skills development. If confirmed, I will support efforts to explore strategies that help workers adapt to technological changes, including through education, training, and workforce development initiatives.

In your prior role in the Trump Administration, you led the White House's implementation of the National Quantum Initiative. Colorado is home to world-leading quantum research at academic institutions and in the private sector. Quantum technology has the potential to revolutionize medical drug discovery, supercharge artificial intelligence, strengthen cybersecurity, and support our transition to clean energy. The Elevate Quantum Tech Hub, based in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming, has built a diverse array of leaders in academia, workforce development, and private industry to expand workforce training and commercial-scale manufacturing for quantum technologies in the Mountain West. Additionally, Colorado is home to cutting edge quantum information science research being conducted at JILA, which is a longstanding collaboration between CU Boulder and NIST.

Question 3. How will you continue to support the development of the next generation of quantum scientists our Nation needs to maintain global competitiveness?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting Federal research and development initiatives that train the next generation of quantum scientists and provide them access to Federal research resources, such as our Federally funded quantum testbeds, that will prepare them to contribute to American leadership in quantum information science.

Question 4. How will you lead OSTP to coordinate Federal R&D activities to complement the work of hubs of innovation across the country?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to building a team of technical experts at OSTP and working with our interagency partners through the National Science and Technology Council to coordinate Federal research and development initiatives.

Question 5. How can OSTP help turn scientific breakthroughs into game-changing commercial technologies and companies?

Answer. I believe OSTP has an important role in developing and implementing strategies that support research and development, remove unnecessary barriers to innovation, promote workforce development, and lead international development of standards and regulations. These actions can support turning scientific breakthroughs into commercial technologies and ensuring American science and technology leadership on a global stage.

Question 6. Small businesses are leading much of the innovation in the quantum realm. Under the first Trump Administration, the National Quantum Presidential Advisory Council included small business innovators, academics, and key government offices. In what ways can OSTP and Federal innovation policies support small businesses in the quantum sector to help maintain and advance American leadership in quantum technology?

Answer. Federal policies can support small businesses in quantum and other emerging technology areas by increasing their access to Federal research and development funding and resources, removing unnecessary administrative burdens, and training the next generation of quantum scientists and innovators.

Question 7. You played a key role in crafting the Trump Administration's original AI policies. These included the February 2019 Executive Order on Maintaining American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence, which highlighted the ways that developing thoughtful Federal standards can help drive the widespread adoption of AI technologies throughout industry. The National Institute of Standards and Technology has already published the AI Risk Management Framework that has been embraced by industry, and NIST continues their work in this realm.

If confirmed as OSTP Director, how do you plan to build on this work to advance standards for responsible AI research, development, and deployment?

Answer. AI research and development will not lead to the adoption of AI systems if those systems do not have the trust of the American people. If confirmed, I will seek to develop additional technical standards for the development and deployment of AI systems and to issue non-regulatory guidance to improve public trust in AI systems.

Question 8. How will you ensure that AI development in the U.S. is both innovative and secure, given the administration's emphasis on removing regulatory barriers?

Answer. I do not believe there is an inherent tradeoff between advancing AI innovation and developing secure AI systems. If confirmed, I will ensure that Administration efforts to remove unnecessary barriers to innovation do so while maintaining the security standards needed for AI systems.

Question 9. The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission submitted its annual report to Congress in November 2024. As part of the Commission's review, it found substantial evidence that the United States and China are fiercely competing in the subdomains of quantum sensing, quantum communications, and quantum computing. As you know, the Congress has to reauthorize the National Quantum Initiative Act to guide Federal R&D efforts, promote translation of quantum technologies to commercial applications, and invest in workforce training.

If confirmed to lead OSTP, what is your specific plan to promote U.S. advancements in the specific fields of quantum sensing, quantum communications, and quantum computing?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the quantum initiatives supported and coordinated by OSTP are aligned with the National Strategic Overview for Quantum Information Science and subsequent strategy documents on quantum sensing, communications, and networking authored by an interagency group of technical experts.

Question 10. What recommendations would you provide Congress on how to strengthen and increase the resiliency of the quantum supply chain, including hardware?

Answer. It is critically important that the United States maintains a secure, resilient quantum supply chain, including hardware in order to ensure continued American leadership in quantum information science. Doing so will require collaboration across stakeholders in industry, academia and Government to identify and fill gaps in technology, standards, and workforce.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER TO
MICHAEL KRATSIOS

Question 1. Do you believe AI systems are biased? As Director of OSTP, would you focus resources and attention on the issue of bias in AI?

Answer. AI systems can produce inconsistent results either due to structural deficiencies in system design or the use of unrepresentative datasets during training. Engineers of AI systems should ensure that the systems they develop are designed appropriately for their specific use case.

Question 2. Do you believe AI literacy is important for Americans? How will you work to promote AI literacy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work towards equipping workers with the skills needed for AI-enabled job opportunities.

Question 3. What role do you think OSTP should play in strategic planning and coordination to prepare the workforce for an economy that is increasingly impacted by AI?

Answer. OSTP has an important role to play in coordination across the Federal government, academia, and private sector to ensure that our workforce is prepared for the jobs of the future, including AI and AI-enabled occupations.

Question 4. Do you think OSTP has a role in promoting and advancing STEM education as a strategy to ensure that our country has sufficient technical talent to lead and compete with adversaries like China?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will support efforts to promote and advance STEM education to ensure that the United States has the sufficient technical talent to lead and compete with our adversaries and strategic competitors.

Question 5. Delaware has a robust life science, biotechnology, and precision medicine ecosystem. What is your vision for promoting U.S. leadership in these areas and other strategic and emerging science and technologies?

Answer. In general, for biotechnology as well as other emerging technology areas, I believe it is important to develop and implement strategies that support research and development, remove unnecessary barriers to innovation, promote workforce development in these sectors, and lead international development of standards and regulations.

Question 6. Do you think biotechnology and life science should be represented on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology?

Answer. Yes.

Question 7. What role do you see for OSTP in supporting entrepreneurship?

Answer. OSTP has an important role to play in fostering an innovation ecosystem by supporting policies that empower startups and "little tech," including ensuring their access to Federal resources and reducing barriers to technology development.

Question 8. A top priority of mine is securing our supply chains. I have been working on a bipartisan basis with Ranking Member Cantwell and Senator Blackburn on legislation to promote supply chain resilience. In your past roles, you have been mainly focused on technologies like AI and quantum.

Do you see a role for OSTP in helping secure our supply chains?

Answer. Ensuring resilience in and securing our supply chains for emerging technologies is critically important. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting interagency efforts to secure our supply chains.

Question 9. Over the last several years, OSTP has worked to advance climate and environmental justice priorities. Delaware is the lowest lying state in the Union, making us particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and climate change.

If confirmed as the President's top scientific advisor, would you advise dedicating technical resources to help improve climate resilience?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support interagency efforts to coordinate with states so that they are adequately prepared to address natural disasters and severe weather.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JOHN THUNE TO
MARK MEADOR

Question 1. Advanced artificial intelligence (A.I.) is a revolutionary technology that has the potential to improve health care, agriculture, logistics, supply chains, and countless other industries. How would you approach A.I. regulation to protect consumers, harness major advancement, and limit government intervention?

I endorse the principles articulated by Vice President Vance in his February 11, 2025 remarks before the Paris AI Action Summit. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to protect competition within the AI space and ensure that consumers are not harmed by unfair or deceptive conduct that uses AI tools.

Question 2. Will you commit to working with this committee on a light-touch, pro-innovation legislative framework for A.I.?

Answer. Yes.

Question 3. The Federal Trade Commission's section 6(b) investigative authority provides much needed transparency about data practices of large tech companies to consumers. What are your views on the FTC using this authority to provide transparency about some of the practices of the largest technology companies?

Answer. The FTC's 6(b) authority is an incredibly valuable tool that allows the agency to better understand how markets operate, ensuring that its enforcement efforts are efficient and well-informed, and to provide expert guidance to Congress. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to consider future uses of the agency's 6(b) authority that may inform its enforcement and assist legislators.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JERRY MORAN TO
MARK MEADOR

1. Refocusing the Commission

Mr. Meador, I have been concerned about the direction of the FTC over the past four years. During this time, the FTC has:

- pursued significant regulatory changes that encroach on Congress's legislative duties;
- departed from long-standing precedents guiding mergers and acquisitions policies that help create a pro-competition business environment in the US; and
- harmed the bipartisan work of the Commission by politicizing agency processes.

These changes have impacted the FTC ability to perform their essential consumer protection functions and significantly harmed morale at the Commission.

- Mr. Meador, if confirmed, how do you plan to address the concerns I have laid out?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency's enforcement efforts adhere to our statutory authorities, reflect sound law and policy, and advance the interests of the American people.

2. Enforcement Approach

The FTC has a dual mandate of promoting competition and protecting consumers. The previous administration's record of aggressive antitrust enforcement over-deterred mergers and acquisitions, resulting in a sudden and sharp decline in startup acquisitions by large companies, and an enormous drop in overall acquisitions of smaller startups, which detracts consumers by limiting access to products and services.

For example, research shows that from mid-to-late 2021 through 2024, antitrust authorities were pursuing a "process is the punishment" approach to antitrust enforcement. In Fiscal Year 2022 alone, the FTC and DOJ Antitrust collectively filed at least 50 merger enforcement actions, the highest rate in two decades. As a result, acquiring startups virtually ceased. In the technology industry, from 2011 and into early 2021, companies acquired more than a dozen startups every year. Yet, in 2022 and 2023, they collectively acquired just three startups per year. And in the first half of 2024, they collectively acquired zero startups.

In fact, the exit valuations of all startups declined and the shutdown rate for startups increased massively. In the late 2010s, the median company exit multiple for tech startups was between 0.7 to 0.8—the median startup exit was an acquisition at a slight loss for venture capital investors. In 2023 and the first half of 2024, it was zero—meaning the median startup exit was no longer an acquisition, but a shutdown and total loss.

- Mr. Meador, can you share your philosophy on enforcement—how would you decide when to pursue litigation versus negotiation with companies?

Answer. The FTC should be prepared to litigate any matter where it believes there has been a violation of the law that has harmed consumers. In some cases, the most efficient and effective way to protect consumers will be to enter into a negotiated settlement with a defendant, known as a consent decree. The FTC should always remain open to consent decrees where they can effectively protect consumers from the harm at issue, but at the same time should be willing to litigate to a verdict where necessary.

- Do you agree that overly rigorous antitrust enforcement stunts the growth and success of innovative small businesses?

Answer. Rigorous antitrust enforcement is essential to maintaining the competitive markets that promote innovation, entry by new competitors, and benefit consumers. Markets and consumers are harmed, however, by under-or overenforcement that strays from the law.

- Given the recognized importance of frontier technologies and long-term U.S. economic growth, innovation, and technological leadership, what steps will you take to provide clarity and predictability to antitrust enforcement to ensure that they continue to draw investment and innovation?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that we are providing all appropriate guidance to the business community regarding the agency's enforcement policies.

- Will you commit to antitrust enforcement that will focus on the interest of consumers and will not have a negative impact on consumer prices and small businesses?

Answer. Ensuring that antitrust enforcement benefits consumers and competition should always be at the forefront of every enforcement decision.

- What steps will you take to remove regulatory taxes that your agency placed on businesses during the last administration?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is not imposing any unnecessary burdens on parties appearing before the Commission. The FTC should protect competition and consumers by enforcing the laws written by Congress, not by abusing administrative processes.

- Will you reimplement guidance to help businesses ensure that they are complying with the antitrust laws and avoid the risk of an investigation?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to fully and fairly enforce each of the laws that Congress has given the agency to execute.

Those enforcement efforts should follow the text of the relevant statutes, and priority should be given to matters that present the greatest risk to American consumers.

3. Challenges to U.S. Trade Leadership

Over-enforcement and *ex-ante* digital regulatory experiments in Europe, like the Digital Markets Act, have already resulted in initial harms to consumers and businesses. We have also seen that innovative companies have delayed or halted launches of new products entirely in the EU. For example, Apple and Meta have delayed the launch of certain AI services in Europe as a result of the increased regulatory burdens imposed by the DMA.

President Trump recently criticized Europe for its regulatory approach, exemplified by the DMA, that is unfairly targeting U.S. tech firms. This type of regulatory overreach risks undermining the transatlantic cooperation that has helped to ensure the United States and our allies lead in the global technology race. China is also targeting U.S. tech companies, using antitrust as a tool to undermine America's technology leadership.

- Mr. Meador, how would you work to counterbalance these challenges to American leadership?

Answer. American law enforcers and regulators should always put America first. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to advance the interests of the American people.

- What role can your agency play in preventing these regulatory regimes from spreading to additional countries?

Answer. The FTC should focus on enforcing *American* laws, to protect *American* consumers. Precious taxpayer resources should never be spent on helping other nations regulate American companies. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the FTC is focused on putting America first.

- Will you distinguish yourself from the prior administration on the way the agency worked with USTR on promoting innovation and competition abroad by standing up for American companies in multilateral fora?

Answer. It is paramount that all Executive Branch agencies put America first. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure the agency follows this approach.

4. Competition in General

American leadership across all industries, particularly in digital markets, is being challenged by regulatory regimes worldwide that are intent on picking winners and losers. These experimental regulatory regimes, like the European Union's Digital Markets Act, penalize businesses and consumers alike through higher costs and may result in reduced innovation.

U.S. antitrust enforcers should carefully consider how overly burdensome rules and regulations can stifle innovation and entrepreneurialism. Robust competition that prioritizes benefits to consumers, rather than competitors, is fundamental to ensure America's continued global leadership in dynamic and innovative markets.

The U.S. is the leading global exporter of innovative new technology, and home to many start-ups and small businesses, particularly in the tech sector. These startups, which have been paramount in advancing the technological leadership of the U.S., rely heavily on mergers to support their products getting into consumers' hands and to continue to attract essential early-stage investment. Likewise, the focus on consumer welfare has been the foundation of our antitrust analysis for decades, and with it, the U.S. has led the world with a highly competitive and innovative technology industry.

- Mr. Meador, what steps will you take to ensure that enforcement of the anti-trust laws does not stifle innovation and reduce consumer benefits?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that all agency enforcement actions are undertaken to promote the welfare of consumers.

- Will you commit to reviving the consumer welfare standard as the agency's guiding principle?

Answer. The welfare of consumers must always be the north star of antitrust enforcement. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that all agency enforcement actions are undertaken to promote the welfare of consumers.

- Will you commit to ensuring that your agency will use its taxpayer-funded resources to pursue cases only when they risk harm to consumers?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that all agency enforcement actions are undertaken to promote the welfare of consumers.

- What policies and guidelines should be prioritized to ensure that antitrust enforcement in the U.S. does not impede innovation and consumer benefits?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to evaluate all ongoing enforcement efforts to determine what steps we can take to best protect innovation and consumers.

- In recent years we have also seen increased international regulatory and enforcement scrutiny against merger activity by predominantly U.S. firms, particularly in digital markets. As international competition enforcers increase their focus on American tech firms, what steps can be taken to preserve America's global competitive advantage in these areas?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that all agency enforcement actions are consistent with our statutory authority and in the interests of consumers.

5. Regulations

Many have raised concerns about the changes to the new HSR premerger notification rules and their disparate negative impact on small businesses and start-ups. These rules will considerably increase costs and time to prepare for a merger notification. While larger companies can afford to comply with the extra document procurement and work hours, small businesses and start-ups will likely struggle to meet the increased demands. The new rules have also been challenged in court for violating the Administrative Procedures Act as being unnecessary and overly burdensome.

With the final rule for the HSR premerger notification form now in effect, it will also expand the scope of documents required to be submitted, and increase the time for merging parties to prepare for a filing by up to 121 additional hours per filing according to the FTC—a number that many companies that actually prepare these filings suggest is too low—increasing the time and resources needed for the Agencies to review these proposed deals.

The new HSR rules result in a substantial amount of additional information being produced to the agencies and will require additional time by staff to review these filings. The FTC opened an investigation into 2 percent of mergers for which it received an HSR in 2024 and issued Second Requests to fewer than that.

- Mr. Meador, given that over 95 percent of notified merger transactions do not present a competitive risk, is this the best use of the Agency's resources?
- Will you commit to repealing the new HSR rules, and to work with the FTC to restart the rulemaking process in order to adopt a new rule that does not negatively impact merger activity?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency's merger review process is both efficient and effective.

6. Data Privacy

In previous Congresses, I have sponsored legislation establishing a strong Federal data privacy standard for Americans that also provides certainty to businesses that collect and process consumer data.

I believe it is important for Americans to control how their data is collected and used by companies, and I think there is a growing national security argument for a strong Federal standard for data privacy and security. The situation with TikTok and recent large-scale cyberattacks have shown how dire the situation for consumer data is in this country.

- Mr. Meador, do you agree that a Federal data privacy and security law is needed to protect Americans' data?
- If directed by the law, do you believe the FTC would be able to enforce such a standard, assuming appropriate guidelines are in place to prevent overreach by the Commission?

Answer. Protecting Americans' data is incredibly important. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your office—as well as Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff—to ensure the FTC has all of the tools it needs to protect American consumers and enforce the laws written by Congress.

7. Artificial Intelligence/DeepSeek

DeepSeek's emergence in the AI race has sparked concerns over the United States' ability to maintain its lead in this critical technology. In remarks on January 30, 2025, FTC Commissioner Melissa Holyoak argued that “we must avoid slowing innovation in artificial intelligence through misguided enforcement actions.” She went on to observe that “[w]e have a vested interest in keeping America first when it comes to AI technology.”

- Mr. Meador, do you agree with Commissioner Holyoak on the importance of encouraging innovation and keeping America first when it comes to AI?

Answer. Innovation is incredibly important, and America must be the leader in AI.

8. Elder Fraud/Stop Senior Scams Act

In 2023, individuals aged 60 and older reported losses exceeding \$3.4 billion due to scams, marking an 11 percent increase from the previous year.

In 2022, Congress passed the Stop Senior Scams Act, a bill that I introduced with Senator Casey. This law tasks the FTC with setting up an advisory group focused on senior scams and aims to enhance coordination between the Federal government, businesses, and consumer advocacy groups to protect seniors from scams.

- Mr. Meador, considering that older Americans face disproportionate financial losses from scams—with estimates of billions lost and significant under-reporting—what concrete initiatives or policy changes do you plan to champion at the FTC to strengthen enforcement and improve outreach to protect our vulnerable seniors from these sophisticated fraud schemes?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consult with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to get up to speed on the agency's current enforcement efforts in this area and ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

9. Future Consumer Protection Issues

- Mr. Meador, what consumer protection challenges do you believe the FTC should address in the coming years? How does the rise of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, influence the focus of the FTC?

Answer. As I observed in my opening remarks, “One of the FTC's most important missions in the years to come will be using its consumer protection authority to safeguard families from those seeking to take advantage of the most vulnerable.” Protecting our children is of the utmost importance, especially as attempts to take advantage of them are turbocharged by AI.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. DAN SULLIVAN TO
MARK MEADOR

Question 1. The antitrust statutes are famously brief. They don't say "big is bad," nor that all mergers are bad. However, the focus on consumer welfare has been the foundation of our antitrust analysis for decades. From mid-to-late 2021 through 2024, antitrust authorities were pursuing a "process is the punishment" approach to antitrust enforcement. In Fiscal Year 2022 alone, the FTC and DOJ Antitrust collectively filed at least 50 merger enforcement actions, the highest rate in two decades.

These actions ran the gambit from providing a chilling effect on innovation, resulting in a sudden and sharp decline in tech startup acquisitions by large companies, to also focusing on the necessary actions to monitor consumer welfare, such as the Albertsons-Kroger merger which would have had unique impacts on Alaska.

Alaskans were concerned about how this now cancelled merger would affect consumer prices, the state's food security, and Alaskan employees and their union contracts. The FTC found that the merger would likely reduce competition and raise prices—putting further strain on working families in our state

- The FTC must strike a balance as it uses its taxpayer-funded resources to pursue cases only when they risk harm to consumers, and not stifle innovation and consumer benefits. What steps will you take to ensure that enforcement of the antitrust laws does not stifle innovation and reduce consumer benefits?
- What do you think is the appropriate goal of antitrust enforcement?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to fully and fairly enforce each of the laws that Congress has given the agency to execute. Those enforcement efforts should follow the text of the relevant statutes, and priority should be given to matters that present the greatest risk to American consumers.

Question 2. The public and U.S. markets have historically benefited from FTC's role to protect the public from deceptive or unfair business practices and from unfair methods of competition.

Under the last Administration, Chair Lina Khan chose to use the FTC to score political wins, through costly, unwinnable litigation based on dubious legal theories, and through expansive, burdensome, and overly prescriptive rulemaking.

- If confirmed as Commissioner, how will you prioritize what rulemakings need to be rescinded, and which litigation should be dismissed?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that any FTC rulemakings or enforcement actions are based on clear statutory authority and in the interests of American consumers.

Question 3. The geopolitical threat China poses is acute when it comes to high technology. Whether it's national security or economic security, America must remain ahead of China in developing and deploying cutting-edge technologies.

- How should the threat posed by China be incorporated in antitrust analysis, so that we ensure American consumers benefit from competition, while our leading U.S. tech companies are globally competitive against foreign rivals?
- Given the recognized importance of frontier technologies and long-term U.S. economic growth, innovation, and technological leadership, what steps will you take to provide clarity and predictability to antitrust enforcement to ensure that they continue to draw investment and innovation?

Answer. American antitrust enforcers must ensure that foreign firms are not violating our antitrust laws to gain an unfair advantage over American companies. They must also ensure that American markets remain competitive so that our free-market economy continues to lead in technological innovation and development.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JOHN CURTIS TO
MARK MEADOR

Question 1. Last fall, a week after election day, the Biden Administration's Federal Trade Commission (FTC), issued final amendments to the Negative Option rule. Utahns are concerned that the Negative Option rule will not only harm our country's growing subscriptions economy, but that it will curb innovation and impose unnecessarily stringent requirements on legitimate American businesses, all to the detriment of consumers.

Many companies impacted by the Negative Option Rule have best practices around their subscription-based services so that their customers have an experience that is transparent and flexible to meet their needs and budgets. In her dissent to this rule, FTC Commissioner Holyoak noted, “the Rule’s breadth incentivizes companies to avoid negative option features that honest businesses and consumers find valuable” and that “even honest businesses will have reason to reconsider the use of negative option billing now that it means subjecting themselves to potential civil penalties for misreading Commission tea leaves.” She also notes that parts of the rule “ultimately, may harm consumers.”

- Mr. Meador, do you agree with Commissioner Holyoak’s statements? Why?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that any agency rulemakings are based on clear statutory authority and in the interests of American consumers.

Question 2. Another item of concern for me on the Negative Option Rulemaking was its failure to follow proper procedure in finalizing the rule. Again, looking to Commissioner Holyoak’s dissent, she notes that, for multiple reasons she is “convinced that this rulemaking has failed to satisfy [the FTC Act] Section 18’s requirements for rulemaking.” It is crucial to me and the people of my state that our Federal Government is not side stepping the official rule making process in releasing regulation, such as this one.

- As an FTC Commissioner, will you work to ensure that the FTC will not take short cuts in its rule making process in the future?

Answer. Yes.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. MARIA CANTWELL TO
MARK MEADOR

FTC Independence. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) was designed to be an independent, bipartisan Commission. As a result, FTC Commissioners often disagree on issues before them and frequently issue dissents on matters when they are in the minority. And thanks to the for-cause removal protections Congress provided in the FTC Act, these expert Commissioners have traditionally been free to vote their conscience on matters before the Commission using their independent judgment and expertise about whether the FTC laws have been violated and should be enforced.

Question 1. Mr. Meador, do you believe that having a bipartisan group of Commissioners strengthens the FTC?

Answer. The FTC has a strong tradition of consensus-building. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing that practice.

Question 2. Do you believe it is important for Commissioners to be able to issue dissents—without fear of being removed by the President?

Answer. I believe it is important that the Executive Branch be accountable to the American people through the President that they elect.

Question 3. Do you think a Commissioner should ever be fired for issuing a dissent?

Answer. I will defer to the President on personnel matters within the Executive Branch.

Following the law. In an interview with my staff, you affirmed that you knew that the oath you would take as an FTC Commissioner is to uphold the Constitution, and that it is not an oath of loyalty to the President. However, when Senator Duckworth asked at your nomination hearing if you would commit not to carrying out an illegal order by the president, you declined three times to make that commitment. That is deeply concerning.

Question 4. If the president ordered you to do something illegal, would you refuse?

Answer. I do not believe that such a situation would actually occur, but I would uphold my oath to defend the Constitution.

Question 5. Do you believe the Executive Branch must comply with the law?

Answer. The FTC must enforce all duly enacted laws that Congress gives it to enforce, and must follow all laws to which it is subject.

Question 6. Do you believe the Executive Branch must comply with lawful court orders?

Answer. Subject to the right to appeal, parties that appear before a court of lawful jurisdiction are bound by the decisions of that court.

Information Privacy and Confidentiality. The FTC regularly handles sensitive information about consumers and confidential business information, including information that could be highly valuable to competitors and investors, such as merger filings before the mergers are made public.

Question 7. Can you commit to keeping information at the FTC confidential under the privacy laws governing this information?

Answer. I will follow all applicable laws, including the confidentiality restrictions applicable to the FTC.

Question 8. Can you confirm that includes keeping information confidential where required under the relevant privacy laws from the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, Elon Musk, and his affiliates, which is especially important given the sensitive information the FTC may hold about Musk's competitors?

Answer. I will follow all applicable laws, including the confidentiality restrictions applicable to the FTC.

Privacy and online safety. Americans are becoming more and more reliant on technology, and privacy and data security couldn't be more important.

Question 9. Do you believe the FTC has sufficient authority and resources to protect American's privacy and online safety?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with you and your office and with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect Americans' privacy and online safety.

Question 10. Would you support a comprehensive Federal privacy law that gives individuals a privacy right that they can enforce in court?

Answer. I defer to Congress on the best way to update the law to protect Americans' privacy. If confirmed, I will work closely with you and your office and with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect Americans' privacy and online safety.

Question 11. If no, why not?

Answer. See above.

Protecting Renters and Homeowners. The FTC's mission is to protect consumers and promote competition. In the housing market, a lack of competition and transparency can hurt both renters and buyers. The FTC recently took action against a large landlord of single-family homes for deceptive and unfair practices including charging hidden fees to tenants and withholding security deposits.

Question 13. What additional actions do you believe the FTC should be taking to protect competition and prevent unfair and deceptive practices in markets for rental housing and home ownership, including extending its Junk Fees Rule to long-term rental housing, examining private listing networks, policing algorithmic price fixing, and any additional actions you believe the FTC should prioritize?

Answer. Protecting competition in the housing market to help keep housing affordable is of critical importance. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may appear before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that we do everything we can to protect competition in this space.

13(b). For 40 years prior to the AMG decision in 2021, if a business unlawfully took money from consumers, the FTC could go to court with its 13(b) authority and force the business to give it back to consumers. From 2016 to 2020, the FTC returned over \$33 million to consumers in Washington state, benefiting over 220,000 people. And that's just one state.

At your nomination hearing, you stated that you "think it's incredibly important that the Federal Trade Commission have the ability to return money to consumers who have been harmed."

Question 14. Do you support restoration of the FTC's 13(b) authority to order refunds for consumers in consumer protection and competition cases?

Answer. While I ultimately defer to Congress on how best to enable the FTC to obtain monetary redress for consumers, if confirmed I will work closely with you and your office and with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to provide guidance on this question based on the FTC's enforcement experience and expertise.

Question 15. What limits, if any, would you advise Congress to place on the FTC's ability to get consumer refunds?

Answer. See above.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR TO
MARK MEADOR

Question 1. It only takes a few seconds of audio to clone a voice using artificial intelligence (AI), and criminals can pull the sample from public sources like social media. As a result, AI-enabled scams are becoming far too common. We need to make sure our consumer protection enforcers are prepared to respond to the growing threat of voice cloning scams.

- If confirmed, what will you do to help combat deceptive practices facilitated by AI technologies?

Answer. It is incredibly important that the FTC be vigilant in protecting consumers from deceptive practices turbocharged by AI. If confirmed, I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to assess the agency's current enforcement tools and resources to ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 2. The Federal Trade Commission recently issued a Staff Report on artificial intelligence (AI) partnerships and investments by large technology companies.

- Do you share any of the concerns outlined in the report?
- If confirmed, what role do you believe the Federal Trade Commission should play in ensuring markets within the AI technology stack are competitive?
- Are there areas related to AI that you believe merit further investigation by the Federal Trade Commission?

Answer. It is essential to ensuring America's leadership in AI that the FTC do everything it can to protect competition in AI markets, whether through merger review or policing anticompetitive conduct.

Question 3. Last September, I wrote to the Federal Trade Commission to raise concerns with the Federal Trade Commission that some large language models take content from creators without compensation, such as local journalists, to create artificial intelligence (AI) systems that compete directly with those creators.

- Do you agree that using one's content without compensation or permission to create products that compete directly against that content creator could be an unfair method of competition or a deceptive act or practice?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may appear before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed I will work closely with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is doing everything it can to protect consumers and competitors from anticompetitive and unfair or deceptive conduct in AI markets.

Question 4. There have been legislative proposals to remove the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)'s authority to enforce competition laws by moving the Bureau of Competition to the Justice Department, which I believe would undermine enforcement efforts.

- As a Commissioner, would you oppose any efforts to dismantle the FTC's Bureau of Competition and gut the FTC's authority to root out "unfair methods of competition" on behalf of consumers and small businesses?
- Do you agree that such a proposal could only be done through legislation and not by Executive Order?

Answer. If confirmed, I will defer to Congress and the President regarding any proposal to restructure our antitrust enforcement efforts.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. BRIAN SCHATZ TO
MARK MEADOR

On February 18, 2025, President Trump announced an Executive Order (EO) entitled, "Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies." The EO institutes an unprecedented requirement for direct presidential oversight over actions and strategic plans by independent agencies, including the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Question 1. As Commissioner, will you commit to upholding the independence of decision making at the FTC?

Answer. If confirmed, I will serve the American people by working to advance the agenda of the President they elected.

AI-generated scams, impersonations, voice-cloning, and deepfakes can lead to financial losses and privacy violations for consumers, especially for vulnerable populations such as senior citizens.

Question 2. What do you believe is the role of the FTC in ensuring that consumers are protected from AI-generated scams and fraud?

The FTC should ensure that it is fully and fairly enforcing its existing statutory authorities to protect consumers from all forms of fraud.

Question 3. Will you commit to ensuring that the FTC takes adequate enforcement actions to protect consumers from AI-generated scams and fraud?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is doing everything it can to protect American consumers.

In your testimony, you noted the ongoing affordability crisis and the importance of the FTC in protecting consumers from predatory practices.

Question 4. Will you commit to protecting FTC rules that would lower consumer costs and provide improved transparency to consumers about unexpected financial charges, such as the “Click-to-Cancel” rule?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is doing everything it can to protect American consumers.

The FTC develops public-facing consumer advice, including resources about how to best protect kids online.

Question 5. Will you commit to ensuring that the FTC continues to develop and, as needed, update resources related to kids’ online safety?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is doing everything it can to protect kids online.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. EDWARD MARKEY TO
MARK MEADOR

Question 1. Over the past years the Federal Trade Commission has required companies to delete their algorithms created with improperly obtained data. Do you support the Commission using this practice as a way to address improper data collection?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that all remedies in FTC matters are both effective and appropriate.

Question 2. Do you believe that bias and discriminatory artificial intelligence is a problem?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 3. If confirmed, what is your plan to address biased and discriminatory artificial intelligence, especially in critical areas such as health care, education, employment, and criminal justice?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 4. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to test, address, or measure its algorithms before deployment in order to determine whether it discriminates or is biased against protected characteristics?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 5. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to monitor its algorithms after deployment in order to determine whether it discriminates or is biased against protected characteristics?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 6. If confirmed, what is your plan to address companies that market and sell AI in a way that is misleading to the public?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 7. Do you believe it is within the Commission's jurisdiction to investigate and address algorithmic discrimination?

Answer. The FTC has the duty to prevent unfair methods of competition and prevent unfair or deceptive trade practices, including in AI markets.

Question 8. Do you believe that companies that use facial recognition technologies have an obligation to consider and mitigate risks related to misidentification of individuals, especially related to protected characteristics?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 9. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to test, assess, measure, document, or inquire about the accuracy of its facial recognition tools before deployment, including seeking information from the vendor the technology was procured?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 10. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to regularly monitor or test the accuracy of its facial recognition tool after its deployment?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 11. Do you believe that companies have an obligation to adequately train employees tasked with operating facial recognition tools around the generation of false positives and bad matches?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers and promote a vibrant and competitive AI ecosystem.

Question 12. If confirmed, do you believe you serve the American people or President Trump?

Answer. If confirmed, I will serve the American people by working to advance the agenda of the President they elected.

Question 13. FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson has indicated that independent agency leadership should "answer to the President," and the Trump administration has asserted the same in a recent executive order. Do you agree?

Answer. I believe it is important that the Executive Branch be accountable to the American people through the President that they elect.

Question 14. Do you believe that FTC commissioners should exercise independent judgement or defer to the preferences of the White House?

Answer. I believe it is important that the Executive Branch be accountable to the American people through the President that they elect.

Question 15. FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson has indicated that he will prioritize prosecuting companies who have adopted diversity, equity, and inclusion policies. Do you agree with this priority?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the FTC is fully enforcing all of its statutory authorities to protect American consumers from any harm prohibited by those laws.

Question 16. Chairman Ferguson has said he will prioritize investigating and prosecuting companies who choose not to advertise on certain platforms. Do you agree with this priority?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the FTC is fully enforcing all of its statutory authorities to protect American consumers from any harm prohibited by those laws.

Question 17. Chairman Ferguson has pledged to wield the FTC's investigative authority to, quote, "fight back against the trans agenda" and investigate doctors and hospitals who provide treatment to transgender patients of all ages. Do you think this is a proper use of the FTC's authority?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the FTC is fully enforcing all of its statutory authorities to protect American consumers from any harm prohibited by those laws.

Question 18. FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson announced a new policy this month that would prohibit FTC political appointees from holding leadership roles in the American Bar Association, participating in ABA events, or renewing their ABA memberships. Do you agree with this policy?

Answer. Yes.

Question 19. If confirmed, do you plan on remaining a member of the American Bar Association?

Answer. No.

Question 20. Modern modes of transportation, especially cars, collect, use, and share many types of sensitive information, such as location, photos, audio, and video recordings. In many instances, this collection and use of this information is not disclosed to the driver and passengers of a vehicle.

Last year, I called upon the Federal Trade Commission to investigate these invasive and deceptive data collection practices. If confirmed, will you commit to looking into this issue to protect consumer privacy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is doing everything it can to protect Americans' privacy.

Question 21. During the last administration the Commission held regular open meetings, which drove public engagement to record levels. If confirmed, would you support resuming these open meetings?

Answer. I will defer to Chairman Ferguson on scheduling Commission meetings.

Question 22. Please describe your plans on how you plan on ensuring the Commission is hearing directly and proactively reaching out to consumers, workers, business owners, technological experts, impacted communities, and other stakeholders?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure that the agency is hearing from all relevant stakeholders as it carries out its statutory obligations.

Question 23. Do you believe it is constitutional to ban children and/or teens from social media?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect children.

Question 24. Do you believe that a social media platform's algorithmic ranking of content constitutes the speech of the platform?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 25. Do you believe that a social media platform's content moderation decisions constitute the speech of the platform?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 26. Do you believe that private communications between employees of the Federal government and social media platforms related to content moderation decisions or rules and the algorithmic ranking of content can violate the rights of the platform's users? If so, please describe the circumstances and/or conditions under which those communications would be unconstitutional?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 27. Do you believe that formal actions by Federal agencies to investigate the content moderation decisions or rules or algorithmic ranking of content on social media platforms could be unconstitutional? If so, please describe the circumstances and/or conditions under which those actions would be unconstitutional?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 28. Do you believe that the public statements of an FTC commissioner around the content moderation decisions or rules or algorithmic ranking of content on social media platforms could be unconstitutional? If so, please describe the cir-

cumstances and/or conditions under which those statements would be unconstitutional?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 29. What concerns do you have related to the financialization of the health care sector?

Answer. Having a competitive health care sector is of critical importance to all Americans, and is an enforcement priority I have been focused on my entire career. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect competition within the health care industry.

Question 30. What steps would you take to regulate private equity in the health care sector?

Answer. Please see my response to question 29.

Question 31. What additional measures would you take to increase transparency in health care ownership provider (nursing homes, hospitals, etc.) as it relates to private equity?

Answer. Please see my response to question 29.

Question 32. To what extent should private equity firms be held responsible for decisions that undermine health care safety, quality, and access?

Answer. Please see my response to question 29.

Question 33. What reforms do you plan to pursue related to hospital consolidation?

Answer. Please see my response to question 29.

Question 34. How would you address private equity's health care market consolidation through smaller transactions that often evade FTC enforcement?

Answer. Please see my response to question 29.

Question 35. What plans do you have to address private equity's practices that create significant debt or financial distress among the entities it purchases (for example, selling hospital or nursing home real estate to real estate investment trusts and requiring hospitals pay untenable lease payments)?

Answer. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before me as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect competition.

Question 36. Will you work with the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Labor on matters related to the role of private equity in health care?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to coordinate our enforcement efforts with all appropriate stakeholders, including any relevant part of the Executive Branch.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. JOHN HICKENLOOPER TO
MARK MEADOR

Data is a key driver of a 21st century economy. The average American household has at least 17 internet-connected devices, including TVs, smart assistants, and phones. Each internet-connected device uses and relies on data. Today, 20 states (including Colorado) have a statewide privacy law. Among these state laws, each has a different definition for what counts as "sensitive data." Some examples include data that reveal biometrics, religious beliefs, or affiliations with various organizations.

Question 1. In order to establish a consistent definition for the kinds of data that companies should be expected to protect, what do you believe the definition of "sensitive data" should include?

Answer. The definition of "sensitive data" in proposed legislation is a policy question best left to Congress, and I will defer to the decision reached by Congress on this important matter. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staff as well as Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to provide guidance and feedback where helpful.

Question 2. While some consumers may not be aware of the lack of a Federal privacy law, most are painfully aware of when their data is part of a data breach. As

data breaches increase, we must take every measure to give consumers control over what businesses do with their data.

What kinds of transparency rules should data brokers be subject to? Should data brokers be required to disclose themselves in a public registry?

Answer. Protecting Americans' privacy is incredibly important. While I cannot prejudge any matter that may come before as a Commissioner, if confirmed, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.

Question 3. States are leading legislation and enforcement of data privacy protections for consumers, including robust state privacy laws in Colorado and Texas. The Texas Attorney General filed a lawsuit against a company for collecting data about the location and driving habits of its customers without consent, allegedly violating the Texas Data Privacy and Security Act. Collecting and selling sensitive personal data increases the risk of consumers' data being stolen by a cyberattack or used to directly harm an individual.

In the absence of a Federal consumer data privacy law, do you believe that the FTC currently has the necessary enforcement authorities to protect consumers against invasive data collection practices involving the unauthorized collection and sale of geolocation data?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to review the FTC's current enforcement efforts and ensure that the agency has all the tools it needs to adequately protect American consumers.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION SUBMITTED BY HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER TO
MARK MEADOR

Question. In 2023, scams targeting seniors caused over \$3.4 billion in losses. Scams are only getting more frequent and advanced with AI. We have many older adults in Delaware. In the House, I worked with partners like AARP and passed bipartisan legislation to help ensure we are protecting and preparing our seniors. Due to my bill's passage, an advisory group was started at the FTC to focus on fighting scams against older adults.

Will you commit to continuing this work? What are your biggest concerns when it comes to fraud and scams against older adults?

Answer. Protecting senior citizens is an incredibly important mission for the FTC. If confirmed, I will work with Chairman Ferguson, my fellow commissioners, and FTC staff to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect American consumers.