

March 10, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Re: Advancing American AI Leadership

Dear Secretary Lutnick:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our shared interest in ensuring that the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) continues to play a vital role in advancing American leadership in artificial intelligence (AI) innovation. NIST's work in AI, begun under President Trump's first term, has proven to be a critical enabler for the U.S. government and U.S. industry to maintain AI leadership globally. As the Administration considers changes to personnel and programs to better align agencies with priorities, we encourage a strategy that leverages NIST's leadership and expertise on standards development, voluntary frameworks, public-private sector collaboration, and international harmonization.

President Trump's first executive order on AI directed NIST to develop a plan for engagement in technical standards.¹ That plan, issued on August 2, 2019, has served as a robust blueprint for the U.S. government to drive domestic innovation, shape global best practices, and lead the global conversation on AI.² The NIST AI Risk Management Framework and the Department of Commerce's protection of national security have bolstered American leadership through a light-touch, non-regulatory approach. This approach has both fostered continued U.S. innovation and advanced national security and global competitiveness goals.

The work done at NIST is not just a matter of maintaining technical excellence; it is a direct investment in ensuring that American industry continues to set the global benchmark for innovation. Global competitors are ramping up their investments in AI and other emerging technologies, including efforts to shape and lead international standards. In this context, and as AI technologies rapidly evolve, sustained research and development efforts in standards and measurement science will be critical for the Administration's goal to continue to lead in AI.

¹ Executive Order 13859, [Maintaining American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence](#) (Feb. 11, 2019).

² National Institute of Standards and Technology, [US Leadership in AI: A Plan for Federal Engagement in Developing Technical Standards and Related Tools](#) (Aug. 2, 2019).

We recognize the need to shift priorities toward a security-focused approach that maximizes economic potential and continues to foster innovation. In this context, we emphasize that NIST's work represents a high value investment that directly contributes to U.S. economic growth, competitiveness, and technological leadership. We caution that downsizing NIST or eliminating these initiatives will have ramifications for the ability of the American AI industry to continue to lead globally. A reshaped approach—one that aligns NIST's world-leading expertise in standards and R&D with security and economic imperatives—will ensure that America continues to lead in AI and other emerging technologies.

Stakeholders across industry, academia, and civil society stand ready to work with you in shaping this vision, ensuring that the U.S. remains at the forefront of technology advancements while maintaining safeguards against emerging threats. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the Department on a framework that reinforces American technological leadership and supports AI innovation across industries.

We appreciate your leadership and look forward to engaging with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)
Americans for Responsible Innovation
Center for AI Policy
Computer & Communication Industry Association (CCIA)
Engine
ITIF's Center for Data Innovation
Internet Infrastructure Coalition
TechNet

cc: White House Office of Science and Technology Policy