September 8, 2020

The Honorable Adam Smith   The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman   Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services   Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives   U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515   Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Smith and Ranking Member Thornberry:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to include provisions in the final FY21 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) essential to maintaining US leadership in the development of artificial intelligence (AI). Specifically, we support provisions identical or sufficiently similar to Division E of H.R. 6216, the "National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act," and to ensure that there is a five year authorization of appropriations for the programs authorized in the legislation.

We strongly support efforts to strengthen federal investments in AI research and development, facilitate new public-private partnerships that would accelerate the development of cutting-edge AI, and provide for enhanced coordination within the federal government on AI issues. Consequently, we believe that Congress should take the following approach to AI R&D in the final NDAA.

First, Congress should authorize programs at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of Energy, and the National Science Foundation to advance AI research and development and support the development of industry-led, voluntary consensus-based standards. The programs should ensure robust public-private collaboration between government, industry, academia, and any other relevant stakeholders.

Second, any programs that are established should be authorized for at least five fiscal years to provide certainty for stakeholders and demonstrate the United States' commitment internationally to be a leader in AI through research and development. Also, a multiyear reauthorization would give Congress sufficient time to ascertain the effectiveness of the new programs and determine if any revisions need to be made in a subsequent reauthorization.

Third, in recognizing that US leadership in AI requires forward-thinking approaches for ensuring that the technology is developed in trustworthy and accountable ways, the legislation also includes an important provision (Section 5301(b)) that directs NIST to begin developing a risk management framework for artificial intelligence in partnership with industry. Through this framework, NIST can help forge a shared conceptual foundation to support the development of trustworthy AI. Given the quickly evolving nature of AI, an AI framework can serve as a helpful resource for organizations as they evaluate their own uses of AI and seek to identify the range of standards, best practices, governance approaches, and technical safeguards that can be implemented through a system's lifecycle to mitigate potential risks. We respectfully request that that the risk management framework as established in Division E of House FY21 NDAA be included as part of the final FY21 NDAA.

Finally, any legislation should establish intergovernmental bodies that ensure coordination of resources and projects across the federal government to maximize partnership opportunities and provide for the efficient planning and investments of federal resources.

Similarly, we support the creation of an advisory committee of government, industry, academic, and other relevant stakeholders to provide advice on critical issues related to AI.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,

BSA | The Software Alliance
The Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)
TechNet
U.S. Chamber Technology Engagement Center (C_TEC)

September 8, 2020

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Inhofe and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to include provisions in the final FY21 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) essential to maintaining US leadership in the development of artificial intelligence (AI). Specifically, we support provisions identical or sufficiently similar to Division E of H.R. 6216, the "National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act," and to ensure that there is a five year authorization of appropriations for the programs authorized in the legislation.

We strongly support efforts to strengthen federal investments in AI research and development, facilitate new public-private partnerships that would accelerate the development of cutting-edge AI, and provide for enhanced coordination within the federal government on AI issues. Consequently, we believe that Congress should take the following approach to AI R&D in the final NDAA.

First, Congress should authorize programs at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of Energy, and the National Science Foundation to advance AI research and development and support the development of industry-led, voluntary consensus-based standards. The programs should ensure robust public-private collaboration between government, industry, academia, and any other relevant stakeholders.

Second, any programs that are established should be authorized for at least five fiscal years to provide certainty for stakeholders and demonstrate the United States' commitment internationally to be a leader in AI through research and development. Also, a multiyear reauthorization would give Congress sufficient time to ascertain the effectiveness of the new programs and determine if any revisions need to be made in a subsequent reauthorization.

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Finally, any legislation should establish intergovernmental bodies that ensure coordination of resources and projects across the federal government to maximize partnership opportunities and provide for the efficient planning and investments of federal resources.

Similarly, we support the creation of an advisory committee of government, industry, academic, and other relevant stakeholders to provide advice on critical issues related to AI.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,

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