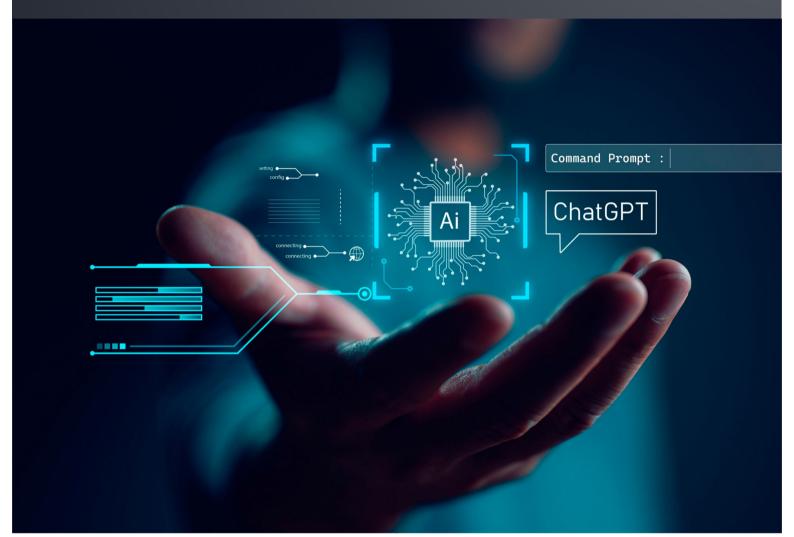# "USA control on AI"

The CEO of OpenAI, Sam Altman, believes that as AI systems become more powerful, government intervention is necessary to manage the associated risks. He suggests that a US or global agency license the most powerful AI systems and have the authority to revoke licenses if safety standards are not met. Altman acknowledges people's concerns about AI's impact on society and supports safety measures.

After releasing ChatGPT, a free chatbot with impressively human-like responses, Altman's San Francisco-based startup gained significant public attention. The fear that students would use ChatGPT to cheat on homework assignments quickly expanded into greater fears about the potential for the latest generation of generative AI tools to deceive, spread falsehoods, violate copyright laws, and displace some jobs. Though Congress has yet to create comprehensive AI regulations like their European counterparts, societal concerns have brought Altman and other tech CEOs to the White House and catalyzed US agencies' pledges to crackdown on harmful AI products that violate existing consumer protection and civil rights laws.

Senator Richard Blumenthal, who is the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on privacy, technology and the law, began the hearing by using a voice clone, trained on Blumenthal's own speeches, to deliver the opening remarks written by ChatGPT. Although the result was impressive, Blumenthal expressed concern about how AI systems could affect job stability and called on AI companies to conduct testing and disclose known risks before releasing their products.

Altman agreed with Blumenthal's viewpoint, with the exception of being more positive about the future of work. Altman avoided discussing specific AI risks, but emphasized the potential for significant harm and disastrous results if the technology goes wrong. Later in the hearing, Altman suggested that a regulatory agency should implement safeguards to prevent AI models from self-replicating or exfiltrating into the wider world. This hint at futuristic concerns about the potential for advanced AI systems to manipulate humans into relinquishing control.

According to Suresh Venkatasubramanian, a former White House official who co-authored an AI bill of rights, the focus on potential future super-powerful AI models may hinder the ability to address and regulate current harms. This is because resolving current concerns regarding data transparency, discriminatory behavior, and potential disinformation efforts requires a deeper understanding of AI technology. Venkatasubramanian believes unfounded fears of hypothetical super-powerful AI models distract from current concerns and obstruct regulating AI's harms.

Since its establishment in 2015, OpenAI has emphasized concerns about the existential risks posed by AI. Initially formed as a nonprofit research lab with a safety-focused mission, the startup has since become a profitable business with popular AI products like DALL-E. OpenAI has received investments totaling billions of dollars from Microsoft, who also integrated the technology into its own products like Bing. Altman is also planning to go on a global tour this month to discuss the technology with policymakers and the public. On the eve of his Senate testimony, Altman held a dinner with several U.S. lawmakers, who were impressed with his remarks.

The Senate hearing featured testimony from Christina Montgomery, IBM's chief privacy and trust officer, and Gary Marcus, a professor emeritus at New York University and a member of a group of AI experts calling for a six-month pause on developing more powerful AI models. The call to end AI model development was in response to the release of OpenAI's latest model, GPT-4, in March. Sen. Josh Hawley from Missouri, the panel's ranking Republican, emphasized the technology's implications for elections, jobs, and national security. Many tech industry leaders welcome AI oversight but have raised concerns about overly restrictive rules.

Both Altman and Marcus advocated for an international AI-focused regulator, with examples like the U.N.'s nuclear agency or the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. However, Montgomery called for "precision regulation" targeting specific AI applications rather than the technology itself.

Apostolos Tzikas, CEO

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