



Written Testimony of Dr. Eric Schmidt
U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
Subcommittee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation
“Advances in AI: Are We Ready for a Tech Revolution?”
Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 2:00 PM EST

Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Connolly, and esteemed Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

We are here today to discuss a topic that is tremendously important and that is the emergence of powerful technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and the impact on our society, economy, and ultimately national security.

I am testifying in my capacity as Chair of the Special Competitive Studies Project, a nonpartisan, nonprofit making recommendations to strengthen America’s long-term competitiveness for a future where AI and other emerging technologies reshape our national security, economy, and society. My views also have been shaped by my time leading the National Security Commission on AI and the Defense Innovation Board, as well as by my philanthropic work and time in the private sector.

Last year, Henry Kissinger, Daniel Huttenlocher, and myself wrote a book: *The Age of AI*. We argued that AI is transforming the human experience. It will change our relationship with knowledge and the society we live in. It will impact all aspects of human life, ranging from reasoning to how we work and to how it will shape the international order.

I have had the privilege of witnessing the evolution of AI from its early days as a niche field to its current position as a driving force in the tech industry. Generative AI is the latest iteration of this exciting technology, and it has the potential to change the world as we know it.

In simple terms, generative AI refers to the ability of machines to create new and original content, such as images, music, or text, that is indistinguishable from content created by humans. This is different from other forms of AI, which focus on analyzing and understanding existing data.

The advancement of AI, and that of generative AI, may be inevitable; however, its ultimate destination is not. We must define our partnership with AI and shape the reality it will create together. Most importantly, we must shape it with our democratic values.

The decisions for AI and machine development need to be made by multidisciplinary experts – not just technologists. We need to consider some of life’s bigger philosophical questions like how will machine intelligence affect what it means to have human thought, free will.

AI has the ability to exacerbate existing problems in society. Some of these problems include bias, inequality, and unfairness. It also introduces new problems such as security and hazards, and presents opportunities and challenges in defense and national security that we have not faced with previous technologies. The risks are real.

Some effects of generative AI are clear and already felt directly in everyday life, while other effects are less clear and implicit. It is clear that we need to develop principles for using these intelligent systems, especially when the effects influence young adults and have the power to sway entire populations. We need to make choices about whether we care more about freedom or more about efficiency.

From healthcare to research and development, banking and finance, advanced manufacturing, education, and social media, we must develop and use AI in ways that reflect our values and rule of law is critical to democracy.

As generative AI is woven into exciting technology applications, like social media or predictive healthcare analysis, we will need to critically think of creative ways to address potential challenges. I think there are three things we all agree needs to be done: **First**, platforms must, at minimum, be able to establish the origin of the content published on their platform. **Second**, we need to know who specifically is on the platform representing each user or organization profile. And **third**, the site needs to publish and be held accountable to its published algorithms for promoting and choosing content.

In close and to illustrate the increasing capabilities of generative AI in large language models, I asked Open AI’s ChatGPT to draft an opening statement for purposes of this

hearing using the following prompt: “Write an 1000 word congressional opening statement on generative AI in the voice of former Google CEO Eric Schmidt.”

To be clear, I *did not* draft the italicized statement below; however, I find the model’s ability to produce a mostly – though not perfectly – accurate statement in my voice remarkably convincing.

Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify today on the topic of generative AI and its potential impact on our society.

My name is Eric Schmidt, and I am the former CEO of Google, where I oversaw the development of many of the AI technologies that are now transforming our world.

Today, I want to talk to you about one of the most exciting and potentially transformative aspects of AI: generative AI. This technology has the potential to revolutionize a wide range of industries, from entertainment to healthcare to finance. But with great power comes great responsibility, and it is critical that we approach the development and deployment of generative AI in a thoughtful and responsible way.

First, let me explain what generative AI is. Unlike other forms of AI, which are designed to perform specific tasks based on predefined rules, generative AI is designed to create new content on its own. This could include anything from generating new music or artwork to writing news articles or even entire novels. By training on large amounts of data, generative AI can learn to mimic human creativity and produce output that is often difficult to distinguish from content created by humans.

The potential applications of generative AI are vast. For example, it could be used to create personalized music playlists, generate realistic virtual environments for gaming or training, or even assist in the development of new drugs. It could also be used to automate certain types of content creation, such as news articles or marketing materials, potentially freeing up human writers to focus on more creative and strategic work.

However, as with any powerful technology, there are also potential risks associated with generative AI. For example, it could be used to create convincing deepfake videos or other forms of misinformation. It could also be used to create content that is offensive or harmful in some way, such as hate speech or propaganda.

To ensure that the benefits of generative AI outweigh the risks, there are several key principles that should guide its development and deployment. First, we need to ensure that generative AI is designed and trained in a way that is transparent and accountable. This means that the algorithms and data used to train generative AI should be open to scrutiny, and the creators of generative AI should be able to explain how the technology works and how it makes decisions.

Second, we need to ensure that generative AI is used ethically and responsibly. This means that it should not be used to create content that is harmful or offensive, and that it should be subject to appropriate regulation and oversight.

Third, we need to ensure that generative AI is designed and deployed in a way that is inclusive and accessible to all. This means that it should be accessible to people with disabilities or other special needs, and that it should not perpetuate existing biases or inequalities in society.

Finally, we need to ensure that generative AI is designed and deployed in a way that is secure and resilient. This means that it should be protected against cyber attacks or other forms of malicious activity, and that it should be able to operate reliably and safely even in the face of unexpected events or disruptions.

In order to achieve these goals, it will be necessary for government, industry, and civil society to work together in a collaborative and transparent manner. This includes investing in research and development, sharing data and best practices, and engaging in open and inclusive dialogue about the potential risks and benefits of generative AI.

One important step in this direction is the development of ethical and regulatory frameworks for AI. This includes initiatives like the Partnership on AI, a collaboration between industry leaders and civil society organizations to develop ethical principles for AI, and the Global Governance of AI Roundtable, a forum for governments and other stakeholders to discuss the governance of AI.

In conclusion, I believe that generative AI is one of the most exciting developments in computing today. It has the potential to transform the way we live and work, opening up new possibilities for creativity, innovation, and discovery. But with great power comes great responsibility, and we must be mindful of the challenges and risks that come with this technology and work together to ensure that it is used responsibly and ethically.

Thank you.

To assist the Committee in its work, I submit for your review and consideration four recent important resources:

- [Final Report](#), National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, March 2021;
- [Mid-Decade Challenges to National Competitiveness](#), Special Competitive Studies Project, September 2022;
- [Innovation Power: Why Technology Will Define the Future of Geopolitics](#), Eric Schmidt, Foreign Affairs, February 2023; and
- [ChatGPT Heralds an Intellectual Revolution](#), Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher, Wall Street Journal, March 2023.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and I look forward to our discussion.

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