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Opening Statement
Chairman Stephen F. Lynch
Subcommittee on National Security
House Committee on Oversight and Reform
"Final Recommendations of the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence"
March 12, 2021

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I begin, I'd like to commend my good friend, Chairman Jim Langevin, for his continuing leadership in the areas of cyberspace operations, artificial intelligence, and other developing technologies with critical implications for America's national security. I am pleased to join him, Ranking Member Stefanik, and Ranking Member Grothman, as our subcommittees conduct today's important work to examine the Final Report released earlier this month by the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence.

Artificial intelligence carries the remarkable potential to enhance and even transform our national security. We are already beginning to integrate A.I. algorithms, applications, and systems to facilitate intelligence collection and analysis, including to detect and prevent future terrorist attacks. We are also deploying A.I. to support battlefield medical evacuations, logistical missions, and military operations in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and other conflict zones.

On the Financial Services Committee, where I serve as Chairman of the Task Force on Financial Technology, we are seeing the use of A.I. and machine learning technology to enhance international investigations to combat terrorist financing and money laundering.

However, the evolution of artificial intelligence has also heightened the prospect that America's geopolitical adversaries will win the race to develop and deploy AI and do so for malign purposes – to the great detriment of our national security. As reported by the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence:

> "AI is expanding the window of vulnerability the United States has already entered. For the first time since World War II, America's technological predominance – the backbone of its economic and military power – is under threat."

Clearly, cybersecurity has become synonymous with national security, and our fundamental duty to protect our democracy requires that we become "A.I.-ready" with the resources, personnel, and strategies necessary to meet these urgent challenges. According to the Commission, however, we are a "long way" from that goal. Absent shifting trends,

"China possesses the might, talent, and ambition to surpass the United States as the world's leader in AI in the next decade."

In his 2020 book, *The Kill Chain: Defending America in the Future of High Tech Warfare*, Christian Brose – former Staff Director of the Senate Armed Services Committee under Chairman John McCain – articulates that "a core pillar of the Chinese Communist Party's plan is harnessing emerging technologies to 'leapfrog' the United States and become the world's preeminent power." **In fact, the 2017 development plan on artificial intelligence issued by China's State Council envisioned that China will lead the international A.I. sector as soon as 2030.**

It is also worth noting that in the race to develop and deploy AI, our adversaries such as the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China do not struggle with the moral restrictions faced by democratic governments on the use of AI-enabled autonomous weapons, nor are they hindered by moral considerations regarding the impact of AI on civil liberties.

However, thanks to the expertise and dedication of the NSCAI Commissioners, the Final Report they released earlier this month sets forth a comprehensive blueprint to help the new administration and Congress allocate appropriate federal resources towards the advancement and integration of A.I. technologies, technical infrastructure, and a digitally-proficient workforce. We must also work together to ensure that these efforts maximize the opportunity for robust oversight, transparency, and accountability that reflect our compelling national interest in safeguarding the civil liberties of all Americans.

To that end, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of Representative Lori Trahan's upcoming legislation to establish a Digital Service Academy. The creation of a fully accredited university to train future public servants in artificial intelligence and other digital fields is a principal recommendation included in the Commission's Final Report.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to today's hearing and discussing these issues with our distinguished panelists. I yield back the balance of my time.

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