Insight

Compendium of AAF Insights on Artificial Intelligence

ANGELA LUNA | MAY 8, 2025

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is shaping how we work, govern, create, and compete globally. Yet as this technology moves forward at full speed, the policy world is struggling to keep up. Policymakers have an opportunity to shape rules and incentives that allow AI to grow in a way that's secure, competitive, and aligned with our values.

This compendium brings together the latest American Action Forum (AAF) work in AI grouped into five core themes, each tackling a different angle of the AI policy debate, from national security to open-source innovation to intellectual property, and antitrust to children's health and safety. Together, these AAF insights aim to make the complex issues surrounding AI more accessible, while also raising key questions for lawmakers, industry leaders, and the public as they work to craft a regulatory framework for this technology.

I. U.S. AI Policy and Global Competitiveness

Why It Matters

The United States wants to lead in AI, but attaining leadership will require more than simply restricting access to AI semiconductor chips to its global competitors. It must think more broadly: How should the United States invest in research? Is it training the right talent? Do companies have the data they need to build strong models? This section delves into the risks and benefits of export controls and the growing debate around open-source AI. The takeaway: The United States can't win this race by playing defense alone; it needs a full strategy for responsible, long-term competitiveness.

Sustaining U.S. AI Leadership: Moving Beyond Restrictions

This insight analyzes how current U.S. export controls on AI chips fall short, and why staying competitive in AI will take more than just restrictions. It argues for a strategy that invests in research, talent, and access to data that powers innovation.
Key Topics: export controls, AI competitiveness, policy strategy, global AI race

AI Export Controls: Balancing National Security and AI Innovation

This insight discusses the challenges of implementing AI export controls that protect national security without stifling innovation. It highlights how export controls, if not carefully designed, can do more harm than good, and why the United States needs smarter policies that protect national security without harming innovation.
Key Topics: Export controls, national security, innovation policy, AI governance

Open-Source AI: The Debate That Could Redefine AI Innovation

This insight explores the ongoing debate over open-source AI, weighing the benefits of collaborative innovation against concerns about security and misuse, and how this debate could shape the future of AI development.
Key Topics: open-source software, AI innovation, security risks, collaborative development

II. Legislative Initiatives and AI Governance

Why It Matters

The nature of U.S. AI regulation depends a lot on who's in office. While the Biden administration leaned on agency initiatives, the Trump Administration has adopted a freer approach to AI regulation. Meanwhile, states are stepping in with their own rules, creating confusion and fragmentation. These insights look at how different administrations have approached AI and highlight the need for a clear and consistent policy environment that also supports innovation and safety.

AI Policy in Transition: Trump's Second Term

This insight examines the potential shifts in AI policy under President Trump's second term, including repealing Biden Administration executive order, addressing fragmented state regulations, and balancing innovation with national security concerns, particularly in relation to China.
Key Topics: federal vs. state AI regulation, national security, policy transition

The Forthcoming Artificial Intelligence Action Plan

This insight outlines the key topics various AI stakeholders prioritized in their comments for the Trump Administration's AI Action Plan, focusing on reinforcing U.S. leadership in AI.
Key Topics: export controls, infrastructure investment, ethical AI development, IP

Primer: A Look at the Biden Administration's Approach to AI Regulation

This insight provides an overview of the Biden Administration's AI regulatory approach, which relied on executive actions and agency-led initiatives in the absence of comprehensive legislation, leading to a patchwork of state-level regulations.
Key Topics: AI regulation, executive orders, federal vs. state policies, administrative governance

III. Intellectual Property and AI

Why It Matters

The United States is at a turning point for IP law. What happens when an AI system invents something, or generates art that looks human-made? As it stands, U.S. patent and copyright law are not fully equipped to respond to that. These insights look at how the law is struggling to keep up with machine-generated innovation and why getting it right matters if the United States wants to encourage creativity, fairness, and trust in the system.

Is AI an Inventor Under Patent Law?

This insight explores the challenges of current patent laws that require human inventorship, highlighting how AI-generated inventions may lack protection, potentially discouraging innovation. It also suggests policymakers consider revising patent laws to accommodate AI's growing role in invention.
Key Topics: AI-generated inventions, patent law, legal frameworks

COPIED Act of 2024: Protecting Creative Works in the AI Era

This insight walks through the Content Origin Protection and Integrity from Edited and Deepfake Media Act (COPIED Act), aimed at updating copyright laws to address challenges posed by AI-generated content, ensuring protection for human creators in an evolving technological landscape.
Key Topics: copyright law, AI-generated content, intellectual property, legislative reform

IV.AI Market Dynamics

Why It Matters

This section digs into the Department of Justice's (DOJ) investigation into AI chip company Nvidia's behavior in the industry and explores not just what this development means for the company but for how policymakers should think about future competition shaped by AI infrastructure, chips, and compute access.

The DOJ and Nvidia: AI Market Dominance and Antitrust Concerns

This insight examines the DOJ's investigation into Nvidia's potential antitrust violations amid its dominance in AI chipmaking.
Key Topics: antitrust, AI chip market, Nvidia, DOJ

V. AI and Youth Online Safety

Why It Matters

There is much discussion of how AI affects jobs and geopolitics, but one of its most immediate impacts is on young users. Social media platforms are already using AI to recommend content, flag risk, and shape how kids interact online. This primer explores how policymakers should think about these critical issues.

Primer: AI Impact on Kids Social Media Safety Legislation Discussion

This primer looks at how AI technologies affect minors on social media platforms and considers current legislative efforts aimed at safeguarding young users. It highlights the need for balanced policies that mitigate risks without stifling beneficial AI applications.
Key Topics: AI in social media, child safety, legislation, content moderation

AI Legislation Tracker

AAF's AI Legislation Tracker is a tool to help navigate federal AI legislation. It divides bills into five categories based on their focus and provides a short summary of each, detailing how it will be implemented, mechanisms of enforcement, and notes on its construction and potential impact.