

In San Francisco, Biden talks with tech leaders about risks and promises of artificial intelligence

June 21 2023, by Josh Boak



President Joe Biden smiles as members of the media leave the room and ask questions about his son Hunter Biden, during a discussion on managing the risks of Artificial Intelligence during an event in San Francisco, Tuesday, June 20, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Susan Walsh

President Joe Biden convened a group of technology leaders on Tuesday to debate what he called the "risks and enormous promises" of artificial intelligence.

The Biden administration is seeking to figure out how to regulate the emergent field of AI, looking for ways to nurture its potential for economic growth and national security and protect against its potential dangers.

"We'll see more [technological change](#) in the next 10 years that we saw in the last 50 years," Biden said as the meeting with eight technology experts from academia and [advocacy groups](#) kicked off.

"AI is already driving that change," Biden said.

The sudden emergence of AI chatbot [ChatGPT](#) and other tools has jumpstarted investment in the sector. AI tools are able to craft human-like text, music, images and computer code. This form of automation could increase the productivity of workers, but experts warn of numerous risks.

The technology could be used to replace workers, causing layoffs. It's already being deployed in false images and videos, becoming a vehicle of disinformation that could undermine democratic elections.

Governments, as well as the [European Union](#), have said they are determined to regulate and put brakes on AI before it is too late.



People hold signs as the motorcade with President Joe Biden drives through the area in Kentfield, Calif., where he will attend a campaign fundraiser. Credit: AP Photo/Susan Walsh

Biden said [social media](#) has already shown the harm technology can do "without the right safeguards in place."

In May, Biden's administration brought together tech CEOs at the White House to discuss these issues, with the Democratic president telling them, "What you're doing has enormous potential and enormous danger."

White House chief of staff Jeff Zients' office is developing a set of actions the [federal government](#) can take over the coming weeks regarding AI, according to the White House. Top officials are meeting

two to three times each week on this issue, in addition to the daily work of federal agencies. The administration wants commitments from private companies to address the possible risks from AI.

Biden met Tuesday at the Fairmont hotel in San Francisco with Tristan Harris, executive director of the Center for Human Technology; Jim Steyer, the CEO of Common Sense Media; and Joy Buolamwin, founder of the Algorithmic Justice League, among others. California Gov. Gavin Newsom was also in attendance.



President Joe Biden walks from Marine One with trip director Travid Dredd at the Crissy Field Landing Zone in San Francisco, Tuesday, June 20, 2023, as he returns from a campaign reception in Kentfield, Calif. Credit: AP Photo/Susan Walsh



President Joe Biden speaks during a discussion on managing the risks of Artificial Intelligence during an event in San Francisco, Tuesday, June 20, 2023, as California Gov. Gavin Newsom listens. Credit: AP Photo/Susan Walsh

Biden is also in the San Francisco area to raise money for this 2024 reelection campaign. At his first fundraiser of the night, Biden spoke about what he saw as freedoms under siege, particularly for the LGBTQ community and with the overturning of abortion protections by the U.S. Supreme Court. And as president, it's his job to help safeguard the right to choose.

"I think the American people need to have the confidence that we're going to do what we say we're going to do," he said.

Climate change has also been a priority in Biden's speeches at the fundraisers. On Tuesday, he told a group that he expects that John Kerry, the special envoy for climate, will soon return to China for talks on reducing carbon emissions.

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