President Trump Starts First Week with AI Executive Orders and Investments — AI: The Washington Report

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VIEWPOINT TOPICS

- Artificial Intelligence

- In his first week in office, President Trump took three significant actions on AI that lay the foundation for a new deregulatory approach to AI at the federal level.
- On Inauguration Day, Trump repealed President Biden's signature October 2023 AI Executive Order (AI EO), which aimed to promote the safe and secure use of AI.
- On Tuesday, President Trump announced Stargate, an up to $500 billion private investment into AI infrastructure in the US, including data and energy generation centers. He has promised to use an emergency declaration to expedite the approval and permitting processes for these projects.
- On Thursday, Trump signed an Executive Order on AI that states that it is the policy of the US to "enhance America's global AI dominance." The Trump AI EO directs his advisors to develop an AI action plan to achieve that policy. It also orders an immediate review of all actions taken pursuant to Biden's AI EO and the suspension or revision of any actions that are inconsistent with the new AI policy.

In his first week in office, President Trump took three significant actions on AI that lay the foundation for a new deregulatory approach to AI on the federal level. On Monday, the new president repealed former President Biden's October 2023 **Executive Order on AI** (AI EO), which aimed to promote the safe and secure use of AI. On Tuesday, Trump announced $500 billion in private investments in a joint venture called Stargate for the development of AI data and electricity generation centers. On Thursday, Trump signed an **Executive Order on AI** that states that it is the policy of the US to "enhance America's global AI dominance." The Trump AI EO directs his advisors to develop an AI action plan to achieve that policy and orders an immediate review of all actions taken pursuant to Biden's AI EO and the suspension or revision of any actions that are inconsistent with the new AI policy.

President Trump's first week actions on AI make clear that, while AI will remain a priority for the US government, the new president is charting a new deregulatory approach to federal AI policy. While President Biden sought to put in place guardrails to ensure the safe development and use of AI, President Trump's early actions suggest that he aims to clear away regulatory hurdles or obstacles that may get in the way of AI innovation, while also championing private investments in AI infrastructure and R&D.

President Trump Repeals Biden's AI Executive Order

On his first day in office, President Trump issued an **Executive Order on Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions**, which repealed Biden's October 2023 Executive Order on AI (AI EO), among 70 other EOs.

President Trump's repeal of Biden's AI EO was to some degree a symbolic first move to differentiate himself from his predecessor on AI, as over 60 studies, reports, guidance, and agency councils on AI commissioned by the AI EO have already been published or created. However, the repeal of the AI EO did create uncertainty about the future of existing and pending requirements and guidance, issued pursuant to the Biden AI EO, and whether they would remain in effect after the Biden AI EO was repealed. But as we discuss below, Trump's Thursday AI EO provided clarity about the fate of actions taken under the Biden AI EO.

President Trump Signs an Executive Order on AI

On Thursday, President Trump issued an **Executive Order on Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence**. The EO states that "it is the policy of the United States to sustain and enhance America's global AI dominance in order to promote human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security."

The EO directs Trump's AI Czar, David Sacks, and his other advisors on AI and technology policy, who **we've written about**, to within 180 days of the order "develop and submit to the President an action plan to achieve the policy" of the US on AI.

The EO also orders Sacks, along with the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, to "immediately review… all policies, directives, regulations, orders, and other actions taken pursuant" to Biden's AI EO. They shall identify any actions that "may be inconsistent with, or present obstacles to" the new U.S. AI policy and "suspend, revise, or rescind such actions."

The Trump AI EO orders the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director to, within 60 days of the order, "revise OMB Memoranda M-24-10 and M-24-18 as necessary to make them consistent with the" new AI policy. As **we previously covered**, OMB's memoranda on AI created a set of requirements for federal agencies that procure and utilize AI. They required, among other things, that agencies identify AI use cases that impact civil rights and safety and adhere to minimum practices for them and also carry out proper due diligence when procuring AI tools.

It remains to be seen which actions taken under the Biden AI EO will remain and which will be modified or rescinded, but there are a few likely suspects. President Trump's first week actions terminating government DEI programs and revoking workplace discrimination rules suggest that his advisors may take aim at the anti-discrimination initiatives created under the Biden AI EO. These include training programs to address algorithmic discrimination and anti-bias guidance for companies that use automated valuation models, among others. Trump's advisors may also choose to not finalize the pending Commerce **rule** on reporting requirements for AI developers, which would require private developers of advanced AI models to submit safety and reliability information to the government.

Trump Announces $500 billion in funding for AI Infrastructure

On Tuesday, President Trump announced a $500 billion private investment into AI infrastructure—called Stargate—by three of the nation's leading AI companies and a number of technology companies. The companies will initially invest $100 billion into AI infrastructure, but they plan to invest up to $500 billion in the coming years. Stargate aims to build data and electricity generation centers in America to support continued AI innovation.

President Trump has framed the investments into American AI as part of an effort to win the AI race against China. "What we want to do is we want to keep [AI] in this country," the president said at the Tuesday Stargate announcement. "China is a competitor, others are competitors. We want to be in this country, and we're making it available. I'm gonna help a lot through emergency declarations, because we have an emergency, we have to get this stuff built. So they have to produce a lot of electricity. And we'll make it possible for them to get this production done easily, at their own plants if they want."

But following the announcement, Elon Musk, who leads the new Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), **posted** on X on Tuesday that "they don't actually have the money," referring to the companies who have pledged investments as part of Stargate. He added that one of the companies "has well under $10B secured. I have that on good authority." It is well known that Trump's closest advisors on AI, as **we covered**, have diverging views about the technology, but Musk's comments are the first public signs of possible disagreements in the new White House about AI.

On Thursday, in a virtual address to the World Economic Forum, the president doubled down on his plans to utilize an emergency declaration to expedite the construction of AI power plants and data centers.

"We're going to build electric generating facilities. I'm going to get the approval under emergency declaration. I can get the approvals done myself without having to go through years of waiting," the president said.

President Trump's latest comments also build on the **national energy emergency** he declared on his first day, which directs the heads of federal agencies to exercise their emergency authorities to expedite approvals for new energy projects and the completion of existing projects.

The Stargate announcement comes a week after Biden issued an executive order on AI infrastructure, as **we covered**, which directs agencies to lease federal land for data centers. President Trump has not yet repealed Biden's EO on AI infrastructure, which aligns with Trump's focus on domestic AI investments.

Conclusion: A New Federal Approach to AI

Under the second Trump administration, AI will remain a priority, but the new president is already charting his own different, deregulatory approach to AI, as his first week's actions demonstrate. As **expected**, President Trump's approach to AI will likely continue to involve clearing regulatory hurdles or obstacles that may get in the way of AI innovation, while also championing private sector investments in America AI—and the infrastructure needed to power it. But it remains to be seen how the Trump administration's review of actions taken under the Biden AI EO goes and what actions remain, what actions are revised, and what actions are rescinded.

We will continue to monitor, analyze, and issue reports on developments about the Trump administration's approach to and policies for AI.

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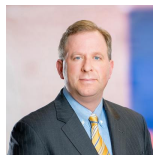
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