

Alert | Government Law & Policy/ Innovation & Artificial Intelligence



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White House Issues Executive Order Targeting Frontier AI Models

On June 2, 2026, the White House issued an **Executive Order** that aims to strengthen U.S. cybersecurity infrastructure through AI-enabled defenses while maintaining the administration's permissive regulatory environment for AI development. The Order imposes a series of short-term action items on federal agencies intended to improve the nation's posture on cybersecurity and creates a voluntary framework for collaboration between the government and private AI developers.

Covered Frontier Model Framework

While the Order prohibits creating a mandatory licensing or preclearance requirement for AI models, it directs the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to develop a classified benchmarking process to identify AI models with advanced cyber capabilities. Models meeting this threshold will be designated "covered frontier models." Developers of such models are invited, on a voluntary basis, to provide the government with up to 30 days of pre-release access to the model prior to disclosure of the model. The government will also ask model developers to collaborate with it on selecting partners who will receive early access to frontier models for the purposes of strengthening cybersecurity of critical infrastructure.

Federal Cyber Defense Modernization

The Order instructs several agencies, including CISA, NSA, and the Department of War, to harden federal information systems. It also directs CISA to expand AI-enabled defensive tools and facilitate access to cybersecurity services, including for state and local governments and critical infrastructure operators, such as rural hospitals, community banks, and utilities. The U.S. Department of the Treasury, in coordination with NSA and CISA, is ordered to establish a voluntary industry clearinghouse to coordinate vulnerability scanning, discovery, and patch distribution. In addition, the Order directs the Office of Management and Budget to evaluate the availability of funding for grants to develop advanced AI vulnerability detection and requires the Office of Personnel Management to expand cybersecurity specialist hiring and placement pathways.

Criminal Enforcement Prioritization

The Order instructs the U.S. Attorney General to prioritize prosecution of AI-assisted computer fraud, unauthorized access, and wire fraud offenses under existing federal statutes. This includes attacks on public and private information technology systems. The Order specifies that these prohibitions apply to the use of AI agents to illegally access data for unlawful purposes.

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Authors

This GT Alert was prepared by:

- [Kieran Dwyer](#) | +1 612.600.0402 | Kieran.Dwyer@gtlaw.com
- [Andrew \(A.J.\) Tibbetts](#) | +1 617.310.5286 | Andrew.Tibbetts@gtlaw.com
- [Robert Mangas](#) | +1 202.530.8507 | mangasr@gtlaw.com
- [Reena Bajowala](#) | +1 312.456.1018 | Reena.Bajowala@gtlaw.com

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