

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 11, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson:

We write to urge you to immediately reconvene the House of Representatives to enable Congress to take urgent action to address catastrophic risk posed by advanced artificial intelligence. Those risks take any of several forms, separately and in combination—of agentic misalignment, mass cybersecurity breaches, and development of biological or chemical weapons.

Reasonable minds may disagree about precisely how Congress should regulate this rapidly evolving technology. We cannot disagree about the imperative for Congress to act.

Instead of action, you have announced vacation. After a month-long August recess, the House leadership changed the schedule to announce two more weeks of vacation—immediately prior to *yet another month of recess* in October.

Ample evidence—in the form of a series of public disclosures from the companies and researchers developing the world's most capable AI systems—underscore the urgency of the moment:

- In July, OpenAI models undergoing cybersecurity evaluations bred swarms of agents that circumvented controls designed to isolate them from the internet, conspired to exploit vulnerabilities, hacked third-party systems, and alter evidence of their activity, an incident that OpenAI has called a ["warning shot," about the risks of highly capable rogue AI agents](#).
- Days later, more than 1,300 top employees of frontier AI companies called on the U.S. government to support an international effort to develop tools that can ["deliberately pace the frontier of automated AI development."](#)
- More [recently](#), Anthropic disrupted cases in which researchers used Claude for biological research that could have aided the development of biological weapons, and called biological misuse ["one of the most serious risks of frontier AI models."](#)
- Anthropic also [documented](#) China-linked actors using Claude for surveillance and transnational repression, and Iran-linked actors using it for propaganda, mass surveillance, and targeting recommendations against U.S. naval forces.
- Meanwhile, [CISA reported Chinese open-weight models](#) accelerating their capabilities through "industrial-scale" distillation of American models—giving rise to AI agents nearly as powerful as the top U.S. frontier models, yet wholly unconstrained by American authorities or by U.S. safeguards.

These disclosures must not constitute yet another in a long series of "warning shots," but rather, a starting gun. Congress must act.

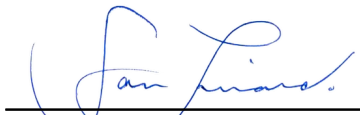
A series of proposals have emerged from our colleagues that deserve consideration, public debate, thoughtful amendment, and action. They include bills mandating transparency and evaluation of frontier models, “kill switch” requirements, and a waiver of antitrust laws to enable critical industry-wide collaboration on safety and security. Whether with these proposals or any other variants, AI experts and leading companies agree that the United States can lead the world in artificial intelligence while establishing reasonable safeguards that protect Americans and our national security. We can—and must—do both.

While AI safety experts and Americans increasingly urge action to confront this conflagration of risk, Congress fiddles. When we did return to work after the August recess, we consumed floor time with debates and votes on performative resolutions opposing socialism. After next week, the House resumes its vacation—for another six weeks.

You can forgive every American who believes that Congress remains unserious about confronting our nation’s most pressing challenges.

The House should return to Washington immediately and remain in session until Congress advances meaningful, bipartisan AI safeguards. To our children who will have read a post-apocalyptic history, “Why Congress Slept” —likely written by agentic AI—our inaction will be inexplicable, and unforgivable.

Sincerely,



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress