

# United States Senate

February 19, 2025

Sundar Pichai  
Chief Executive Officer  
Google LLC  
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway  
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai:

We write with concerns about Google’s decision to reverse its previous safety and ethical commitments on its development of artificial intelligence (AI) products. Starting in 2018, Google articulated clear AI principles to guide its new technology projects, including limitations on developing AI products involving weapons or certain surveillance technologies. But on February 4, 2025, your company removed that language from its AI Principles, seemingly reversing a key promise that Google made to not develop potentially harmful and dangerous technologies.<sup>1</sup> Given the serious risks that AI-powered products could supercharge weapons and surveillance technologies, we request additional information about the rationale for and scope of these changes.

For years, Google’s AI Principles have allowed the public to understand the company’s values for the development and deployment of new technologies. The company first published the AI Principles in 2018 following employee backlash to one of its contracts.<sup>2</sup> Recognizing the impact and potential consequences of AI, Google committed to not develop or deploy AI related to “technologies that cause or are likely to cause overall harm,” “weapons or other technologies whose principal purpose or implementation is to cause or directly facilitate injury to people,” “technologies that gather or use information for surveillance violating internationally accepted norms,” and “technologies whose purpose contravenes widely accepted principles of international law and human rights.”<sup>3</sup> Advocates recognized this action as a positive step forward.

But last week, Google removed those limitations on the development and deployment of AI products, among other changes to its AI Principles. A blog post accompanying these revisions made no reference to the removal of these long-standing commitments. Instead, the blog highlighted Google’s new core tenets in AI developments. The closest the post came to referencing these critical changes was its noting Google’s commitment to “pursue AI responsibly throughout the development and deployment lifecycle.”<sup>4</sup> This vague language does not provide

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<sup>1</sup> Nitasha Tiku & Gerrit De Vynck, *Google drops pledge not to use AI for reasons or surveillance*, Google (Feb. 4, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2025/02/04/google-ai-policies-weapons-harm/>.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Simonite, *3 Years After the Project Maven Uproar, Google Cozies to the Pentagon*, Wired (Nov. 18, 2021), <https://www.wired.com/story/3-years-maven-uproar-google-warms-pentagon/>.

<sup>3</sup> Sundar Pichai, *AI at Google: our principles*, Google (Jun. 7, 2018), <https://blog.google/technology/ai/ai-principles/>.

<sup>4</sup> James Manyika & Demis Hassabis, *Responsible AI: Our 2024 report and ongoing work*, Google (Feb. 4, 2025), <https://blog.google/technology/ai/responsible-ai-2024-report-ongoing-work/>.

any guidelines on the types of technology Google will or will not develop, raising more questions than answers and sparking concerns from Google's current and former employees.<sup>5</sup>

To better understand Google's new plans and policies around AI development and deployment, we request that you answer the following questions in writing by March 7, 2025:

1. Please describe Google's rationale for revising its AI Principles, especially its decision to remove the limitation on developing AI products for weapons or certain surveillance applications.
2. Is Google currently developing or has Google currently deployed any AI products or potential projects that could be considered a weapon?
  - a. If so, please provide detailed description of those projects.
  - b. Going forward, if Google develops AI weapons projects, how does Google intended to mitigate the risks they pose?
3. Is Google developing or has Google currently deployed any AI products or potential projects that could be used for surveillance purposes in violation of internationally accepted norms?
  - a. If so, please provide detailed description of those projects.
  - b. Going forward, if Google develops AI surveillance projects in violation of internationally accepted norms, how does Google intended to mitigate the risks they pose?
4. Is Google developing or has Google currently deployed any AI products or potential products that could cause or are likely to cause overall harm?
  - a. If so, please provide detailed description of those projects.
  - b. Going forward, if Google develops AI projects that could cause or are likely to cause overall harm, how does Google intended to mitigate the risks they pose?
5. The new Google AI Principles state the company will ensure "appropriate human oversight, due diligence, and feedback mechanisms to align with user goals, social responsibility, and widely accepted principles of international law and human rights." Please provide a detailed description of how Google plans to uphold these commitments.

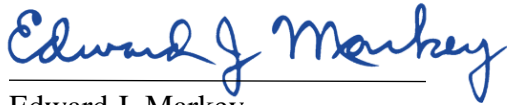
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<sup>5</sup> Paresh Dave & Caroline Haskins, *Google Lifts a Ban on Using Its AI for Weapons and Surveillance*, Wired (Feb. 4, 2025), <https://www.wired.com/story/google-responsible-ai-principles/>.

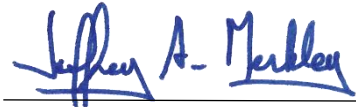
6. The new Google AI Principles state the company will “employ rigorous design, testing, monitoring, and safeguards to mitigate unintended or harmful outcomes and avoid unfair bias.” Please provide a detailed description of how Google plans to uphold these commitments, including a detailed description of the testing and monitoring Google intends to implement.
7. Will Google commit that any AI development that conflicts with the 2018 principles will include robust stakeholder consultation, including collaboration with workers, relevant experts, and impacted communities? If not, why not?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Peter Welch  
United States Senator