2026 FEDERAL POLICY AGENDA

TECHNET
THE VOICE OF AMERICAN INNOVATION

The United States has led the world in technological innovation, driving transformative advancements that power our economy, secure our nation, and elevate our global standing. From defense to healthcare to manufacturing, America's unparalleled technological ecosystem ensures productivity, resilience, and efficiency across every sector. Yet, America's leadership faces intensifying challenges from foreign adversaries, including China, that are determined to outpace us in critical and emerging technologies.

To safeguard our future and win the next era of innovation, we must double down on strategic investments, fortify our talent pipeline, and create a policy environment that empowers American innovators to thrive.

- AI will create an estimated 133 million new jobs and contribute over $15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030. 37% of business founders and owners are planning to upskill their employees in the next two or three years. (Hostinger, 2026)
- In 2025, state lawmakers across all 50 states introduced over 1,200 AI-related bills; this year over 1,700 have been introduced. The number of enacted state AI laws is rising dramatically, creating an increasingly complex web of compliance for companies operating across state lines. (Multistate, 2025)
- Fewer than one in ten CEOs of large U.S. companies plan to cut jobs due to AI in 2026. Instead, 55% of the same CEOs expect to increase hiring in 2026 as a direct result of AI. (KPMG, 2026)
- 94% of U.S. adults favor using current-day AI to augment human work, with the number rising to 96% with future, more advanced versions of AI. (Harvard Business School, 2026)
- In 2025, China had 47% of the world's top AI researchers and more than 50% of AI patents. (Morgan Stanley, 2025)
- China is leading the generative AI patent race, filing more than 38,000 patents compared to a little over 6,000 filed by the United States from 2014-2024. (Reuters, 2024)
- Every $1 invested in electrical transmission lines generates $4 in benefits for consumers. (Grid Strategies, 2026)

Winning the Next Era of Innovation

Drive Innovation in Artificial Intelligence
AI is poised to drive American economic growth and create the next generation of technological progress. It is essential that the United States leads the way in responsible AI development and deployment. To do this, Congress must adopt a consistent, risk-based federal framework that preempts conflicting state laws and establishes clear federal safety standards for AI. The federal government should also streamline export control policy to address national security risks while encouraging the export of the American AI stack and promoting AI leadership abroad.

To further drive AI innovation, the federal government should invest in AI infrastructure and research and development (R&D) initiatives. This includes codifying the Center for AI Standards and Innovation (CAISI) and fully funding and operationalizing the National AI Research Resource (NAIRR) through bills like the *CREATE AI Act* and the *Future of AI Innovation Act*. Increasing R&D and compute investments so researchers nationwide can access advanced compute, datasets, and AI tools at scale will sustain America's long-term economic growth and global competitiveness.

Build Resilient, Cost-Effective Energy Infrastructure
New technologies, including but not limited to AI, are driving growing U.S. energy demand. The federal government has an opportunity to meet this demand by upgrading America's aging energy infrastructure. Meeting this demand through increased energy production will help keep costs down for consumers and cement the U.S. as the global leader in AI. Policymakers must support measures that increase energy generation and transmission, accelerate energy infrastructure deployment, and encourage partnership with the private sector.

Permitting reform is the best way to expand supply, modernize the grid, and speed deployment of new energy infrastructure. Congress should build on previous efforts and pass comprehensive bipartisan permitting reform legislation to resolve the inefficiencies of the U.S. permitting process. Bills like the *Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act* and *High-Capacity Grid Act* will help advance infrastructure, energy, natural resources, transportation, and other projects that improve quality of life, revitalize communities, and deliver the goods and services families rely on every day.

- Investment in high-capacity electrical transmission fell from an average of 1,700 miles per year in the 2010s to 275 miles in 2025. (Grid Strategies, 2026)
- Real-world data shows that autonomous systems reduce accidents by 96%. (Waymo, 2025)
- For every three international students, one U.S. job is created. (NAFSA, 2025)
- In 2025, about 70 million Americans or 36 percent of the total American workforce participated in the gig economy. (Carry, 2026)
- Digital trade supports an estimated three million direct and indirect jobs in the U.S. (Coalition of Services Industries, 2025)
- Digital service exports generated a trade surplus of $282 billion for the U.S. economy in 2024. (CCIA, 2025)
- U.S. exports of goods and services to Canada and Mexico are up 56% since USMCA took effect in 2020. (USTR, 2025)
- Eight in 10 Americans support a federal data privacy law. (ACT, 2024)
- Since 2018, 269 privacy bills have been introduced across 47 states. Twenty-one states now have different, often conflicting state privacy laws. (Smith Anderson, 2026)

Protect Consumers and Create Certainty with a Comprehensive Data Privacy Law

Digital technologies have revolutionized how Americans live, making everyday tasks easier and expanding access to information, services, and opportunity. Federal law has lagged behind rapid technological advancement. So far, twenty states have enacted burdensome, often conflicting state data privacy laws that are confusing consumers, stifling innovation, and driving out smaller companies. Congress should pass a comprehensive, national privacy framework that protects consumers while enabling responsible data use, innovation, and economic growth. A national law will ensure that commerce, communication, health care, and education remain accessible to all Americans, regardless of zip code.

Maintain America's Global Technology Leadership with a Strong, Pro-Growth Trade Agenda

Foreign governments discriminate against American technology companies. The United States must uphold and modernize the rules-based trading system to ensure fair competition, expand market access, and protect U.S. economic interests abroad. Policymakers should ensure that trade policy remains targeted, consistent, and grounded in enforceable rules that protect American innovation, defend against unfair foreign practices, and provide businesses with the certainty they need to invest and grow. An example of legislation that would meet these goals is the bipartisan *Digital Trade Promotion Act.*

Modernize American Transportation

Autonomous vehicles (AVs), electric vehicles (EVs), connected vehicles, and advanced aviation platforms such as drones are transforming how Americans move, access goods and services, and participate in the economy while improving safety, expanding mobility, strengthening supply chains, and driving innovation-led growth. Congress and the Executive Branch should modernize federal transportation laws and regulations and advance a unified, innovation-forward framework, like the *SELF DRIVE Act* that enables the safe, large-scale deployment of AVs.

Invest in the American Workforce

As technological innovation reshapes the American workplace, the private sector is investing billions of dollars to train and reskill workers to ensure all Americans can access the skills, infrastructure, and opportunities needed to thrive in a modern economy. Congress and the Executive Branch should modernize workforce and tax policies to support flexible work, increase investment in training and reskilling programs, and align education pathways with in-demand technical skills. Bipartisan proposals such as the *Jumpstart Our Businesses by Supporting Students* (JOBS) *Act* and the *Skills Investment Act* are designed to support and prepare U.S. workers in the digital and AI-driven economy and should be advanced by federal lawmakers. At the same time, a modernized, high-skilled immigration system is essential to attracting and retaining global STEM talent and ensuring the United States remains the world leader in innovation.