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"Building an AI-Ready America"
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Thank you, Chairman Walberg, Ranking Member Scott, and Members of the Committee.

My name is Chaya Nayak, and I serve as Head of Certifications and the Jobs Platform at OpenAI. In this role, I oversee our efforts to help people build AI skills, demonstrate those skills in credible ways, and connect them to real economic opportunity. I appreciate the opportunity to share OpenAI's perspective on how we can work together to build an AI-ready America, and the practical steps we are taking to help workers prepare for an AI-driven economy.

OpenAI is building AI tools like ChatGPT and putting them in people's hands for free so they can solve our hardest challenges like improving healthcare, speeding up science, protecting national security, helping Main Streets compete, and creating more opportunity and time for themselves.

OpenAI, ChatGPT, and preparing for the AI era

OpenAI's mission is to ensure that advanced AI benefits all of humanity. That mission reflects a simple belief: powerful technologies should expand opportunity, not concentrate it.

Today, more than 800 million people around the world—about 10 percent of the global population—use OpenAI's tools, mostly for free. Many of them are workers. They use AI to learn faster, do their jobs better, and adapt as the nature of their work changes. Students preparing for their first jobs, mid-career professionals building new skills, and small business owners looking to operate more efficiently are already incorporating AI into their daily work.

This reality creates urgency. AI tools are being adopted across the economy faster than previous general-purpose technologies, compressing years of change into a much shorter period of time. That speed may seem daunting, but it also creates a window of opportunity.

There is still time for workers to shape how AI fits into their jobs rather than having it imposed on them after the fact. Acting early gives people time to build new skills as their work changes, makes it easier for employers to redesign roles and workflows to take full advantage of AI, and helps institutions adjust to a faster-moving, AI-enabled economy. Waiting makes adaptation harder and more uneven.

It is also important to recognize that AI's capabilities are advancing rapidly, but adoption and effective use are uneven across firms, workers, and communities. There is still a lot these tools can do that many people are not yet using to improve productivity, learning, and opportunity. Left unaddressed, that capability overhang, which is the gap between what AI can do and who is positioned to use it well, means the benefits of AI may concentrate among those with the time, skills, and resources to take advantage of it. Our goal is to help close that gap so these tools empower all Americans, not just a few.

That sense of urgency is why we are focused on practical, near-term forms of assistance—tools people can use today and learning that translates directly into real work and opportunity. The goal is not to predict the future of work, but to give people agency as it evolves.

Skills, productivity, and employer demand

We believe AI will make workers more productive and unlock more opportunity for more people than any technology in history. It can help companies operate more effectively, give individuals the ability to turn ideas into income, and contribute to the creation of new kinds of jobs.

At the same time, we know that tasks will shift, roles will change, and some jobs will go away. The responsible response is not denial—it is preparation.

Employers are already being clear about the value they place on AI skills. More than 70 percent of business leaders say they would hire a less experienced candidate with AI experience over a more seasoned one without it, and other research shows that workers with AI skills can earn up to 50 percent more.

Our own research at OpenAI helps explain why these skills matter. With access to the right AI tools and the right training, up to 56 percent of the tasks people do at work today can be completed significantly faster without sacrificing quality. In practical terms, that means AI is best understood as a way to help people do more in their existing roles, not as a replacement for human work.

ChatGPT as a learning platform for workers

Our work begins with ChatGPT itself. For millions of people, ChatGPT is not just a productivity tool—it is a place to learn.

Workers use ChatGPT to practice real tasks, ask questions in context, receive feedback, and build skills at their own pace. The experience is dynamic and personal, adapting to an individual's goals and starting point, and bringing learning, practice, and guidance together in a single environment. Here are a few examples among many:

- At the University of Oklahoma College of Law, Professor Sean Harrington built a Socratic quiz tool in ChatGPT that reads the week's assignments and then runs a live, ten-minute, one-on-one dialogue with each student at the start of class. The transcripts show how students reason through real-world legal scenarios, allowing him to adjust the syllabus and strengthen what's being taught—not just how it's tested.
- A Navy veteran turned educator, Stephen K. Hudson built a nonprofit that helps veterans translate military experience into civilian jobs. Using AI as a coach, not a gatekeeper, it helps write resumes, practice interviews, and cut the friction that too often keeps veterans from landing and keeping their first civilian role.
- At a public high school in Southern California, Teacher of the Year Casey Cuny uses AI as a writing coach by starting with what students care about—from football to pop music. ChatGPT offers a claim and evidence, then pushes students to defend it using techniques they've learned in class. The result: his students scored 23 percent higher than the school average on a district writing assessment.

Not every worker has a mentor, a career coach, or an advisor to help them navigate change. ChatGPT can help close that gap by making learning and guidance more widely available.

That learning matters—but it only translates into opportunity if employers can see and trust the skills people are building.

OpenAI Certifications

We launched the OpenAI Certifications program to help workers build and hone AI skills – and to make it easier for employers to identify candidates who demonstrate competency and fluency in using those skills at work.

The program begins with AI Foundations, a course designed to help participants learn to use AI tools to start completing real tasks and solving real problems. For the first time, a full learning experience is available directly inside ChatGPT, where learners can practice real tasks, receive feedback in context, and reflect on their work in a single environment, utilizing AI to help people learn AI.

As people complete AI Foundations, they earn a course certification verifying that they have job-ready AI skills. With additional coursework and a hands-on project, participants can progress to full OpenAI Certification. This broader credential shows employers that a person can apply AI effectively and responsibly in real-world work settings, not just that they have been exposed to the technology.

Our goal is to certify 10 million Americans by 2030.

Closing the loop: the OpenAI Jobs Platform

Skills only create opportunity when they translate into jobs. That is why we are building the OpenAI Jobs Platform, which we plan to launch soon.

The jobs platform is designed to connect employers with job seekers across every industry — using AI to help people get prepared, get matched, and get hired. It will also help workers build AI capabilities over time. The platform will serve businesses of all sizes, as well as state and local governments looking to find AI talent to improve public services.

In practice, the platform is intended to function as a feedback loop. Verified skills connect to employer needs, and hiring outcomes inform future learning. For employers, it means faster, more efficient hiring based on real capabilities. For workers, it means clearer pathways—especially for those without traditional credentials—where skills, not background alone, open doors.

Building with partners and scaling access

We are building this work with a broad coalition of partners because no single organization has all the answers. Employers like Walmart, state systems, and universities each bring unique insight into what workers need and what employers value.

That same belief in meeting people where they are also shapes how we're approaching education, where we're helping equip 400,000 K–12 educators with practical AI skills. The effort builds on our work to make a custom version of ChatGPT free to educators and to introduce tools that are responsive to real classroom needs, such as study mode. It reflects our belief that teachers will play an essential role in helping students learn to use AI effectively as the technology reshapes nearly every industry.

To build AI literacy and skills at scale, we also operate the OpenAI Academy, our free learning platform, which has already helped more than 2.5 million people, including workers, small business owners, nonprofit leaders, and students. Through the Academy,

we provide resources, workshops, and community support, and we have held events in the home states of many members of this Committee, including North Carolina, New York, Georgia, Utah, Pennsylvania, Texas, Illinois, Florida, and Michigan. Last November, we teamed up with DoorDash to host a nationwide, hands-on workshop for small business leaders, with sessions in Michigan, California, New York, Texas, and Florida. By the end of the day, many participants walked away with at least one ready-to-use AI solution tailored to their business.

We also recently launched ChatGPT for Veterans, offering a free year of ChatGPT Plus for eligible transitioning service members and veterans, to help with tasks like translating military experience into civilian terms, preparing for interviews, and exploring education and career options. These efforts share the same objective: helping more people learn to use AI effectively so the benefits are broadly distributed.

Workforce opportunity is local, and progress depends on meeting people where they are.

Acting now, in concrete ways

There is still time to prepare workers for the AI era—but not time to wait. Adoption is already widespread. The labor market is already changing. The question is whether we act early, while workers can still shape how AI fits into their careers.

At OpenAI, we are acting now in concrete ways: helping people build AI skills, making it easier for employers to hire based on those skills, and ensuring the technology supports job growth and economic opportunity. We look forward to being a constructive partner as you work to help American workers thrive in an AI-driven economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.