



**ENERGY SCIENCES  
COALITION**

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## **Statement in Support of the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act in the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act**

August 5, 2020

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of the 100 organizations involved in the Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC), we ask that you include the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act in the final, conferenced FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, consistent with the House FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act.

The ESC believes this legislation is critically important to help improve coordination across federal agencies, increase research and development investments, expand education opportunities, and foster public-private partnerships to maintain U.S. leadership in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and accelerate its adoption for scientific discovery and national security. ESC also supports the legislation's commitment to develop ethical, safe, robust, and reliable AI systems consistent with American values.

In particular, ESC would like to highlight support for the section which authorizes a Department of Energy (DOE) AI research program. DOE, and in particular the Office of Science, is uniquely positioned to advance the development of AI. DOE can also leverage new AI tools and capabilities to support its own unique nuclear security missions and support broader national security missions of the Department of Defense and other national security agencies. For example, the Office of Science is the largest government sponsor for basic research in the physical sciences and a leading sponsor for computing and engineering supporting 22,000 Ph.D. scientists, engineers, graduate students, undergraduates and technical personnel at more than 300 institutions across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. These DOE-funded research and education programs are essential to making the development and adoption of AI a success. In addition, the Office of Science supports the operation of the largest collection of major scientific user facilities in the world. Located at national laboratories and universities across the country, these 27 facilities include leadership-class supercomputers, particle accelerators, experimental reactors, X-ray synchrotron and free-electron laser light sources and other high-precision instruments. These user facilities will both help advance AI and be major beneficiaries of AI tools to accelerate the pace of scientific innovation.

ESC thanks you for advancing this important AI legislation and looks forward to continue working with the Committee to make progress on this Industry of the Future.

Contacts: Christopher Carter  
Co-chair  
610-216-5656  
[ccc317@lehigh.edu](mailto:ccc317@lehigh.edu)

Leland Cogliani  
Co-chair  
202-289-7475  
[Leland@lewis-burke.com](mailto:Leland@lewis-burke.com)

*The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC) is a broad-based coalition of organizations representing scientists, engineers and mathematicians in universities, industry and national laboratories who are committed to supporting and advancing the scientific research programs of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and in particular, the DOE Office of Science.*