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May 17, 2023

The Honorable Debra Haaland
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

I write to you to formally request that the Department of Interior (DOI) immediately block all employee access to ChatGPT and other third-party artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The Department must implement robust security measures and rules to ensure that DOI personnel and information are sufficiently protected from malign actors.

As you may know, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has already blocked employee access to AI tools pending an internal review of these tools' associated risks. According to the EPA, the agency is currently assessing "potential legal, privacy and cybersecurity concerns [related to AI tools] as releasing information to AI tools could lead to potential data breaches, identify theft, financial fraud or inadvertent release of privileged information."¹

It is concerning DOI has not taken similar, decisive action. The use of ChatGPT and other third-party AI tools by DOI employees for official business only compounds the risk of compromise and attack of sensitive DOI information and systems.

Therefore, it is imperative DOI immediately block access to third-party AI tools across all DOI elements until a robust internal review of the use of third-party AI tools is conducted, and guidance and rules for these tools' use is issued. I request that you answer the following questions by May 31, 2023. I look forward to your timely reply.

Sincerely,


John Barrasso, M.D.
Ranking Member

¹ [POLITICO Pro | Article | EPA blocks employee use of ChatGPT](#)

Questions

1. Can you commit that your Department will immediately block access to third-party AI tools across all DOI elements until a robust internal review of the use of third-party AI tools is conducted?
 - a. If not, why not?
2. Can you commit that your Department will work to immediately conduct a review of the use of third-party AI tools by DOI personnel?
 - a. If not, why not?
3. Can you commit that your Department will publish internal guidance and rules for the use of third-party AI tools before June 30, 2023?
 - a. If not, why not?
4. Please provide copies of all internal guidance issued as a result of this review no later than June 30, 2023.