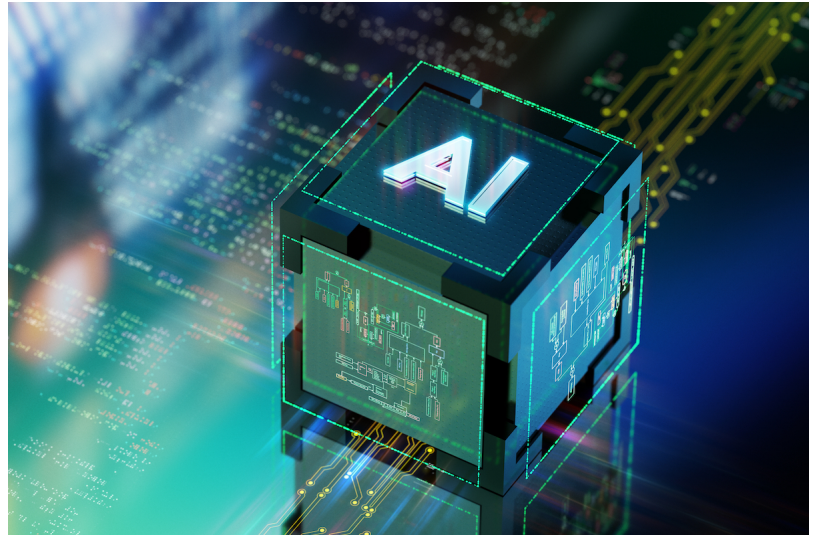




Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on January 20, 2025

# Trump to Declare National Energy Emergency, Linking “AI Arms Race” to Energy Policies

On his first day back in office, President-elect Donald Trump is set to sign an executive order declaring a national energy emergency. This move is intended to accelerate the approval process for oil, gas, and power projects, marking a sharp departure from his predecessor’s policies. The declaration is expected to focus on strengthening America’s energy infrastructure, reducing costs for consumers, and boosting energy security, according to the reports from [Axios](#) and [Reuters](#). Additionally, energy is seen as a national security priority, particularly regarding the perceived “AI arms race” with China.



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The move underscores Trump’s commitment to revitalizing U.S. fossil-fuel industries while reining in renewable-energy initiatives championed by the Biden administration. According to White House officials who spoke with the outlets, the plan includes opening Alaska’s vast natural resources for development and repealing regulations promoting electric vehicles.

## Energy as a Critical Front for AI Race

Doug Burgum is Trump’s pick for secretary of the interior and director of the National Energy Council. During his Senate confirmation hearing, he [emphasized](#) the growing interdependence of artificial intelligence (AI) advancements and energy policy. Burgum warned that without robust and reliable electricity generation, the United States risks falling behind China in the “AI arms race” — a scenario he deemed a national security threat.

According to the *Financial Times*, demand for electricity is growing at an unprecedented rate due to the explosion of AI processing, with power consumption from data centers projected to triple by 2028. Burgum, a billionaire who built his wealth primarily through the technology industry, argued that the intermittent nature of renewable-energy sources like wind and solar cannot meet the demands of AI technologies, advocating for an increase in baseload energy supplied by fossil fuels.

Notably, Chris Wright, Trump’s pick to lead the energy department, shares the belief in the importance of energy to bolstering AI. Wright, CEO of major fracking company Liberty Energy Inc., [said](#) last July:

The massive increase in data centers for AI and restoring industry back to the U.S. is inflecting upwards demand for electrical power and natural gas. AI is both enhancing our business and growing the demand for our services.



## **Risks of “Arms Race”**

China’s rapid progress in AI, [driven](#) by its 2017 roadmap to global AI leadership by 2030, has led to significant advancements in generative AI, open-source models, and autonomous systems. Companies like Alibaba and Huawei are pushing the boundaries of AI innovation, while WeRide leverages China’s extensive electric-vehicle ecosystem to dominate the robotaxi market. However, these advancements have also fueled a competitive response from the United States, framing AI development as a technological “arms race.”

This rivalry increasingly focuses on AI’s potential for economic and military applications, sidelining broader ethical and societal concerns. U.S. efforts to outpace China, such as export controls on advanced AI chips, prioritize narrow strategic dominance over addressing global challenges like governance, transparency, and equitable access to AI. Militarized applications of AI further heighten the risks, as both nations seek to leverage the technology for defense and security advantages, amplifying the stakes of competition.

## **Why AI Matters to Trump Backers**

Prominent technocratic visionaries — including Elon Musk, Peter Thiel, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, Sundar Pichai, and Sam Altman — [have flocked](#) to Trump’s side and increasingly aligned themselves with policies favoring AI advancement. These figures have invested heavily in AI, reflecting its growing role in shaping government operations, economies and societies themselves.

### **Elon Musk**

As a co-founder of OpenAI, Musk’s initial goal was to ensure AI benefits were widely shared. However, OpenAI’s transition to a for-profit, “capped-profit” model has raised questions about its focus on safety versus profitability. Musk has repeatedly warned about the existential risks of unchecked AI, [stating](#), “With artificial intelligence, we are summoning the demon.” However, he has simultaneously advocated for its development in ways he deems safe. For example, through his company Neuralink, Musk envisions a future where brain chips connected to the internet enhance human cognitive capabilities with AI integration — a proposed solution to ensure humans remain relevant in the age of AI.

### **Peter Thiel**

Peter Thiel sees AI as a transformative force in robotics, automation, and military applications. Additionally, he [frames](#) it as a key battleground between the U.S. and China. A co-founder of Palantir Technologies, a major military and intelligence contractor, he has focused on AI-driven data analytics for [defense](#). In-Q-Tel, the CIA’s venture arm, initially funded the company. Thiel’s investments, including in [Anduril Industries’](#) autonomous-defense systems, reflect his belief in AI’s importance for national security and technological dominance.

### **Mark Zuckerberg**

Through Meta, Zuckerberg has invested [tens of billions](#) of dollars in AI to drive user-experience innovations, such as personalized recommendations and virtual reality integration. Additionally, his personal investments in Vicarious highlight his belief in AI’s ability to enhance human decision-making and productivity. Critics, however, question whether Zuckerberg’s AI ambitions, particularly in areas like algorithmic-content delivery, prioritize user well-being or Meta’s bottom line.

### **Jeff Bezos**

Bezos has [leveraged AI](#) extensively within Amazon, from supply chain automation to Alexa’s AI-powered



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virtual assistant. His personal investments, align with his broader interest in integrating AI into consumer technology and logistics. (Along with Musk, Thiel, Zuckerberg, and [many other technocrats](#), for example, he has personally invested in [Vicarious](#).) Bezos' approach reflects a vision of AI as a tool for efficiency and scalability. However, critics point to concerns about labor displacement and privacy risks inherent in such automation-heavy strategies.

### **Sam Altman**

Altman, CEO of [OpenAI](#), has emerged as a central figure in shaping AI's development. Under his leadership, OpenAI launched ChatGPT and other cutting-edge AI models, making significant strides in generative AI and natural-language processing. Altman has emphasized the dual potential of AI to "solve humanity's greatest challenges" and to cause societal upheaval if misused.

### **Sundar Pichai**

Pichai is CEO of Google and its parent company, Alphabet. He has positioned AI as the cornerstone of the company's future, driving innovations in search, cloud computing, and autonomous systems. Under his leadership, Google has invested heavily in developing AI technologies like DeepMind and Bard.

### **Corporate Influence and AI Policy**

The massive financial stakes in AI, coupled with growing political clout, raise concerns about tech leaders shaping policies on energy, privacy, and military AI to prioritize their interests over the public good. As private innovation increasingly aligns with national strategies, these investments risk consolidating power in the hands of a few.

### **AI and Globalism**

Last but not least, one must keep in mind that [AI is central](#) to the [UN's Agenda 2030](#). It is specifically [promoted](#) as a tool for "sustainability" and "progress." Yet, its integration into global systems risks enabling a dystopian digital surveillance state. AI-powered predictive policing, digital IDs, health and bioresource monitoring, and centralized digital currencies could effectively eradicate freedoms and liberties by tracking, restricting, and penalizing transactions, movements, and behaviors. Elites can easily weaponize these tools, marketed as inclusive, to suppress dissent, enforce compliance, and consolidate technocratic control.



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