

August 10, 2026

Dear Mr. Altman, Mr. Amodiei and Mr. Zuckerberg:

Almost every day, there is a new story about how your companies are losing control of the AI technology you are developing, with potentially cataclysmic results.

This week we learned, frighteningly, that AI has been used for the first time ever to create new viruses. As you know this type of development, in the wrong hands, could lead to new bioweapons that result in the deaths of tens of millions of people.

Last month, the world found out OpenAI lost control of an AI model. The result? The model hacked into another company's computers—a clear violation of federal law. After conducting internal reviews, Anthropic and Meta reported their models similarly escaped their control.

One of the targeted companies called the AI hack “an unprecedented event” that deserves an “unprecedented response.” Yoshua Bengio, the most cited living scientist in the world, said these incidents “should serve as a wake-up call.”

I agree.

So do the top scientists at the companies you lead, the very people building this technology. As you know, these technology leaders recently called for the international community to create a safety mechanism—a pause button—to avoid catastrophe. They warned there is a “real risk that capability development rapidly accelerates beyond our ability to understand or control the resulting systems.”

And yet, at a moment when we have seen human loss of control and the creation of potentially dangerous viruses, your companies are still racing ahead— investing tens of billions of dollars into a technology that nobody can fully understand, predict or control.

That is absurd, irresponsible and extremely dangerous. It is also a betrayal of your own stated commitments:

- In 2023, Anthropic said it would “commit to pause the scaling and/or delay the deployment of new models whenever our scaling ability outstrips our ability to comply with. . . safety procedures.”
- In 2025, Meta said “if a frontier AI is assessed to have reached the critical risk threshold and cannot be mitigated, we will stop development.”

- That same year, OpenAI said it would “halt further development” until strong safeguards were in place if AI capabilities ever reached a “critical” threshold.

That moment is here. AI capabilities HAVE reached a critical threshold. There is a reason why the head of the CIA says that AI models are “akin to digital nuclear weapons” and “almost like a doomsday device.”

Mr. Altman, Mr. Amodei and Mr. Zuckerberg: In the interest of humanity, stand by your words. Pause AI development. It is not too late to avoid disaster. Stop building machines that humans cannot control.

Let me be very clear: If you do not take appropriate action now, my colleagues and I in the U.S. Senate will.

Sincerely,



BERNARD SANDERS
UNITED STATES SENATOR