

California creates AI verification bodies and a state registry of AI auditors

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News

Sep 9, 2026

Governor Newsom signs first-in-the-nation AI safeguards to protect Californians, calls on the federal government to do its part

What you need to know: Governor Newsom signed two bills strengthening California's AI safeguards by establishing first-in-the-nation standards for third-party audits and independent assessments of AI systems — increasing transparency and accountability as the technology rapidly advances.

SACRAMENTO – As artificial intelligence advances at extraordinary speed and leading experts raise increasingly urgent concerns about the risks posed by these systems, Governor Gavin Newsom today signed legislation (Senate Bill 813 and Assembly Bill 1405) strengthening California's nation-leading framework for safe, transparent, and accountable AI.

The concerns raised in recent incidents reinforce what California has long recognized: artificial intelligence holds extraordinary promise, but it must be developed and deployed with meaningful safeguards to protect the public. California has taken nation-leading action to advance AI safety, transparency, accountability, and responsible innovation, but the scale and potential consequences of this technology demand sustained action from every level of government. The federal government must step forward with robust, national regulations that match the urgency of this moment.

Governor Gavin Newsom

The Governor signed Senate Bill 813 , authored by Senator Jerry McNerney (D – Pleasanton), which establishes a first-in-the-nation framework for independent verification organizations that can assess AI systems and models for compliance with state law. Governor Newsom also signed Assembly Bill 1405 , authored by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), creating a state registry for AI auditors and establishing standards for their independence, transparency, and integrity.

Together, the bills establish a framework for independent third-party evaluation and audits , laying the foundation for greater transparency and accountability as AI becomes increasingly embedded in critical sectors of California's economy and public life.

"AI has the potential to improve our lives, but without effective guardrails, it poses significant risks. Just this week we learned that the most powerful AI systems teamed with AI agents pose real threats to humanity," said Senator McNerney . "Gov. Newsom's signing of SB 813 sends a clear message that California is taking the lead on assessing AI's safety risks, since Washington, D.C., is unable or unwilling to do so. This landmark law codifies one of the primary recommendations of the governor's blue-ribbon panel on AI by establishing independent, third-party evaluations of artificial intelligence to help ensure that the technology remains safe and beneficial."

"Thank you, Governor Newsom, for protecting Californians from the risks we know are emerging from AI," said Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan. "Californians deserve to know that the AI systems and models shaping their lives are safe and secure. We cannot expect industry to simply grade its own homework; third-party auditors are essential to ensuring AI is safe for our communities and critical infrastructure. The auditors will be able to identify risks, verify claims, and hold developers to meaningful standards. AB 1405 is groundbreaking legislation that for the first time establishes a mechanism for credible third-party auditing, laying the groundwork for meaningful oversight of the AI technologies that touch our lives every day."

California is building safeguards as AI accelerates

California has been the longstanding national leader in AI safety. In 2023, Governor Newsom issued a first-of-its-kind executive order directing the state to safely use AI for the benefit of Californians; identify potential risks to individuals, communities, state government, and state workers; and implement guardrails to ensure the government's use of AI protects Californians' rights and safety.

In 2024, the Governor signed a nation-leading comprehensive package of AI legislation addressing issues including deepfakes, AI watermarking, children and workers. The Administration also convened leading AI academics and experts to develop a science-based framework for understanding the capabilities and risks of frontier models.

In 2025, Governor Newsom signed the nation's strongest AI safety law — SB 53, California's Transparency in Frontier Artificial Intelligence Act — which requires frontier AI developers to publicly disclose their safety frameworks, report certain critical safety incidents to the state and protects whistleblowers who report serious risks. California also established the first child online safety protections around AI companion chatbots in the country and strengthened automated decisionmaking technology privacy regulations.

Earlier this year, Governor Newsom issued an executive order to further strengthen privacy and civil liberties protections around California's procurement processes and raise the trust and safety bar for artificial intelligence companies seeking to do business with the state. He also launched a Tech Fraud Task Force to collaborate with the private sector to crack down on AI-enabled fraud. In August, Governor Newsom announced a first-in-the-nation AI Cyber Defense Program within the California Cybersecurity Integration Center to strengthen defenses against emerging AI-enabled cyber threats. The program will use AI to help detect vulnerabilities, harden networks and support incident response, while expanding access to advanced cybersecurity capabilities for local governments and critical infrastructure partners.

Innovation, safety, and accountability must move together

California is home to the world's leading AI companies, researchers, and innovators. The state's approach is to harness and foster that extraordinary capacity while ensuring that the technology develops in a way that protects the public, improves public well-being, and earns public trust. This is why we have leveraged AI to streamline access to government services, improve road safety, expedite housing permits, and improve wildfire detection.

As AI capabilities continue to accelerate, California is continuing to strengthen transparency, protect whistleblowers, defend critical infrastructure and ensure meaningful human oversight.

And while California keeps leading, the speed and scale of the technology and its associated risks demand a national response. Governor Newsom continues to call on the federal government to establish robust national regulations that protect the public while allowing responsible innovation to flourish.

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