

Trump moves to ban Anthropic from the US government

The dispute between Anthropic and the Department of Defense has escalated in recent days, with officials publicly trading barbs with the AI company on social media.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth met with Anthropic's CEO, Dario Amodei, earlier this week. He gave the company until Friday to commit to changing the terms of its contract to allow "all lawful use" of its models. Hegseth praised Anthropic's products during the meeting and said that the Department of Defense wanted to continue working with Anthropic, according to one source familiar with interaction who was not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Some experts say that the dispute boils down to a clash over vibes rather than concrete disagreements over how artificial intelligence should be deployed. "This is such an unnecessary dispute in my opinion," says Michael Horowitz, an expert on military use of AI and former Deputy Assistant Secretary for emerging technologies at the Pentagon. "It is about theoretical use cases that are not on the table for now."

Horowitz notes that Anthropic has supported all of the ways the Department of Defense has proposed using its technology thus far. "My sense is that the Pentagon and Anthropic agree at present about the use cases where the technology is not ready for prime time," he adds.

Anthropic was founded on the idea that AI should be built with safety at its core. In January, Amodei penned a blog post about the risks of powerful artificial intelligence that touched upon the dangers of fully autonomous AI-controlled

weapons.

“These weapons also have legitimate uses in the defense of democracy,” Amodei wrote. “But they are a dangerous weapon to wield.”

Additional reporting by Paresh Dave.

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