

November 3, 2025

The Honorable Rick Scott
Chair
Senate Special Committee on Aging
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
Ranking Member
Senate Special Committee on Aging
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Scott and Ranking Member Gillibrand,

I write to respectfully request that the Senate Special Committee on Aging schedule a hearing to examine the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, particularly AI chatbots and companions, on older Americans. These tools are already influencing how seniors receive information, manage their finances and health care, and interact with the world around them.¹ These tools are still in their nascent stages, and as this technology advances, Congress has a responsibility to ensure it is developed, deployed, and used in ways that protect consumers and promote public trust.

In my *AI for America* roadmap, I outlined a vision for the United States to lead in innovation while ensuring that every generation of Americans benefits. That means building AI systems with safety, reliability, transparency, and accountability at their core. This Committee is uniquely suited to apply that lens to older Americans' experiences.

AI tools can both help and harm seniors. On one hand, they offer opportunities for independence, including medication reminders, health monitoring, and accessible digital interfaces. However, there is growing evidence of exploitation of and harm to seniors from AI-driven technology. In one tragic instance reported by Reuters, a cognitively impaired 76-year-old was lured via an AI chatbot into believing he was interacting with a real person and subsequently died after traveling to a meeting arranged by the bot.² In a recent investigation, it was found that major AI chatbots could be manipulated to craft targeted phishing emails aimed at older adults and allow the supercharging of scams that face our aging population.³ Survey data shows older adults are less

¹ Brittne Kakulla, "Older Adults Are Navigating AI: Attitudes, Awareness and Openness Among Adults 50+," AARP Research, September 23, 2025, <https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/technology/internet-media-devices/artificial-intelligence-survey/>.

² Jeff Horwitz, "Meta's flirty AI chatbot invited a retiree to New York. He never made it home." Reuters Investigates, August 14, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/meta-ai-chatbot-death/>.

³ Steve Stecklow and Poppy McPherson, "We set out to craft the perfect phishing scam. Major AI chatbots were happy to help," Reuters Investigates, September 15, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/ai-chatbots-cyber/>.

confident than younger users in identifying when content is AI-generated or inaccurate, leaving them more vulnerable to deception or misuse.⁴ These are not hypothetical risks. They're happening right now, and they demonstrate the need for oversight and stronger safeguards before more people get hurt.

At the same time, many older Americans are embracing AI-powered tools to enhance their quality of life, some out of curiosity or convenience, others out of a desire for companionship. However, AI can also worsen the growing problem of social isolation among older adults.⁵ In one report, a 75-year-old widow who rarely sees other people said she now spends up to five hours a day talking with an AI chatbot for conversation and can go “weeks on end” without talking to a human.⁶ Her story shows the two sides of this issue: while these tools may offer comfort in the moment, they can also deepen loneliness by replacing genuine connection with artificial interaction. The Committee should discuss how these technologies can help combat loneliness among seniors without reinforcing it, and ensure AI tools are designed to strengthen, not substitute, human connection.

A hearing would allow the Committee to:

- Assess how AI chatbots and other AI tools are being used by and for older Americans, both beneficially (e.g., medication reminders, simplified interfaces) and detrimentally (e.g., scams, misinformation, loneliness, confusion).
- Explore the opportunities for transparency and oversight in these systems so that older adults understand when they are interacting with an AI, its limitations, and when human intervention is needed.
- Examine what regulatory or legislative reforms might be necessary to support safe design, red teaming of AI systems, consumer education efforts, and access to redress when things go wrong.
- Consider how to build trust in AI among older Americans so that beneficial technologies are adopted responsibly and vulnerabilities are addressed proactively.

Older Americans deserve to participate fully and safely in our evolving digital society, not be left behind or put at risk as technology races ahead without necessary guardrails. The Committee's leadership on this topic can help ensure the federal approach to AI supports strong innovation and protections for all generations.

⁴ Robin Brewer, “Commentary: Older Americans are using AI – study shows how and what they think of it,” Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation (University of Michigan), August 14 2025, <https://ihpi.umich.edu/news-events/news/commentary-older-americans-are-using-ai-study-shows-how-and-what-they-think-it>.

⁵ Gerlach LB, Solway ES, Malani PN. Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults. *JAMA*. 2024;331(23):2058. doi:10.1001/jama.2024.3456

⁶ Meg Oliver, “Older Americans turning to AI-powered chatbots for companionship,” *CBS News*, August 5, 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ai-chatbot-companionship-older-americans>.

Thank you for your dedication to protecting older Americans and for considering this important request. I look forward to working with you and the Committee toward a hearing that can shed light on this emerging challenge and identify real solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "K".

Mark Kelly
United States Senator