

North Carolina Artificial Intelligence Leadership Council

Co-Chairs:

Teena Piccione, Secretary of N.C. Department of Information Technology and State CIO

Lee Lilley, Secretary of North Carolina Department of Commerce

Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2025, 2:00-5:00pm

North Carolina State University Plant Sciences Building

840 Oval Dr, Raleigh, NC 27606

AI Leadership Council Members Present

Sen. DeAndrea Salvador

Rep. Zack Hawkins

Dr. David Yokum

Mary Penny Kelley

Kunal Choksi

Vera Cubero

Bryan Harris

Michael Martine (*representing Phaedra Boinodiris*)

Marina Carreker

Igor Jablov

Dr. Thomas Reardon

The Hon. Tommy Sowers

Dr. Andrea Crowley

Dr. Stan Ahalt

Dr. Siobahn Day Grady

Markell Storay

The Hon. Shinica Thomas

Jennie Bowen

Dr. Angel Hsu

Leslie Boney

Rick Knafelz (*virtual*)

Hannah Drummond

Sarah Bacha

Sushma Masemore

AI Leadership Council Members Absent

Sen. Todd Johnson

Todd Olson

Rep. Jake Johnson

Guest Speakers

Governor Josh Stein

I-Sah Hsieh, Deputy Secretary for AI and Policy, NCDIT

Facilitators

Dr. Marc Hoit, Vice Chancellor for Information Technology and CIO, NC State University

Dr. Margaret Brunson, Organizational Health Advisor, NC Office of State Human Resources

Agenda

- I. Opening Remarks – Co-Chairs
- II. Council Member Introductions – Council Members and Facilitators
- III. Vision for AI in North Carolina – I-Sah Hsieh
- IV. Breakout Discussions – Council Members and Facilitators
- V. Governor's Remarks – Gov. Josh Stein
- VI. Presentation of AI Questions
- VII. Closing Remarks

Opening Remarks

Sec. Teena Piccione opened her remarks with a commitment to innovation and ethical governance. She outlined a vision for North Carolina to become the nation's leader in AI and the most AI-literate state and workforce. She further stated that she wants to equip state agencies with the tools and guidance to use AI effectively. Sec. Piccione ended her remarks by telling all council members that no question is off the table in these meetings.

Sec. Lee Lilley followed Sec. Piccione by stating that the important work is what happens after the meeting, including the discussions and research that members will take on. He encouraged the council to help the state focus and prioritize resources and time to effectively lead the nation in AI. Sec. Lilley finished his remarks by thanking Governor Stein and the council for the work they are putting into North Carolina.

Council Member Introductions

All council members introduced themselves, explained their background and one word that best fits their area of interest in AI.

Vision for AI in North Carolina

I-Sah Hsieh reflected on the historic significance of the council's work, emphasizing that North Carolina stands at a pivotal moment in shaping the future of artificial intelligence. He highlighted the need for thoughtful and proactive leadership, acknowledging that while perfection is unattainable, the collective expertise present offers a unique opportunity to lead responsibly. I-Sah underscored the importance of trust, both within government and with the public, as the foundation for successful AI adoption. He described the state's approach to becoming a leader in AI. Along with the AI Leadership Council, the executive order includes the creation of an AI Accelerator for rapid prototyping and collaboration with private sector partners, and noted North Carolina's commitment to a fast-paced, 60-day development cycle. He further states the council's mission is to harness AI's potential, promote literacy and responsible use, and position North Carolina as a national leader in trustworthy and effective AI solutions.

Breakout Discussions

Council members broke out into small groups to generate questions that the state must answer in the next 12-24 months to accomplish the following tasks:

- 1) Make NC a leader in state government AI use.
- 2) Position NC as a premier state to live and work with AI.

Governor's Remarks

Governor Stein thanked council members and participants for their dedication and highlighted the importance of bipartisan collaboration. The Governor charged the

council with developing a strategic roadmap for AI, advising on policy, workforce development, and training. The Governor also shared insights from recent international trips, emphasizing North Carolina's reputation as a leader in technology and the need to build on these strengths. The council is tasked with ensuring citizens are protected and prepared for the opportunities AI creates.

Presentation of AI Questions

Council members and breakout groups presented the questions they developed for the AI Leadership Council to answer with the strategic roadmap.

The themes that came from the teams focused on "Make NC a leader in state government AI use" were:

- 1) **Leveraging Institutional Knowledge and Partnerships:**
Participants emphasized the importance of learning from large organizations with established AI programs and augmenting state teams by collaborating with vendors and universities to turn ideas into action.
- 2) **Effective and Inclusive AI Training:**
There was broad agreement on the need to move beyond basic AI literacy to true fluency, making training accessible, simple, and relevant for all employees, not just technical professionals. Scaling existing training resources and addressing the digital divide were highlighted as priorities.
- 3) **Leadership, Risk, and Governance:**
The group discussed what it means to be a leader in AI, how to set and communicate risk tolerance within government, and the need for clear, understandable governance frameworks.
- 4) **Collaboration and Resource Optimization:**
Participants stressed the value of cross-sector collaboration to avoid duplicating efforts, orchestrate innovation, and ensure that solutions are scalable across departments. Funding, incentives for research, and open data practices were identified as critical to success.

The themes that came from the teams focused on "Position NC as a premier state to live and work with AI" were:

- 1) **Workforce Disruption and Education:**
Participants expressed concern about job displacement and the changing nature of work due to AI and automation. The group discussed the need for strategies to support workers transitioning to new roles, as well as the importance of updating education and training to prepare future generations for evolving career paths.
- 2) **Safeguards, Privacy, and Responsible AI Use:**
There was a strong focus on the need for robust policies to protect users, including AI disclosure statements, privacy frameworks, and safeguards against scams and data misuse. Fostering competition and preventing monopolies were highlighted as ways to encourage responsible innovation and better privacy practices.

3) **Social Wellness and Community Impact:**

The group recognized the impact of AI on social wellness, including risks of isolation and the importance of maintaining human-centered skills. Libraries, healthcare professionals, and mental health resources were identified as key community assets to help address these challenges.

4) **Infrastructure, Equity, and Collaboration:**

Participants emphasized the importance of reliable infrastructure, such as broadband, water, and data, for successful AI adoption. Ensuring equitable access, supporting marginalized communities, and fostering statewide collaboration were discussed as essential for North Carolina's long-term success.

Closing Remarks

Sec. Piccione expressed sincere gratitude to all participants, hosts, and Governor Stein for their visionary leadership in building a trustworthy and responsible AI future for North Carolina. She highlighted the importance of collaboration and trust and thanked Sec Lilley for helping pave the way for responsible innovation.

Sec. Lilley thanked the staff and acknowledged the complex landscape, emphasizing that the council's work involves many challenging questions. He encouraged political leaders to embrace uncertainty and seek knowledge and confidence as the council moves forward.

Both secretaries noted that the council will organize information into subcommittees and share updates at the next session.

Adjournment

Meeting concluded at 4:30 pm.