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The Honorable Ami Bera
U.S. House of Representatives
172 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Submitted electronically to bera.ai@mail.house.gov
May 6, 2024

Dear Representative Bera,

On behalf of the University of California Health (UC Health), thank you for championing health innovation and your efforts to understand the uses of artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on health care. We sincerely appreciate this opportunity to respond to your request on the current state of AI in the health care industry and hope that it may inform your efforts to develop policies that promote innovation while safeguarding patient interests.

Guided by its tripartite mission of teaching, research and public service, the University of California (UC) has a bold vision to improve the health and well-being of all people living in California now and in the future. With ten campuses, six academic health centers, twenty health professional schools and three national laboratories, UC is leading the way in exploring scientific and technological breakthroughs in several AI-related research topics. From biomedical research advancement to improved health care delivery, AI promises a host of health care innovations, and has the potential to improve ways in which doctors and researchers approach treatments and address health disparities. With both world-class research and medical expertise, UC campuses and medical centers provide the ideal environment for such innovations on the global scale.

UC Health is actively seeking to leverage the wealth of knowledge and experience of UC faculty conducting research in AI, and individual UC academic medical centers are piloting a number of creative approaches. These include the use of generative AI to provide physicians with draft responses to non-emergency questions, developing machine-learning models to better predict patients' risk of certain cancers and other conditions, using AI tools to transcribe patient visits and automate the entry of information in the electronic health record, to name a few examples. In order to guide the appropriate implementation of AI within the UC system, UC President Michael Drake, formed a Presidential Working Group charged with developing overarching principles and recommendations for UC's current and future use of AI in August 2020. This group developed the *UC Responsible AI Principles* to guide the

procurement, development and monitoring of AI as implemented by the University. In response to one of the recommendations of that report, President Drake established the UC Presidential Working Group on Artificial Intelligence Standing Council (AI Council) in May of 2022 to assist in the implementation of the *UC Responsible AI Principles*. As part of this effort, a new awareness program is set to roll out this year – including a new website that will be a source for AI-related policies and training modules that will allow faculty and administrative staff to develop a shared baseline knowledge of the opportunities and risks of various tools and technologies. In addition, since October 2023, UC Health has convened the UC Health AI Governance Forum with the goal of enabling the UC academic health centers to share expertise, resources and concerns related to safe and responsible AI development and deployment. UC Health and experts across the system have also been active in national groups working on responsible AI in healthcare, including the Coalition for Health AI (CHAI), a nonprofit aspiring to contribute to best practices with the testing, deployment and evaluation of AI systems.

On March 14, the University held a Congressional briefing on the intersection of AI and health as part of a series of briefings designed to help policymakers understand the opportunities and challenges of this emerging technology. In this discussion, UC experts highlighted the promise and potential perils for patients as AI tools become more fully incorporated into health care delivery systems. Despite all the positive impacts that AI can bring to health care delivery, UC experts recognize that AI presents risks across critical areas, including bias, safety, transparency, accountability, privacy and security, and ethical considerations. To that end, ensuring adequate transparency and creating governance around the use of AI tools are critical ways that the risks brought by the use of AI can be mitigated. With respect to transparency, UC experts noted that health care providers should have information available to them about how and in which populations AI tools were tested, what the test outcomes were and what information AI tools rely on when generating predictions. It is also important that patients understand how their data are being used and how decisions made by AI tools may impact them. Along with transparency, governance of AI means that there are robust processes in place about how AI tools are vetted to ensure trustworthiness.

UC Health plays a leading role in California's health care safety net as the state's second largest provider of Medi-Cal (Medicaid) inpatient services and ensuring that uses of AI in health care delivery do not exacerbate existing health disparities is critically important. UC recognizes that when data that is put into tools that is not representative of the people it is used for, the outcomes of that algorithm have limited usefulness. There can be harmful implications if populations have been excluded from underlying data sets used by AI models, including perpetuating – rather than closing – health inequities. In order to have an equitable impact, it is critical that developers of AI tools are inclusive, especially for populations that have been historically marginalized and underserved, including people of color and those with rare and chronic conditions.

As AI tools evolve, it has become ever more pertinent for Congress to support and sustain investments in groundbreaking AI research so that universities and institutions can continue to innovate and drive cutting-edge research that improve the lives of all people. As a leader in the advancement of AI technologies, UC supports legislative efforts to make resources widely available to researchers with exciting ideas about how to build and test new models. The Creating Resources for Every American to Experiment with Artificial Intelligence Act of 2023 (CREATE AI) Act (H.R. 5077/ S. 2715) would do just that. Introduced in July 2023, this legislation authorizes the creation of a National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource (NAIRR), which would help ensure ongoing federal investments in groundbreaking AI research to take place at our nation's universities, health centers and national laboratories. Importantly, NAIRR would improve the ability of researchers to access the computing power needed to work with AI models. In addition to authorizing the NAIRR, Congress must appropriate funding to the effort if it is to be successful in supporting the next generation of critical AI discoveries.

UC appreciates your leadership on the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and the Health Care Innovation Caucus, as well as your efforts to understand how to navigate this fast-evolving technology and the ways in which it is transforming patient care, improving health outcomes, and making other advancement in the field of health care. We welcome the opportunity to convene a virtual roundtable discussion for you and your staff with health AI leaders from across UC Health, or work with UC Davis Health to host a discussion that supports your efforts. The University stands ready to serve as a resource and partner, and we are happy to answer any questions you may have on the work that we are doing across our campuses and academic health centers. If you have any questions, please contact Kent Springfield at (202) 993-8810.

Sincerely,

Cora Han, J.D.
Chief Health Data Officer
UC Health