The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA  95814

**RE:      SB 53 (Wiener) – CalCompute: foundation models: whistleblowers. – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wicks,

Omidyar Network, a California based philanthropic and investment organization committed to elevating humanity's interests and role in how technology is governed and held accountable, supports SB 53, which would establish a consortium at the Government Operations Agency to develop recommendations around the development of CalCompute, a public cloud computing cluster. The bill would also establish important whistleblower protections for employees at AI companies and require enhanced transparency around developer procedures to ensure that catastrophic risks are minimized.

Omidyar Network's philanthropic and investment efforts have continued for more than two decades and stem from our founder's work at two great California companies, PayPal and eBay. We envision a world where our shared humanity steers our digital future. So far, we have committed more than $1.94 billion to initiatives that share our vision.

Large AI developers are developing increasingly advanced AI systems. While we are excited about the potential for these systems to drive improvements in education, science, provisioning of public services, and more, large AI developers themselves warn that their AI systems could pose serious risks. The recent International Scientific Report on the Safety of Advanced AI, supported by over 30 countries including the United States, concluded that those risks include "large-scale labor market impacts, AI-enabled hacking or biological attacks," among others. These risks are currently being voluntarily managed by companies themselves, as advanced AI is largely unregulated.

SB 53 would allow the Government Operations Agency to develop a framework for CalCompute that centers safe, ethical, equitable, and sustainable AI development and deployment. CalCompute would be a groundbreaking computational resource for universities and startups to conduct research into publicly beneficial applications of AI, and its foundational principles will help foster a competitive and innovative AI economy that also protects the public interest.
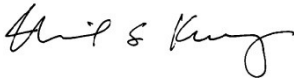
This measure would also carefully expand existing whistleblower protections, which are essential for the AI industry. AI researchers and engineers would likely be the first to know if a company's product poses a significant risk to public safety, but company contracts may prevent disclosures that are not explicitly protected by law. SB 53 not only requires AI companies to establish an anonymous internal process for reporting safety issues, which is already an emerging industry norm, but also expands legal protections for employees who turn to government authorities in the case that internal reporting fails to address a safety risk.

Finally, with the release of [The California Report on Frontier AI Policy](#), SB 53 has been amended to establish procedures for enhanced transparency around the development and implementation of safety and security protocols developed by covered entities and to require incident reporting. These critical transparency measures will build public trust around the development, use, and distribution of sophisticated artificial intelligence models.

SB 53 is an important step toward responsible AI governance. By broadening computing access for AI researchers and startups while implementing safety guardrails, this measure advances and encourages AI innovation while addressing serious safety risks to the public.

**For these reasons, we respectfully request your support for this important measure.**

Sincerely,

Mike Kubzansky
CEO, Omidyar Network

cc:     Senator Scott Wiener
        Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee