California Seeks to Have Consistent Definition of Artificial Intelligence

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) has created numerous opportunities for growth and economic development throughout California. However, the unregulated use of AI can lead to a Pandora's Box of undesirable consequences. A regulatory framework that leads to inconsistent results likely will lead to other problems. Acknowledging this, the most recent California legislature included a bevy of bills aimed at regulating the use of AI, a formal, legal definition of AI to use across various California statutes.

On September 28, 2024, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 2885, which defines AI as

> an engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objective, infer from the input it receives how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments.

The purpose of this definition is to standardize the definition of AI across various California statutes, including the California Business and Professions Code, Education Code, and Government Code. According to the California legislature, this definition is broad enough to cover all conceivable uses of AI, yet it limits what is considered AI solely to "engineered or machine-based systems" (i.e., not biological organisms). Moving forward, we can expect the legislature to continue using this definition of AI as it navigates the novel legal issues that arise in our ever-evolving technological world.

The amendments of this bill take effect January 1, 2025.