# US tech leaders and lawmakers unite at Hill and Valley Forum to boost national security and manufacturing



Tech industry leaders and US lawmakers have convened at the Hill and Valley Forum, a high-profile event dedicated to exploring how advanced technologies can bolster national security and American manufacturing. The forum features some of the most influential figures in technology and government, including Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, Oracle CEO Safra Catz, and Alphabet President Ruth Porat. Among the political attendees are bipartisan members of Congress, notably House Speaker Mike Johnson.

Taking place in Washington, D.C., the event is structured around key discussions about the deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) in defence operations as well as strategies to maintain and extend US leadership in space exploration. The forum also broadens its scope to consider wider policy issues that impact the technology and manufacturing sectors, such as the integration of robotics in revitalising American manufacturing industries, alongside efforts to improve government operational efficiency.

Speakers include Senator Joni Ernst, who addresses government reform, and White House economist Stephen Miran, who provides insights on the role robotics can play in boosting industrial capabilities.

This gathering underscores the deep and historically rooted relationship between Silicon Valley and the federal government, which stretches back to the Cold War and the space race era. Federal investments during this time were pivotal in the growth of the US tech sector, helping shape the development of integrated circuits and creating a market that enabled semiconductor companies to scale. Over time, this relationship has evolved from one of dependency on government contracts to one of significant influence, with leading tech firms now heavily invested in lobbying efforts. For instance, in 2016, technology giants like Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, and Amazon collectively spent $49 million on lobbying activities.

Historian Margaret O’Mara has described Silicon Valley as an “entrepreneurial Galapagos,” a unique innovation ecosystem fostered by government policies such as the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, which allowed diverse global talent to contribute to the region’s technological advancements.

The political philosophy held by Silicon Valley leaders reflects a complex blend of progressive social values and pro-business economic policies. Contrary to the common libertarian stereotype, many tech founders identify as Democrats and favour redistributive policies. Yet they also tend to oppose heavy business regulation and the strengthening of labour unions, with 74% advocating for decreased union power. This ideological stance is marked by an optimistic belief in technology’s ability to address societal challenges and a preference for policies that promote innovation rather than traditional regulatory approaches. Economic growth is a primary focus for 80% of tech leaders, who also tend to espouse globalist views supporting open borders and free trade.

Recent shifts in technology policy, particularly under the Trump administration, have emphasised deregulation and innovation over regulatory oversight, especially in areas such as AI development and digital finance. Executive orders have reflected this pro-business stance, aiming to enhance US competitiveness in emerging technologies. However, these policy directions have drawn some criticism from former government technology officials like Jennifer Pahlka, who advocate for a more engaged approach involving experienced public servants.

The Hill and Valley Forum provides a platform where these intersecting themes—technology advancement, economic policy, national security, and government reform—are actively debated, reflecting ongoing efforts to align technological innovation with broader national priorities.

The information is reported by Tech in Asia and supported by additional contextual background from Bloomberg and other sources.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thehillandvalleyforum.com/2024-event> - This official page details the 2024 Hill and Valley Forum event, listing featured speakers such as Vinod Khosla, Alex Karp, and House Speaker Mike Johnson, aligning with the article's mention of these individuals.
2. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/02/silicon-valley-has-lost-its-way/681633/?utm_source=apple_news> - This article discusses the historical collaboration between Silicon Valley and the U.S. government, highlighting how federal investments during the Cold War era were pivotal in the growth of the U.S. tech sector, which is referenced in the article.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/ce6f96f8-6ab8-4089-b7db-f99db22c2071> - This piece covers how Palmer Luckey's Anduril Industries integrates Silicon Valley into the U.S. defense sector with AI-driven weapons, reflecting the article's discussion on AI deployment in defense operations.
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