



February 13, 2026

The Honorable John Cornyn
Chair, Subcommittee on International Trade,
Customs, and Global Competitiveness
U.S. Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adrian Smith
Chair, Subcommittee on Trade
U.S. House of Representatives
502 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raphael G. Warnock
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
International Trade, Customs, and Global
Competitiveness
U.S. Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Sanchez
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Trade
U.S. House of Representatives
2309 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Cornyn, Chair Smith, Ranking Member Warnock, Ranking Member Sanchez, and Members of the Subcommittees:

The Initiative for a Digital Africa writes to thank Congress for its bipartisan action to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and to encourage continued efforts to modernize the program by incorporating digital trade principles in future negotiations. For more than two decades, AGOA has played a central role in supporting economic development across sub-Saharan Africa while advancing U.S. commercial, strategic, and foreign policy interests. The certainty provided by congressional renewal will help sustain investment, strengthen regional trade ties, and reinforce the United States' long-standing partnership with African nations.

The Initiative for a Digital Africa is a coalition committed to supporting prosperity, economic growth, and job creation across Africa by promoting the adoption of robust digital policies.¹ We

¹ The Initiative for a Digital Africa (www.initiavedigitalafrica.org) is a global network of organisations committed to supporting prosperity, economic growth, and job creation across Africa by promoting the adoption of robust digital policies. IDA's members include: ACT – The App Association, Africa Data Centres Association, Africa Information and Communications Technologies Alliance, Business Software Alliance, Consumer Technology Association, Computer and Communications Industry Association, Coalition of Services Industries, Information and Communication Technology Association of Malawi, Institute of Information and Communication Technology Professionals Ghana, Lesotho Information and Communication Technology Association, South Africa Information and Communication Technology Association, and TICON Africa.

work to educate policymakers about the transformative potential of digital trade and to elevate the voices of African economies, businesses, and workers in key international fora.

AGOA's success has been driven in part by its eligibility criteria, which have encouraged reforms related to rule of law, transparency, anti-corruption measures, and intellectual property protection. These reforms have contributed to more predictable, market-based systems that benefit African economies and U.S. exporters alike. Increased economic growth has also expanded access to digital technologies, enabling millions of Africans to participate in the global digital economy. Today, mobile technologies alone support an estimated 1.7 million jobs and contribute \$144 billion to Africa's economy.²

As Congress looks toward the future of AGOA, we encourage continued consideration of how digital trade can further support inclusive growth and innovation. Despite the promise of the digital economy, businesses and entrepreneurs across Africa and the United States continue to face barriers that restrict market access and the flow of digital goods and services. These include data localization requirements, source code transfer or inspection mandates, and policies that weaken encryption and cybersecurity protections.

Future updates to AGOA could help address these challenges by incorporating digital trade principles into the eligibility framework, reinforcing open markets while supporting domestic reform efforts across the continent. Such an approach would help ensure that AGOA continues to reflect modern trade realities and strengthens the ability of African economies to compete in an increasingly digital global marketplace.

The Initiative for a Digital Africa appreciates Congress's leadership in extending AGOA and stands ready to serve as a resource as lawmakers consider opportunities to modernize the program in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

The Initiative for a Digital Africa

CC: Members of the Senate Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness and the House Subcommittee on Trade

² Nathaniel Allen, The promises and perils of Africa's digital revolution, Brookings Institute (March 11, 2021) available at <https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/the-promises-and-perils-of-africas-digital-revolution/>.