

Musk ally tells employee who warned of 'illegal task' to 'push forward' in leaked audio



By Sarah K. Burris



Elon Musk participates in a SpaceX Demonstration Mission 2 Launch Briefing in 2020. (NASA/Bill Ingalls)

A Tesla engineer and ally of Elon Musk appeared undeterred by laws that could stop their work at the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, an entity Congress hasn't funded that was created by Donald Trump.

In a leaked audio tape obtained by 404Media, Musk's aims were questioned by staffers aware of the legal restrictions on government work.

Musk pal Thomas Shedd, who now leads the General Services Administration's Technology Transformation Services was told by employees that turning the U.S. government over to artificial intelligence to "further identify individuals" was "an illegal task."

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The call was previously reported by WIRED that Shedd promised, "Things are going to get intense."

He went on to discuss creating a kind of "AI coding agents," which would write the software "for many different agencies and would be trained in part on existing government contracts, larger scale automations of government, and, critically, changes to Login.gov"

"Just like a fun one that we've been thinking through with Login, specifically in TTS is, as most of you know, Login can't access government information on individuals. And so there's no connection that Login has with social security or any other government system, even though we're part of the government," Shedd said. "And so part of one of the things to work through is how do we make it so that those agencies that has that information of very secure APIs that can be leveraged by login to further identify individuals and detect and prevent fraud?"

During the Q&A, an employee informed Shedd that the Privacy Act forbids agencies from sharing personal information without consent.

"I think we were on the topic of login aggregating data. It's an illegal task," the employee asked in a written submission. "The Privacy Act forbids agencies sharing personal information without consent."

But Shedd said they "should still push forward and see what we can do." The former Tesla engineer said they should "try to get consent" for altering login.gov logins.

"But again, that's an example of something that we have a vision, that needs worked on, and needs clarified. And if we hit a roadblock, then we hit a roadblock. But we still should push forward and see what we can do," he said.

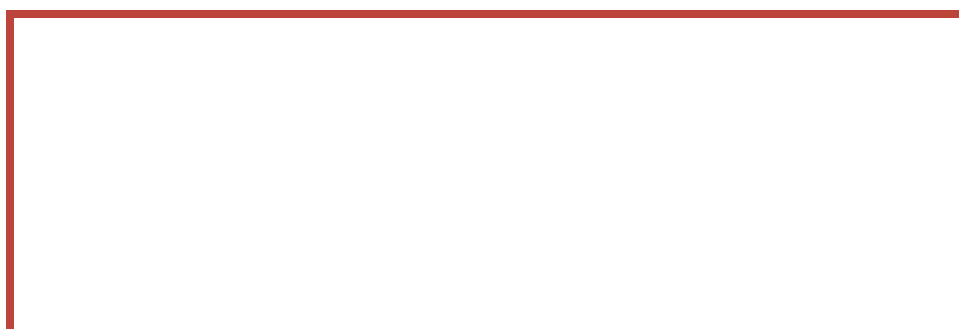
[Listen to the full phone call here.](#)



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