

President-elect Biden
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

January 18, 2020

Dear President-elect Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,

The below undersigned organizations represent millions of Americans concerned about the concentrated power of dominant technology corporations. We are hopeful that your administration will continue and expand the bipartisan effort to hold these companies accountable for violations of our antitrust laws and look forward to working together to address the broad range of harms posed by Big Tech.

As you prepare to take office, we urge you to avoid appointing to key antitrust enforcement positions individuals who have served as lawyers, lobbyists, or consultants for Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google. Instead, we encourage you to appoint experienced litigators or public servants who have recognized the dangers of, rather than helped to exacerbate, these corporations' market power.

American democracy is in crisis, and it is in some ways a result of social media corporations who have killed local newspapers, and structured their business models to engage, radicalize, and addict users so they can monopolize ad markets. Currently, the antitrust defense bar has a view of antitrust law that encourages these kinds of dangerous business models. Indeed, the antitrust defense bar currently reflects a view that is more in step with President Reagan's approach to antitrust enforcement, rather than the progressive approach to antitrust enforcement that your campaign embraced. Such an approach at the antitrust agencies will subvert President-elect Biden's agenda of restoring power to workers, communities, and small businesses.

The public also believes that dominant technology corporations like Facebook and Google already have too much power and influence in Washington. These corporations have massively increased lobbying and campaign spending in recent years, and Facebook and Amazon each spend more on lobbying than any other company in the country. Recent polling conducted by Pew Research Center showed that nearly half of Americans want to see Big Tech brought under more regulatory control, and a poll by Demand Progress found majority support for the antitrust suit against Google.

As you know, momentum to address the broad range of dangerous social and economic challenges posed by monopolization in digital markets is growing by the day – particularly in the aftermath of the attack on the U.S. Capitol, which was fostered by Facebook and YouTube's intentional amplification of sensationalist, conspiratorial content. The House Antitrust Subcommittee recently completed a historic investigation into the monopoly power of Apple, Amazon, Facebook, and Google and found bipartisan support for legislative and regulatory recommendations to rein in their power. The Department of Justice recently joined with state Attorneys General to file a historic antitrust suit against Google, and bipartisan groups of state AGs have filed two additional suits against Google. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission

and numerous states filed antitrust suits against Facebook, and the FTC is reportedly investigating Amazon and Apple. Recent polling shows that substantial majorities of Americans agree that your administration should not appoint individuals who have worked on behalf of dominant technology platforms while these investigations and court cases are pending.

With your historic election, and the groundbreaking mandate Americans have entrusted you with, you face the challenge of not only rebuilding the country, but also rebuilding trust in government. We believe that appointing antitrust enforcers with no ties to dominant corporations in the industries they will be tasked with overseeing – particularly in regard to the technology sector – will help re-establish public trust in government at a critically important moment in our country’s history. We look forward to working with your administration to ensure powerful technology corporations are held accountable for wrongdoing in the months of years ahead.

Sincerely,

Public Citizen
American Economic Liberties Project
Accountable Tech
Action Center on Race and the Economy
American Family Voices
Artist Rights Alliance
Athena
Awood Center
Backbone Campaign
Common Defense
Demand Progress
EarthDay.org
East Valley Indivisibles
Family Farm Action
Future of Music Coalition
Hedge Clippers
Indivisible
Indivisible Georgia Coalition
Indivisible Hawaii
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Jobs With Justice
JP Progressives
Just Futures Law
Local First Arizona
Main Street Alliance
Make the Road NY
MapLight
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)
New York Communities for Change
O³
Open Markets Institute

Our Revolution
Partnership For Working Families
People’s Parity Project
Progressive Change Campaign Committee
Revolving Door Project
RootsAction.org
Stand Up Nashville
United For Respect
Warehouse Worker Resource Center