

Coalition Urges Congress To Reject Democrat Antitrust Power-Grab

June 17, 2021

Dear Member of Congress:

We urge you to reject the package of European-style over-regulation in the antitrust bills spearheaded by Rep. David Cicilline (D-R.I.) and co-sponsored by Members from the far left like Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.).

These bills are a deceitful attempt by Democrat lawmakers to exploit legitimate conservative anger over Big Tech in order to give the Biden administration sweeping new power to regulate the economy. **But make no mistake about it – Democrats are dealing in bad faith, and this Trojan horse package does absolutely nothing to address conservative concerns with Big Tech censorship – and could increase those concerns.**

If implemented, bureaucrats in the Biden administration would wield vast new powers at the expense of American business and households. This heavy-handed approach should offer no comfort for those worried that the platforms are biased against them, as it actually increases the likelihood of political abuse.

Republicans and free-market Democrats should hold firm and vote No.

[One bill](#) would give bureaucrats power to determine if “covered” platforms with over fifty million users and a market cap of \$600 billion might operate businesses that present a “conflict of interest.” If so, “any person” who fails to sell off these alleged conflicts of interest within two years of the bill’s enactment faces steep civil penalties of up to 30 percent of revenue in a given year.

At the same time, another bill [effectively bans](#) covered platforms from selling or providing private-label goods that consumers value in their marketplaces, which makes about as much sense as banning grocery stores from selling generic cereal.

Another bill [outlaws](#) new acquisitions for covered platforms, a key driver of economic growth and innovation. The legislation inverts the burden of proof in certain antitrust cases that would presume that American companies are guilty of anticompetitive conduct until proven innocent. This would massively stack the deck in favor of government enforcers and litigious trial lawyers looking to score a quick buck by gaming the legal system. U.S. economic growth would be dealt a crippling blow just as we emerge from the pandemic.

Another bill [would force](#) covered platforms to share their data with competitors via a government-mandated “interface” – giving government agents and malicious hackers the ability to access sensitive consumer information all in one place. The final bill will give [more resources](#) to the Federal Trade Commission at a time when the agency, controlled by liberal activists like Commissioner Rebecca Slaughter and newly-installed Chair Lina Khan, seems likely to use rulemaking authority to effectively create new antitrust law. Once this power is claimed, they plan to deploy it in service of their social agenda

As a whole, this European antitrust approach would deliver Europe’s low levels of innovation and [deprive](#) Americans of choice and access to convenient services and products that we use each and every day. Apple would no longer be able to operate the App Store or Apple Music. Google would not be able to display YouTube links or Google Maps directions when searched. Amazon would lose the ability to offer free Prime shipping or AmazonBasics products.

And that’s just the beginning.

AMERICANS
for TAX REFORM





Meanwhile, these bills do absolutely nothing to address conservative concerns with Big Tech. This package is just a test run for Democrats to regulate entire sectors of the economy, and there is no reason to believe they will stop with technology companies. Sen. Amy Klobuchar has been crystal clear that she believes antitrust law is a tool for unelected bureaucrats to [“rejuvenate capitalism.”](#)

A vote for this package is a vote to give bureaucrats even more power to pick economic winners and losers. This is neither a conservative nor free-market approach, and would stifle the robust competition that guarantees the best products and lowest prices for every American.

Republicans need to hold the line and vote no against weaponizing antitrust law for Democrat political gains.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

James L. Martin
Founder/Chairman, 60 Plus Association

Saulius “Saul” Anuzis
President, 60 Plus Association

Marty Connors
Alabama Center Right Coalition

Brent Wm. Gardner
Chief Government Affairs Officer, Americans for Prosperity

Kevin Waterman
Chair, Annapolis Center Right Coalition Meeting (Maryland)

Iain Murray
Vice President for Strategy, Competitive Enterprise Institute

Ashley Baker
Director of Public Policy, Committee for Justice

Chuck Muth
President, Citizen Outreach (Nevada)

Katie McAuliffe
Executive Director, Digital Liberty

Heather R. Higgins
CEO, Independent Women’s Voice

Dave Trabert
Chief Executive Officer, Kansas Policy Institute

Rodolfo Milani
Chairman, Miami Freedom Forum (Florida)

Brian McClung
Chair, Minnesota Center Right Coalition

Pete Sepp
President, National Taxpayers Union



TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE



William O'Brien
Former Speaker, NH House of Representatives
Co-chair, New Hampshire Center Right Coalition

Doug Kellogg
Executive Director, Ohioans for Tax Reform

Tom Hebert
Executive Director, Open Competition Center

Lorenzo Montanari
Executive Director, Property Rights Alliance

Wayne Brough
Director of Technology & Innovation, R Street Institute

Mike Stenhouse
CEO, Rhode Island Center for Freedom & Prosperity

Karen Kerrigan
President & CEO, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

Kerri (Houston) Toloczko
Meeting Chair, SWFL Center-Right Coalition
Senior Policy Fellow, Institute for Liberty

Patrick Hedger
Vice President of Policy, Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Ralph Benko
Chairman, The Capitalist League

Rusty Cannon
President, Utah Taxpayers Association