

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to strongly oppose your unlawful attempt to fire Commissioners Alvaro Bedoya and Rebecca Slaughter, two members of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). These actions were illegal, violating the clear language of the *Federal Trade Commission Act*, which has been upheld by decades-old Supreme Court precedent. And they are profoundly harmful to American families, stripping their protections from anticompetitive monopolies, and exposing them to unfair and deceptive practices from companies big and small. This appears to be yet another decision that you have made to help Elon Musk and other billionaire supporters – and leaves middle class families stuck with the costs. You should end your efforts to fire these two commissioners.

Congress created the FTC as a bipartisan, independent commission to ensure that it could fulfill its mission of protecting Americans from deceptive practices and monopoly power free of partisan influence – and for over one hundred years, the agency did just that. These purported firings threaten the FTC’s existence as an independent enforcement agency and pave the way for you to use the FTC as a tool for partisan retribution or favor.

The FTC is the tip of the spear in the federal government’s efforts to lower food prices, tackle health care costs, and combat shady business practices across the economy. Below is an illustrative list of the FTC’s recent work to lower prices and prevent Americans from being ripped off. The firings put at risk the FTC’s work:

- Challenging grocery retailer and food manufacturer mergers that would raise prices for households struggling to make ends meet.¹
- Suing to stop agriculture equipment and pesticide monopolists from taking advantage of American farmers.²

¹ FTC, “Statement on FTC Victory Securing Halt to Kroger, Albertsons Grocery Merger,” press release, December 10, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/12/statement-ftc-victory-securing-halt-kroger-albertsons-grocery-merger>; FTC, “FTC Alleges Post Holdings, Inc.’s Proposed Acquisition of TreeHouse Foods, Inc.’s Private Label Ready-to-Eat Cereal Business Will Harm Competition,” press release, December 19, 2019, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2019/12/ftc-alleges-post-holdings-incs-proposed-acquisition-treehouse-foods-incs-private-label-ready-eat>.

² FTC, “FTC, States Sue Deere & Company to Protect Farmers from Unfair Corporate Tactics, High Repair Costs,” press release, January 15, 2025, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-states-sue-deere-company-protect-farmers->

- Moving to end noncompete agreements that block workers from moving to a better job or starting their own business.³
- Requiring hotels and event venues to end hidden junk fees.⁴
- Requiring Big Tech companies like Meta and Elon Musk’s X to follow through on their promises to protect Americans’ privacy.⁵
- Returning over \$1.5 billion over four years to Americans ripped off by bad actors ranging from tax preparation companies to corporate landlords.⁶
- Banning data brokers from selling consumers’ location data like church attendance or doctor visits.⁷
- Lowering costs for inhalers from \$500 to \$35 and lowering the cost of insulin.⁸
- Limiting companies’ ability to profit from kids’ personal data.⁹
- Returning millions in refunds to defrauded servicemembers and veterans.¹⁰

The attempted firings also sow uncertainty at a time when American businesses are already struggling with your frequent and unpredictable changes regarding tariff policy, government contracts and grants, and the federal workforce. Amidst this economic chaos, the day before the firings, the FTC removed from its website all of its business-related blog posts from the last four

unfair-corporate-tactics-high-repair-costs; FTC, “FTC and State Partners Sue Pesticide Giants Syngenta and Corteva for Using Illegal Pay-to-Block Scheme to Inflate Prices for Farmers,” press release, September 29, 2022, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2022/09/ftc-state-partners-sue-pesticide-giants-syngenta-corteva-using-illegal-pay-block-scheme-inflate>.

³ FTC, “FTC Announces Rule Banning Noncompetes,” press release, April 23, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/04/ftc-announces-rule-banning-noncompetes>.

⁴ FTC, “Federal Trade Commission Announces Bipartisan Rule Banning Junk Ticket and Hotel Fees,” press release, December 17, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/12/federal-trade-commission-announces-bipartisan-rule-banning-junk-ticket-hotel-fees>.

⁵ FTC, “FTC Imposes \$5 Billion Penalty and Sweeping New Privacy Restrictions on Facebook,” press release, July 24, 2019, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2019/07/ftc-imposes-5-billion-penalty-sweeping-new-privacy-restrictions-facebook>; FTC, “FTC Charges Twitter with Deceptively Using Account Security Data to Sell Targeted Ads,” press release, May 25, 2022, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2022/05/ftc-charges-twitter-deceptively-using-account-security-data-sell-targeted-ads>.

⁶ Tableau Public, “FTC Refunds to Consumers, 2021-2024,” March 21, 2025, <https://public.tableau.com/shared/7B3G4RMZ5>; FTC, “FTC Finalizes Order with H&R Block Requiring Them to Pay \$7 Million and Overhaul Advertising and Customer Service Practices for 2025 and 2026 Tax Seasons,” press release, January 8, 2025, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-finalizes-order-hr-block-requiring-them-pay-7-million-overhaul-advertising-customer-service>; FTC, “FTC Takes Action Against Invitation Homes for Deceiving Renters, Charging Junk Fees, Withholding Security Deposits, and Employing Unfair Eviction Practices,” press release, September 24, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/09/ftc-takes-action-against-invitation-homes-deceiving-renters-charging-junk-fees-withholding-security>.

⁷ FTC, “FTC Finalizes Order with X-Mode and Successor Outlogic Prohibiting it from Sharing or Selling Sensitive Location Data,” press release, April 12, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/04/ftc-finalizes-order-x-mode-successor-outlogic-prohibiting-it-sharing-or-selling-sensitive-location>.

⁸ FTC, “FTC Sues Prescription Drug Middlemen for Artificially Inflating Insulin Drug Prices,” press release, September 20, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/09/ftc-sues-prescription-drug-middlemen-artificially-inflating-insulin-drug-prices>; FTC, “Remarks by Chair Lina M. Khan,” April 3, 2024, https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/khan-remarks-white-house-lowering-healthcare-costs.pdf.

⁹ FTC, “FTC Finalizes Changes to Children’s Privacy Rule Limiting Companies’ Ability to Monetize Kids’ Data,” press release, January 16, 2025, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-finalizes-changes-childrens-privacy-rule-limiting-companies-ability-monetize-kids-data>.


¹⁰ FTC, “Career Step to Pay \$43.5 Million in Cash and Debt Cancellation to Resolve Charges It Used Deceptive Advertising to Lure Servicemembers and Their Spouses,” press release, July 30, 2024, <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/07/career-step-pay-435-million-cash-debt-cancellation-resolve-charges-it-used-deceptive-advertising>.


years.¹¹ The blog posts provided important information on how businesses could comply with consumer protection and competitions laws and regulations. For example, the posts included information for tech companies on “how to abide by the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act,” and “outlin[ing] how businesses could avoid creating chatbots that violate the FTC Act’s rules against unfair or deceptive products.”¹² Their removal begs the question of whether you are in favor of corporations exploiting children online and ripping off consumers with bad products.

The FTC’s independence was established by statute in 1914 and has been upheld by the Supreme Court for nearly one hundred years. Congress mandated that FTC commissioners can be removed only “for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.”¹³ The Supreme Court upheld Congress’s authority to create the FTC as a bipartisan, multi-member, expert commission in 1935 and has declined to revisit the decision in the years since.¹⁴ The FTC’s independence ensures the agency makes decisions based on the law, rather than political considerations. The illegal attempt to fire Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter is just the latest in your ongoing campaign to hobble independent agencies and watchdogs to shield you and your billionaire donors, including Elon Musk, from accountability to the law.¹⁵

Your illegal and harmful actions should be overturned by the courts. But you should instead act more quickly to reinstate Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter to ensure that pending FTC actions, particularly those that help American workers and families, will not be curtailed or otherwise affected by the unlawful attempted firings.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

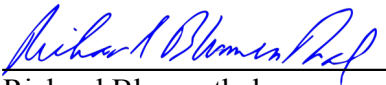
¹¹ Engadget, “The FTC has removed all business blog posts from the Biden administration,” Anna Washenko, March 18, 2025, <https://www.engadget.com/big-tech/the-ftc-has-removed-all-business-blog-posts-from-the-biden-administration-214734633.html>.

¹² Wired, “FTC Removes Posts Critical of Amazon, Microsoft, and AI Companies,” Makena Kelly, March 18, 2025, <https://wired.com/story/federal-trade-commission-removed-blogs-critical-of-ai-amazon-microsoft/>.

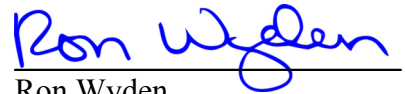
¹³ 15 U.S.C. 41.

¹⁴ *Humphrey’s Executor v. FTC*, 295 U.S. 602 (1935).

¹⁵ Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to President Donald Trump, March 3, 2025, https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/letter_from_senator_warren_to_trump_on_commissioner_firings_and_musk.pdf.



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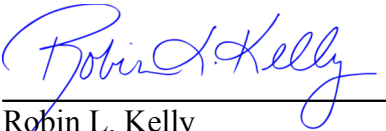
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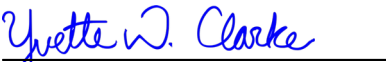
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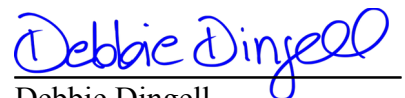
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