



Brandon Williams/iStock/Getty Images Plus
Apple's California headquarters

Big Tech Wants to Lead Antitrust Movement to Punish Competitors

Are the wolves trying to take over guard duty at the hen house?

While the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Justice (DOJ) under Biden are ostensibly seeking to crack down on Big Tech monopolies, there are increasing signals that Silicon Valley's true giants are making efforts to shape antitrust policy in a way that punishes smaller players while the big players continue with business as usual.

In many ways, this is a continuation of the conflict of interest that took place in the Obama years, during which Google held major influence over the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice and a constant revolving door of personnel existed between Big Tech and the White House.

If anyone thought the current administration would be any different, they are to be sorely disappointed. While Biden FTC Chair Lina Khan and Justice Department antitrust chief Jonathan Kanter have spoken out against Big Tech from the competition angle, they have made clear that they are unwilling to lift a finger to defend free speech amid growing censorship by monopolistic platforms.

Furthermore, any effort to rein in Big Tech is being undercut by the tech lobby itself, which is strategically employing a plan to promote antitrust reform on the surface, yet be the gatekeepers of it to ensure it will hurt only Silicon Valley's smaller competitors.

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This can be seen in a recent public letter addressed to Kanter. The letter, penned by a Google-financed professor and think tank, calls for a crackdown on monopolistic practices — of small firms.

The letter [claims](#) to have been signed by “28 former government enforcement officials, professors, and public interest advocates.”

Involved in preparing the letter were Alex Moss of the Public Interest Patent Law Institute and Professor Michael Carrier of Rutgers Law School. The latter notably served as an advisor to the Biden 2020 campaign.

Breitbart’s Allum Bokhari [delves into](#) Moss and Carrier’s Big Tech ties:

The Public Interest Patent Law Institute is an obscure organization with Moss as just one of two listed staff members. However, Moss also serves as a special advisor to the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which also signed on to the letter. EFF has received millions of dollars from Google over the years to defend the tech giant on intellectual property, Section 230 reform, net neutrality, and censorship practices.

Similarly Michael Carrier has acknowledged \$40,000 dollars in direct support of funding from Google specifically to study “copyright secondary liability and innovation.” Carrier has subsequently filed numerous briefs supporting Google’s positions on intellectual property issues.

Public Knowledge, who also signed the letter, publicly acknowledges it receives at least \$50,000 a year from Google as well as Microsoft and Netflix. Other Big Tech-funded signers include Former FTC Chairman and George Mason Law professor Tim Murriss.

It’s worth pointing out that Murriss once co-authored a law review in which he defended Amazon, arguing the company should not be targeted by antitrust action. But, lo and behold, it turns out that review was paid for by none other than Amazon itself.

As for the recent letter, its primary focus of concern is a small patent-licensing platform known as Avanci SEP. Avanci’s main business is licensing wireless technology for cars.

The authors of the Google-funded letter want the government to worry about the fact that Avanci might raise its “license rates from \$15 to \$20 per car.” Is a \$5 increase really deserving of being the FTC and DOJ’s top priority?

What the tech giants are trying to do is turn attention and scrutiny away from themselves and channel Americans’ desire for reform into causes that won’t interfere with their bottom line.

This is a dangerous move, as the largest tech firms are moving to expand their monopolies. For instance, Google and Apple, which have essentially driven other firms out of the smartphone market, seek, along with Amazon, to [extend that market dominance to the auto industry](#).

In the minds of tech companies, drivers will soon be able to engage in work, entertainment, and their daily to-do lists while in their vehicles. And the data coming out of those cars would go back into the firms’ databases, allowing them to do things such as update maps or send out information about potholes on roads.

But is more revenue for these companies — and a little more convenience for consumers — worth the danger of having a handful of tech oligarchs getting closer and closer to controlling every aspect of the daily human experience?

Silicon Valley’s top firms seek to make their smaller competitors the target of antitrust policy, paving the way for yet more monopoly.