

November 29, 2022

Ronald A. Klain  
Chief of Staff  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear White House Chief of Staff Klain,

We write to you as proponents of reining in the monopolistic power of Big Tech companies. After months of congressional inaction, we are pleased to hear that the Biden Administration has identified the passage of two historic, bipartisan antitrust bills<sup>1</sup> as a top priority during the lame duck session of the 117th Congress. However, we urge you to go even further in demonstrating your commitment to these bills by insisting on the recusal of Louisa Terrell, director of the Office of Legislative Affairs, from any interactions with Congress on this issue given her past tenure as public policy director at Facebook.

According to recent reporting by *Bloomberg*, Terrell has conspicuously sought to avoid supporting antitrust reform in conversations with Capitol Hill. The reporting notes that Terrell has either ignored antitrust issues or “pivot[ed] the conversation to data privacy or other tech issues” when brought up,<sup>2</sup> a tactic reminiscent of Facebook’s own obfuscatory strategy in the face of scrutiny.<sup>3</sup>

According to the article, the “White House said Terrell has been supportive of the legislative effort since the start.” However, this characterization appears to be at odds with *Bloomberg*’s reporting, and in any case does not resolve the ethical questions raised by the involvement of someone who formerly led Facebook’s Senate outreach<sup>4</sup> in negotiations over legislation that has been the target of a historic lobbying blitz by Big Tech.<sup>5</sup> While there is no legal requirement for Terrell to be recused from these matters, the White House and Terrell should adopt a higher

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<sup>1</sup> The American Innovation and Choice Online Act (S.2992; “AICOA”) and the Open App Markets Act (S.2710; “OAMA”), respectively.

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-11-04/biden-plans-ambitious-antitrust-crackdown-on-big-tech-post-midterms>

<sup>3</sup>

<https://themarkup.org/the-breakdown/2021/09/16/what-does-facebook-mean-when-it-says-it-supports-internet-regulations>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.politico.com/tipsheets/playbook/2012/03/gingrich-to-report-big-debt-groundhog-day-ill-primary-may-be-in-to-close-deal-for-romney-c-span-simulcasts-politico-livestream-7-pm-jon-allen-promoted-manning-to-broncos-003414>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.axios.com/2022/06/06/antitrust-bills-progress-tech-lobbying-splurge>

standard in this matter. The future of competition in digital markets, as well as the White House's credibility on Big Tech related issues, is on the line.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued support for strong competition policy.

Sincerely,

Revolving Door Project

American Economic Liberties Project

Other98

Presente.org

Freedom BLOC

Main Street Alliance

UltraViolet Action