

October 18, 2021

To: Charles E. Schumer, Senate Majority Leader and Maria E. Cantwell, Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

We write to you as a broad coalition of organizations committed to protecting consumers from the abusive behavior of technology industry giants (“Big Tech”) to urge the Senate to consider and swiftly confirm Federal Trade Commission nominee Alvaro M. Bedoya. As the founder and director of the Georgetown University Law Center’s Center on Privacy & Technology,¹ Mr. Bedoya has demonstrated he understands the dangers of Big Tech monopolies. He has shown a particular understanding of how these companies impact communities of color and other marginalized groups.² When it comes to holding Big Tech monopolies accountable, time is of the essence. Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen’s Senate testimony on October 4, 2021 made clear that regulators need to immediately clamp down on Big Tech’s abusive behavior, lest the damage become irreversible.³

The FTC has a crucial role to play in preventing these modern-day monopolies⁴ from harming consumers and other businesses. Although we applaud the confirmation of FTC Commissioner Rohit Chopra as Director of the Consumer Financial Bureau,⁵ the FTC’s functions will be stymied as long as Chopra’s former FTC seat is left vacant. Decades of underfunding has already proven a hindrance to the FTC’s ability to perform its statutory responsibilities.⁶ A prolonged deadlock on the FTC only stands to create further obstacles for the agency as it works to hold Big Tech giants accountable.⁷

Reining in these companies’ abusive practices can only be accomplished through strong regulatory enforcement, and it is crucial that Mr. Bedoya be confirmed as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

18 Million Rising

Accountable Tech

Action Center on Race and the Economy (ACRE)

ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater NY

American Economic Liberties Project

Bend the Arc Jewish Action

Blue Future

Center for Digital Democracy

Center for Popular Democracy

Consumer Action

¹ <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/alvaro-bedoya/>

² <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/privacy-and-data-security/bedoyas-privacy-civil-rights-work-foreshows-potential-ftc-focus>

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/10/05/facebook-senate-hearing-frances-haugen/>

⁴ <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/10/06/house-democrats-say-facebook-amazon-alphabet-apple-enjoy-monopoly-power.html>

⁵ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/09/30/rohit-chopra-cfpb/>

⁶ <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/12/10/ftc-cash-facebook-lawsuit-444468>

⁷ <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2021/08/ftc-alleges-facebook-resorted-illegal-buy-or-bury-scheme-crush>

Demand Progress
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Fight for the Future
Greenpeace
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Jobs With Justice
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
Main Street Alliance
MediaJustice
National Employment Law Project
New America's Open Technology Institute
Open Markets Institute
Open MIC (Open Media and Information Companies Initiative)
The Other 98%
Our Revolution
Progressive Change Campaign Committee
People's Action
People's Parity Project
Presente.org
Progress America
Public Citizen
Public Knowledge
Revolving Door Project
Social Security Works
Surveillance Technology Oversight Project
United for Respect
X-Lab