

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Andrew Ferguson
Chairman
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Chairman Ferguson:

We write with concern the Trump Administration and its anti-consumer policies will undermine the critical mission of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) as it works to protect consumers and promote competition to lower prices for American families.¹ The FTC has significant power and authority to pursue enforcement actions against companies that deploy deceptive and unfair practices to drive up the price of essential goods and services that Americans rely on every day, such as prescription drugs, groceries, and rent. We encourage the FTC to continue to take action against any company that exploits or defrauds working families and to further its work ensuring that prices remain fair and transparent.

In recent years, the FTC used the weight of more than a dozen congressionally authorized antitrust and consumer protection statutes to tackle the infant formula shortage, reign in pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), block predatory mergers that would have kept drug prices high, sue the nation's largest corporate landlord for unfair rental practices, and issue rules to prevent hidden junk fees, among many other consumer protection victories.² We urge the FTC to continue its work to protect us from price gouging, junk fees, and other predatory tactics that make corporations richer at the expense of hardworking Americans.

Powerful actions the FTC took under the previous administration that made life better for people across the country include:

- Lowering the cost of health care and prescription drug prices for millions of Americans. During the Biden-Harris Administration, the FTC sued PBMs and anesthesiology providers for allegedly engaging in anticompetitive practices that raised health care costs, including the cost of insulin, inhalers, and EpiPens.

¹ Federal Trade Commission, *Mission* (online at www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/mission) (accessed Feb. 26, 2025).

² Federal Trade Commission, *Remarks by FTC Chair Lina Khan, Fireside Chat at the Brookings Institution* (Jan. 8, 2024) (online at www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/remarks-chair-lina-m-khan-brookings-institution.pdf).

Thanks to these actions, out-of-pocket costs for inhalers fell from \$500 to \$35.³ Following a multi-year investigation into consolidation in the PBM market, the FTC released two Interim Staff Reports discussing how business practices by the nation's largest PBMs have made medications more expensive for consumers, including critical medications used to treat cancer, HIV, and other life-threatening conditions.⁴ We strongly encourage the FTC to carry forward this work to make health care more accessible and affordable.

- Combating rising grocery prices. The FTC is a critical bulwark against corporate practices keeping food prices high. For example, the FTC successfully sued to block a \$24.6 billion merger between Kroger and Albertsons, a deal that the FTC alleged would have needlessly raised prices on food, led to store closures, and eliminated union jobs.⁵ As Americans pay increasingly more for eggs and watch profits for egg suppliers soar, we encourage the FTC to do everything in its power to investigate price gauging within the egg industry and other predatory practices that make food unaffordable.⁶
- Fighting for fair rent. On January 16, 2025, the FTC filed suit against the nation's largest multi-family rental property manager for allegedly deceiving customers by advertising low monthly rents before adding on hundreds to thousands of dollars in fees after tenants signed leases.⁷ The FTC Chair said at the time that "[t]he FTC should continue its work taking on corporate landlords that use illegal tactics to jack up rent, exploit tenants, and deprive Americans of safe and affordable housing."⁸ We strongly encourage the FTC to continue this important

³ Federal Trade Commission, *Press Release: FTC Releases Summary of Key Accomplishments* (Jan. 9, 2025) (online at www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-releases-summary-key-accomplishments).

⁴ Federal Trade Commission, *Press Release: FTC Releases Interim Staff Report on Prescription Drug Middlemen* (July 9, 2024) (online at www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2024/07/ftc-releases-interim-staff-report-prescription-drug-middlemen); Federal Trade Commission, *Press Release: FTC Releases Second Interim Staff Report on Prescription Drug Middlemen* (Jan. 14, 2025) (online at www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-releases-second-interim-staff-report-prescription-drug-middlemen).

⁵ Federal Trade Commission, *Press Release: FTC Releases Summary of Key Accomplishments* (Jan. 9, 2025) (online at www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-releases-summary-key-accomplishments).

⁶ See *The Many Reasons Egg Prices Are Skyrocketing Under Trump*, MSNBC (Feb. 24, 2025) (online at www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/egg-prices-trump-inflation-bird-flu-rcna193007). Notably, FTC Commissioner Alvaro Bedoya has called for the FTC to open an investigation into the discrepancy between the rising cost of eggs and increasing profits for egg suppliers, stating, "I know there's enough smoke that it's worth figuring out if there's a fire." *Id.*

⁷ Federal Trade Commission, *Press Release: FTC, State of Colorado Take Action Against Greystar, Nation's Largest Multi-Family Rental Property Manager, For Deceiving Consumers About Rent Prices* (Jan. 16, 2025) (online at www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2025/01/ftc-state-colorado-take-action-against-greystar-nations-largest-multi-family-rental-property-manager).

⁸ *Id.*

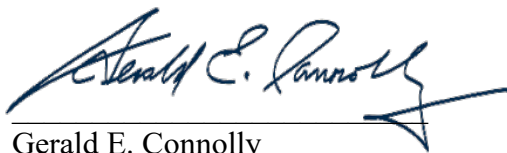
enforcement action to achieve fair rental prices and ensure that renters are no longer subject to these abusive practices.

Last year, the FTC and the Department of Justice (DOJ) launched a Strike Force on Unfair and Illegal Pricing designed to lower prices for all Americans—including in key sectors like health care, food, and housing—and to combat corporate lawbreaking and exploitative tactics.⁹ We urge the Trump Administration to continue the Strike Force, especially as many Americans are struggling to afford groceries, rent, and other everyday essentials, and to continue an all-of-government approach to combatting monopolies, collusion, and price gouging.

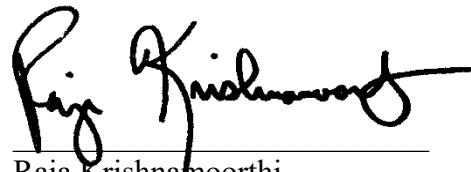
President Trump promised that he would bring down prices on “Day 1” of his Administration. Six weeks later, the price of consumer goods continues to rise at a rapid rate. President Trump now says he “do[es]n’t have a timeline” for when prices will fall, and Vice President Vance has said it is “going to take a little bit of time” for consumers to see lower grocery prices.¹⁰ Experts have warned that tariffs on imported goods are likely to further increase costs for consumers.¹¹ As prices rise in all areas of our lives, the FTC’s work to protect consumers is more important than ever. We strongly urge the FTC to continue to use its robust statutory authority to aggressively fight abusive corporate practices and lower costs for American consumers.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X.¹² If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Democratic Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress


⁹ Federal Trade Commission, *Remarks by FTC Chair Lina Khan and Assistant Attorney General Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division of the United States Jonathan Kanter, Strike Force Virtual Meeting* (Aug. 1, 2024) (online at www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/strike-force-virtualmeeting_-transcript.pdf).

¹⁰ *With High Prices Persisting, Trump Tempers Tone on Slaying Inflation*, New York Times (Feb. 12, 2025) (online at www.nytimes.com/2025/02/12/us/politics/trump-inflation-prices.html).

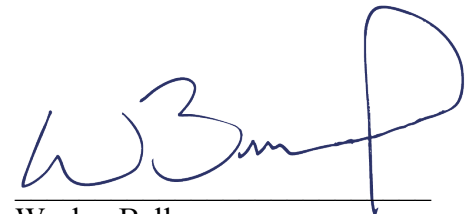
¹¹ *Id.*

¹² House Rule X, clause 4(c)(2).

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Maxwell A. Frost,
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman