

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

We write to express our concern about your refusal to release your calendars and its implications for public trust in your department and this administration. As a public servant, the American people have a right to know who you meet with, when you meet with them, and what you discuss. In the absence of proactive disclosure, and with other routes to obtaining this information subject to [extensive delays](#), the public is being left in the dark about who may be influencing the country's trade and economic policy, and how. This is all the more alarming in light of your recent comments that favored Big Tech and contradicted Biden administration policy. We ask that you immediately address this grave threat to public trust by releasing your calendars, retroactively and at regular intervals moving forward.

In December, you expressed "serious concerns" that new E.U. legislation to rein in Big Tech companies' power will "disproportionately impact" Big Tech firms in the United States. Your comments not only put you at odds with our European allies, they put you in conflict with President Biden's antitrust agenda and the [American public](#). The proposed E.U. legislation closely aligns with the President's antitrust and trade agendas, which calls for "[full and aggressive enforcement of our antitrust laws](#)" and a "[foreign policy for the middle class.](#)" Your viewpoint, in contrast, harkens back to a dead consensus—one that decreed American public officials should advance the interests of "American" big business abroad, (despite those businesses conspicuously evading the obligations, such as taxation, that are associated with that label) not the American middle class or the American worker. Your decision to stake out a position that so clearly contradicts this administration's priorities has raised questions about your commitment to the administration's [popular](#) antitrust and pro-worker agenda.

Your comments also renewed questions about what, if any, meetings you have taken with representatives from Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple. You could end those questions simply by releasing your schedule proactively. Public officials routinely release detailed copies of their calendars. Such proactive releases demonstrate that these officials know their job is to serve the interests of the American people, not any specific industry or the Chamber of Commerce. For instance, [Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell](#) and [Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Gary Gensler](#) both regularly release detailed calendars. When Chair Gensler meets with banking executives, for instance, his calendar notes the time, the individuals present, and their institutions. To date, your office has not publicly and proactively released similar information, despite calls for you to do so.

Your office has also failed to meet its statutory obligations to provide a timely response to our Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for this same calendar information. Over three months ago, FOIA requests asked for documentation of your scheduled meetings with

representatives of big business between March and October of 2021, on topics ranging from global vaccine access to crises in global supply chains. We have not received a response. We will leave it to others to determine whether this failure results from stonewalling, a dysfunctional FOIA bureaucracy, or a lack of leadership at the top. No matter the reason, it is an unacceptable blow to transparency, one that heightens concerns about Big Tech's influence on your office. You have the means to rectify this by releasing your public calendar proactively and routinely.

In short, the American people deserve to know who you are meeting with, when, and why. We write to demand prompt release of your 2021 calendar, planning documents, and meeting agendas. We thank you for your careful attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

AccountableTech
American Economic Liberties Project
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
The Digital Democracy Project
The Freedom BLOC
Good Jobs First
Government Information Watch
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Open The Government
Other 98%
Our Revolution
Public Citizen
Revolving Door Project
UltraViolet
X-Lab

Professor Rosemary Batt, in her individual capacity