

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

Yesterday, Assistant Attorney General Gail Slater of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division announced her resignation on social media, with subsequent reports indicating that she was terminated. Gail Slater is a deeply respected antitrust leader, and her abrupt removal deals a significant blow to the Antitrust Division's work. It signals your Administration's troubling retreat from protecting Americans against powerful corporate interests that drive up consumer prices, suppress wages, and squeeze out small businesses, leaving families and workers to bear the cost.

Ms. Slater's abrupt termination reflects a troubling pattern of sidelining senior Antitrust Division officials, including Bill Rinner and Roger Alford, who were reportedly forced out after opposing the Department's proposed settlement of the \$14 billion Hewlett Packard Enterprise-Juniper Networks, Inc. merger, an outcome widely reported to have been influenced by well-connected lobbyists with no antitrust expertise. Her removal also follows the resignation of her deputy, Mark Hamer, just days earlier, further deepening concerns about instability and political pressure within the Division's leadership.

The timing of this decision, particularly in light of imminent enforcement actions and pending litigation, raises serious concerns about potential improper influence. Of immediate concern is the Department's lawsuit against Live Nation/Ticketmaster, which alleges the company illegally inflated concert ticket prices and engaged in conduct that harmed both artists and consumers. Earlier this week, Semafor reported that Live Nation executives and lobbyists had been negotiating with senior officials at the Department, allegedly circumventing the Antitrust Division, to avert a trial over whether the company operates an illegal monopoly that has driven up concert prices. According to the report, individuals involved in or connected to these discussions include Kellyanne Conway, Mike Davis—a political operative who has pushed to dismantle past antitrust enforcement actions—and Richard Grenell. Taken together, these developments raise grave concerns that enforcement decisions are being shaped through backchannel negotiations and political pressure, rather than through the independent and even-handed application of the law.

Let's be clear: this is a profound departure from the promises you made to the American people. You ran on lowering prices and making life more affordable for working families. You declared that you are "committed to making the arts and entertainment that enrich Americans' lives as accessible as possible" in your executive order, "Combating Unfair Practices in the Live

Entertainment Market.” That action was one of the rare moments you earned bipartisan praise from Republicans and Democrats, young people and older Americans, parents and fans, because it signaled a willingness to stand up to monopolistic practices that drive up costs. Yet the events now unfolding suggest a stark reversal: instead of confronting corporate gatekeepers, your Administration appears to be clearing the path for backroom negotiations that risk weakening the very enforcement you once championed.

At a minimum, the Administration should immediately release the Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission report on live event ticket pricing that was transmitted to the White House in September 2025 but has yet to be made public. That report was expected to provide a comprehensive assessment of the live entertainment market and steps to address the very practices your Administration pledged to confront. Withholding its findings while the DOJ’s enforcement decisions appear to shift behind closed doors only deepens public skepticism and fuels the perception that powerful industry interests are being shielded from scrutiny. If the Administration is truly committed to lowering prices and promoting fair competition, there is no legitimate justification for keeping this analysis from Congress and the American people. Failure to release it will only reinforce the growing perception that enforcement decisions are being shaped by backroom deals that reward powerful corporations while leaving American families to bear the cost.

Americans were promised lower prices, fair competition, and an end to corporate gatekeeping, not a system where powerful insiders can negotiate enforcement outcomes behind closed doors. If the Administration intends to stand by its commitments, it must immediately release this report.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator