

The Hon. David Cicilline
Chairman, House Antitrust Subcommittee
2138 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

House Judiciary Committee, Antitrust Sub-committee
Majority Staff and Minority Staff
By Email

23 February 2021

Dear Chairman Cicilline

I hope you have had a good start to the year and let us hope that this year brings much needed hope and action on many fronts.

I wanted to get back in touch in light of the forthcoming House Judiciary Antitrust Subcommittee hearings on proposals to curb the dominance of online platforms and modernize antitrust law. At our last meeting, we discussed how my business continues to be damaged by Google's abusive gatekeeper behavior. Our US presence has remained heavily constrained by Google's abuse of market power in search and, whilst we continue to work to expand our reach with US consumers and businesses, we know that fundamental change is necessary to allow us to compete. We believe that restoring competition in the digital economy is vital to ensuring a vibrant marketplace for consumers as well as those competing with gatekeepers. Of course, Google's generic defence is that *"people use Google Search because they choose to, not because they are forced to or because they cannot easily find alternative ways to search for information on the Internet."* As we know first-hand, this couldn't be further from the truth.

I understand that The Subcommittee plans to call antitrust experts, affected businesses, and other knowledgeable witnesses to assist with the development of legislation. If it would be helpful, I would be very happy to be called as a witness from 'an affected business' at one of the hearings. Alternatively, I would be happy to submit written testimony and would very much appreciate if your team could let me know the best way to do this.

For your reference, we are still in regular dialogue with regulators globally, providing evidence of how we have been harmed and what effective solutions could look like. I remain encouraged that the work of the US authorities, led by your Subcommittee, will result in significant steps forward for businesses like ours in the US and will help to set the tone of the global conversation on these issues; the need to address the rise, entrenchment, and abuse of gatekeeper power, to modernize and strengthen existing tools and improve antitrust laws, current enforcement levels, and congressional oversight becomes ever stronger.

I look forward to hearing from your office.

Richard Stables
CEO, Kelkoo Group

