



April 21, 2026

The Honorable Roger Williams  
Chair  
House Committee on Small Business  
2361 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nydia Velazquez  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Small Business  
2361 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Williams and Ranking Member Velazquez:

Thank you for holding today's important hearing on "Independent Work, Real Opportunity: The Gig Economy and the Future of Entrepreneurship." We appreciate your careful attention to this growing and critical segment of today's economy, and the opportunity to provide our perspective as active participants in the e-commerce industry.

ROCC is a non-profit association that represents businesses that rely on Amazon and other online commerce platforms to reach their customers. The Coalition seeks to ensure fair play for all businesses that operate in online commerce, so that businesses who offer the best products for the best consumer value can prosper. Our members range in size and location, from small third-party sellers to recognizable brand names, and are located in the U.S., as well as Europe and the U.K.

All of our members, but particularly our independent and third-party sellers, rely on major platforms like Amazon to do business. The market is extremely concentrated with one dominant player: Amazon alone is responsible for about 36% of all transactions in the market. Amazon and Shopify, the second largest platform, combined control almost 50% of sales.<sup>1</sup>

While not typically included in discussions about the gig economy, our sellers have a great deal in common with more traditional participants like Doordash couriers or Uber drivers. They are able to use platforms built by companies like Amazon to establish an e-commerce business. Some use their online storefronts to supplement other work, some sell full-time on platforms and rely entirely on their shops to support their families, and others establish their own brands and websites while still selling on the major platforms. But all of them are dependent on platforms built by companies like Amazon to operate their own stores.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Amazon and Shopify Are Now Half of U.S. E-Commerce," MARKETPLACE PULSE (Feb. 19, 2026) <https://www.marketplacepulse.com/articles/amazon-and-shopify-are-now-half-of-us-e-commerce>.



Without the services major platforms provide, many of our sellers would not be able to start their businesses. Amazon provides sellers with backend assistance to get their shops up and running and technical expertise to assist new sellers in navigating the market. And most importantly, because of their scale these platforms can expose a seller's products to a customer base of hundreds of millions, allowing a shop to become lucrative almost immediately. All of this allows those with a drive to start a small business and explore entrepreneurship to pursue their dreams.

However, exactly because of this scale dominant platforms are able to wield significant power over sellers. Unfortunately, they have not always been good stewards of this power. Amazon, for instance, has been found to manipulate their algorithm to improve their bottom line at the expense of the sellers operating on their platform. Many sellers have had their inventory and accrued funds frozen by Amazon for unsubstantiated counterfeit claims. These goods are held for weeks, and sometimes months, while sellers rack up fees and are unable to move their product out of Amazon's warehouses. When sellers seek to address these issues, they are met with a byzantine, under resourced, and largely automated conflict resolution system.

Amazon also regularly self-preferences its own products at the expense of sellers on their platform. ROCC members, who rely heavily on Amazon to bring their product before consumers, must compete with the platform's algorithm to access its Buy Box, where the majority of sales occur. Amazon has repeatedly insisted that its Buy Box algorithm considers a range of criteria to help predict the best available offer for consumers. In reality, however, this algorithm has been weaponized to expand and maintain Amazon's monopoly power.

These behaviors drive prices up for consumers as well. California Attorney General Rob Bonta is currently investigating Amazon for illegal price manipulation and has uncovered concerning evidence. For example, Amazon requires that sellers advertise their lowest prices on Amazon and penalizes those with lower prices elsewhere on the internet.<sup>2</sup> Sellers seeking to take advantage of deals, promotions, and sales online are often bullied by Amazon into raising prices on other websites. This behavior harms sellers looking to build their brands elsewhere and leads to higher prices on everyday goods for consumers.

---

<sup>2</sup> Annie Palmer, "Amazon 'strong-armed' Levi's, Hanes to hike prices on rival sites, California DA says" CNBC (Apr. 20, 2024) <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/04/20/california-da-amazon-price-fixing-walmart-target.html>.



Our members rely on these platforms to do their business, and appreciate the services provided by Amazon, eBay, and the rest of the e-commerce ecosystem. Their products create vibrant, interesting marketplaces that have helped drive the e-commerce explosion in the last two decades. However, these platforms must use their power responsibly and appropriately to foster innovation and entrepreneurship from the sellers who make their platforms successful. If these platforms fail to adequately invest in and support the sellers on their platform, they will do more to destroy innovation and entrepreneurship than support it.

We commend the Committee for holding today's important hearing on the gig economy and urge you to continue your important work in supporting small businesses, fostering innovation, and making life more affordable for consumers.

Sincerely,

The Responsible Online Commerce Coalition  
(ROCC)