

November 30, 2021

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

On behalf of millions of taxpayers and consumers across the country, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) asks members of the Senate to oppose the nomination of Gigi Sohn to serve as a commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Sohn's appointment would clear the way for policies that would severely hinder telecommunications investment and innovation in the United States.

Sohn has been an avid supporter of taxpayer-funded government networks. As detailed in [TPA's report](#), "GON with the Wind: The Failed Promise of Government Owned Networks Across the Country," these systems are failing at an alarming rate, exposing taxpayers to millions of wasted dollars, while simultaneously deterring private investment in closing the digital divide.

Sohn has expressed support for heavy-handed Title II regulations over the internet – more commonly known as "net neutrality" regulations. During the short time these regulations were in place, investment in broadband infrastructure dropped for the first time in years. This is because the framework that allowed the internet to become what it has today was a light touch framework that saw the government take a minimal role, while preserving the property rights of internet providers. It is because of this framework the U.S. networks outperformed their European counterparts, operating under an approach more akin to Sohn's, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also at issue is Sohn's opposition to innovative mergers that would help legacy media outlets compete amidst a changing technological landscape. In 2017, Sohn vociferously opposed FCC's updates to long-outdated media-ownership rules, recently upheld by the Supreme Court, which unnecessarily suffocated investment in local media in the face of stiff advertising competition from the tech sector.

Further, in a post on her own personal website, Sohn argued the issue with the antitrust fervor on Capitol Hill is that it "has so far overlooked U.S. broadband providers." Sohn does not believe the weaponization of the government against American companies has gone too far, but rather she believes it has not gone far enough.

Lastly, Sohn is far too partisan to hold a seat on an agency that derives its legitimacy from its independence. In the past, Sohn has accused a number of Senators of being “industry puppets” and suggested that Republicans threatened the nation. Given this track record, the Senate cannot expect that Sohn would be an even-handed regulator who would approach the issues at hand in good faith and engage with stakeholders in such a manner. This, in and of itself, is disqualifying.

TPA urges members of the Senate to oppose this nomination if it comes to the Senate floor for a vote. The internet has proven time and time again to be one of our nation’s most valuable assets. Further, the existing media and telecommunications industry must be allowed to adapt to face the challenges presented by online competition, not hamstrung by bureaucrats clinging to unnecessary power. We cannot risk placing innovative sectors in the hands of someone who would strangle the entire media landscape in red tape and turn much of the FCC’s bipartisan work into a deeply partisan struggle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Williams", written in a cursive style.

David Williams
President