

Bipartisan bill seeks to break up Big Tech's stranglehold on innovation

Article

A bipartisan group of House lawmakers introduced sweeping antitrust legislation last Friday aimed at **Amazon, Apple, Google, and Facebook** [per](#) *The New York Times*. The [five bills](#)

propose to prohibit discrimination by dominant platforms, forbid anticompetitive acquisitions that curtail innovation, prevent Big Tech companies from leveraging control across multiple business types, and update filing fees for tech mergers.

Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google could be forced to overhaul their business practices under an expansive set of antitrust reforms. Bipartisan bills are few and far between, but have gained momentum for larger business and economical issues like [USICA](#). The measures follow a 16-month investigation by the House Judiciary subcommittee on antitrust into the four companies completed [last year](#). The panel [found](#) at the time that the big four hold monopoly power and that antitrust laws should be revised to promote fair competition in digital markets.

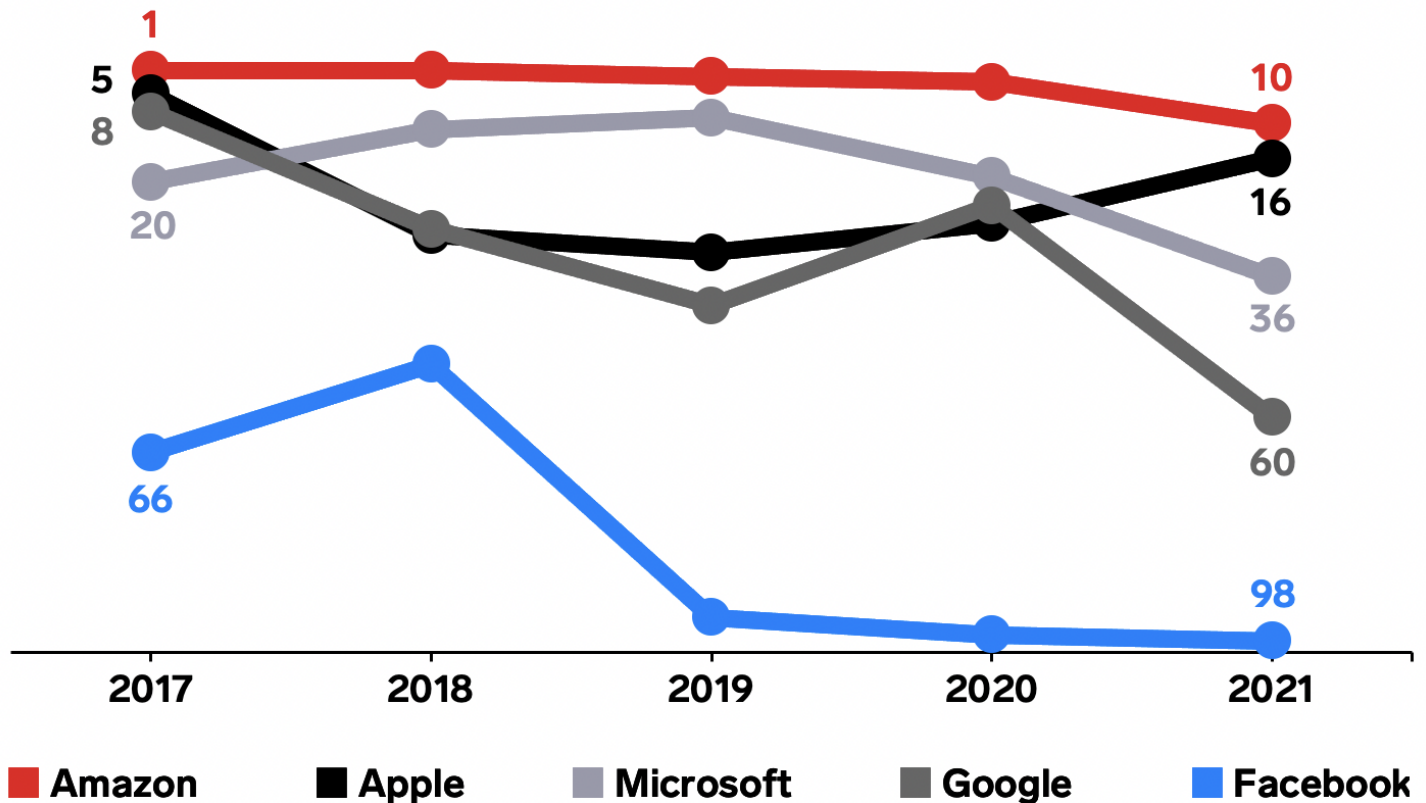
The bills are the most aggressive challenge yet from Capitol Hill to Silicon Valley's tech giants. In fact, the big four have largely thrived for years without regulation or much restraint on business expansion and anticompetitive acquisitions. Earlier this year **Senator Amy Klobuchar** [introduced](#) a bill to reinvigorate the US' antitrust laws and restore competition. If passed, the bills would be the most ambitious update to monopoly laws in decades, but legislation of this scale could take years to finalize and could undergo significant changes.

Some of the proposed bills are likely to pass, while others may see significant resistance. Of the five bills, the bill that gets more funding for antitrust agencies through raising merger fees should get universal support. Meanwhile, the bill that allows consumers to take their digital history to other websites would weaken Facebook's hold on personal data, and could see bilateral support. But banning convenient features like **AmazonBasics** branded products, or Google Maps appearing on Google Search might spark [consumer backlash](#).

The urgency to take on Big Tech monopolies extends beyond US borders at a time when the [reputation of Big Tech](#) companies has taken a significant hit. The Japanese government is [allegedly investigating](#) the Apple/Google smartphone OS duopoly. UK and EU antitrust legislators are [zeroing-in](#) on Facebook's collection and use of data. The European Commission (EC) also filed formal [antitrust charges](#) against Apple over its App Store, and [filed](#) similar charges against Amazon in November 2020 for unfair competition against third-party sellers on its platform.

Technology Company Reputation Rankings, April 2021

relative ranking by reputation from 1 to 100



Source: Axios/Harris, May 2021

Methodology: The Axios Harris Poll 100 is based on a survey of 42,935 US adults in a nationally representative sample conducted April 8–21, 2021. The Axios Harris poll first identifies the 100 most visible companies and then ranks them based on what respondents think of them.

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