

Panel steps up US antitrust probe with Big Tech request

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House Judiciary Committee chairman Jerrold Nadler said documents being sought from Big Tech firms would enable the panel to move on its probe of whether they violated antitrust laws

A US congressional panel stepped up its antitrust probe of four Big Tech firms on Friday with a wide-ranging request for documents on their business operations.

The House Judiciary Committee sent letters to Amazon, Apple, Google and Facebook seeking detailed information about their various business segments and any "executive communication" that discusses potential anti-competitive conduct or prior investigations.

Judiciary Committee chairman Jerrold Nadler said the documents would give "a better understanding of the degree to which these intermediaries enjoy market power, how they are using that market power (and) whether they are using their market power in ways that have harmed consumers."

The move ramps up a congressional inquiry into the dominant tech platforms at the same time US regulators and [state officials](#) are looking into

potential antitrust violations.

Representative David Cicilline, who heads the antitrust subcommittee probing the firms, said the latest request is "an important milestone in this investigation" and that the panel would be seeking to "ensure that the internet is an engine for opportunity for everyone, not just a select few gatekeepers."

US Justice Department enforcers earlier this year launched a review of major online platforms to determine if they have "stifled" innovation or reduced competition.

Last week, 50 attorneys general announced a probe into whether Google abused its power in the online ecosystem at the expense of rivals or consumers.

That followed a separate investigation into Facebook announced earlier in the month by a coalition of US states.

The antitrust actions come against a backdrop of declining public trust in big online firms, and fines levied against Facebook and Google over privacy violations.

The House panel said it wants key emails and documents from top executives including Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Apple CEO Tim Cook and the top executives of Google, its parent firm Alphabet and its YouTube video service.

Documents sought also include memoranda, studies and white papers on various business units and acquisitions by the big firms.

The committee, which announced its probe in June, said it wants the documents by October 14.

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