

After Urging from Lee and Klobuchar, Apple Agrees to Send Witness To Hearing on App Stores and Mobile App Competition

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Ranking Member and Chairwoman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Competition Policy, Antitrust, and Consumer Rights, yesterday announced that both Apple and Google have agreed to send witnesses to a subcommittee hearing on app stores and mobile app competition scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 2:30 PM. In a letter sent on Friday, April 9th, 2021, Lee and Klobuchar criticized Apple’s initial decision to withhold witnesses from testifying and asked Apple CEO Tim Cook to reverse course.

“I am glad that Apple has changed course and agreed to testify before the Subcommittee,” said Senator Lee. **“Utahns are eager to learn what we can do to better protect and promote competition in the digital ecosystem, and it’s essential that Apple and others make good faith contributions to that effort.”**

“The fact that there are just two gatekeepers between consumers and the millions of online applications available for download raises serious competition concerns. These companies have the power to control how and if mobile app developers can reach app users, and ultimately, which apps become successful,” said Senator Klobuchar. **“This hearing will explore whether Apple and Google are using their power as gatekeepers to charge high fees and impose restrictions that suppress competition in mobile applications and related markets, and both companies’ participation in the hearing is necessary.”**

Consumers rely on mobile applications to access online content and services, and the vast majority of apps are downloaded from either Apple’s App Store or Google’s Play Store. The hearing will focus on the impact of Apple’s and Google’s power over the cost, distribution, and availability of mobile applications on consumers, app developers, and competition.

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