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‘Khanservatives’ Have Radical Economic Beliefs

By Paul Steidler

Is there common ground among the most progressive elements of the Biden Administration and Senator Josh Hawley, Senator J.D. Vance, Congressman Matt Gaetz, and other Republicans? There is indeed.

A lengthy and at times gushing [March 25 Wall Street Journal](#) article from Molly Ball and Brody Mullins, “Biden’s Trustbuster Draws Unlikely Fans: ‘Khanservative’ Republicans,” discussed the conservative members’ support for Lina Khan, Chair of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

They should reconsider that support for three reasons.

Empowers Administration’s radical economic agenda. Chair Khan is a protégé of Senator Elizabeth Warren. The two knew each other for years before President Biden nominated her. As the article noted, Chair Khan is, in the words of one of her subordinates in the article, using the FTC as the “tip of the spear” for radical economic change.

Seeming disregard for legal constraints. The aggressive change Khan and her allies want is at best pushing legal envelopes. Former FTC Commissioner Christine Wilson spoke of this when she wrote in a February 14, 2023 [Wall Street Journal Op-Ed](#) about Chair Khan’s, “...willful disregard of congressional imposed limits on agency jurisdiction, her defiance of legal precedent, and her abuse of power to achieve desired outcomes.”

Disregard for consumers. For decades, the consumer welfare standard has governed the approval of mergers. The legal methodology developed by Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork has at its roots common sense: if consumers will not be harmed, the merger should go forward.

For many small businesses, mergers and acquisitions are an integral part of their exit strategy. Yet today’s FTC is having a chilling effect on this, dampening innovation, risk-taking, and progress in the U.S. economy.

For these and other reasons, Khanservatives should do a reassessment.

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