



Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google Amassing a “Lobbying Army” to Fight Potential Investigations

Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google have reportedly amassed a “lobbying army” in preparation for the upcoming anti-trust investigations and calls to break the Silicon Valley tech monopolies. The four technology giants have spent a combined \$55 million on lobbying in 2018, doubling their previous record \$27.4 million spent in 2016. Currently, the four tech titans have amassed 238 lobbyists. Big Tech’s lobbying influence extends to calls with members of Congress, advertising, funding of think-tanks, and efforts to influence President Donald Trump.

Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google have reportedly amassed a “lobbying army” as they prepare to deal with an increasing amount of antitrust investigations and calls to break up the Silicon Valley Masters of the Universe.

Although America's largest tech companies have historically stayed away from lobbying Congress, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google have [transformed](#) into some of the largest influencers in Washington, D.C.

The four technology giants have spent a combined \$55 million on lobbying in 2018, doubling their previous record \$27.4 million spent in 2016, and some of the tech companies are spending at an even higher rate this year, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

The tech companies' rapid hiring of lobbyists arises as the House Judiciary Committee announced that it will start a "top-to-bottom" investigation of America's largest tech giants, the Donald Trump Department of Justice (DOJ) said it will [investigate](#) Google for potential antitrust violations, and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has reportedly [started](#) asking Amazon's rivals about the e-commerce giant's business practices.

Big Tech's rapidly growing influence [puts](#) these companies at relative parity with traditional lobbying powerhouses such as the defense, automobile, and banking industries.

The four tech companies have reportedly amassed 238 lobbyists for the first quarter of 2019, both in-house and contracted lobbyists;

roughly

75 percent of the lobbyists come from government offices or political campaigns.

Big Tech's lobbying influence extends to calls with members of Congress, advertising, funding of think-tanks, and efforts to influence

President Donald Trump, who has occasionally criticized Big Tech's

ownership of censorship of conservatives and even Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos' ownership of

the establishment *Washington Post*.

Breitbart News has [reported](#) that

Google has donated to conservative think-tanks and publications such as

the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), Competitive Enterprise

Institute (CEI), the *National Review*, the Cato Institute, the American Conservative Union (ACU). Many of these institutions, such as the *National Review* and

CEI have been critical of calls to rein-in Big Tech's dominant status

and censorship of conservative and alternative viewpoints.

Sheila Krumholz, the executive director of the Center for Responsive Politics, told the *New York Times* that these companies have ramped up their lobbying efforts.

Krumholz said, "They are no longer upstarts dipping a toe in lobbying. They have both feet in."

Big Tech also has rapidly picked up former high-level congressional staffers to increase their influence on Capitol Hill.

Facebook hired Catlin O'Neill, who worked as Rep. Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) chief of staff, and who now works as the company's American director of public policy for the social media giant. Pelosi reportedly received nearly \$43,000 in total donations during the 2018 midterm cycle from employees and political action committees (PACs) of the Big Tech companies, each of which ranks among her top sources of campaign cash. Pelosi has typically served as a champion of Big Tech companies.

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