

**Farewell Remarks of FTC Chairwoman Edith Ramirez
Washington, DC
January 17, 2017**

What can I possibly say as I approach my last day as Chairwoman of the Federal Trade Commission? I can sum it very simply: It has been the honor of a lifetime to lead this agency.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank each and every one of you for your dedicated service to the American public and to share a few thoughts about my time here and

what this unique institution represents to the American public.

I have also often thought about a conversation I had with former Chairman Bill Kovacic early on in my tenure as Chairwoman. He emphasized that “great institutions reflect an accumulation of effort over decades and thrive because leaders keep their eye on the future and are not guided by a desire for immediate acclaim.” I think he is absolutely right.

The FTC is a great institution because of the vision and accomplishments of prior leaders – Democrats and Republicans alike. Indeed, most of what we do today can be traced back to initiatives that long preceded me.

Chairman Pitofsky saw early on that we needed to improve our understanding of how new technology was reshaping the world around us. During his tenure, the Commission held workshops on protecting consumers in the high tech global marketplace and submitted a report to Congress highlighting key privacy principles. On his watch, the Commission brought its first pay-for-delay cases and conducted the agency’s first remedy study, efforts that we are building on today.

Chairmen Muris and Majoras both took his efforts further. Under Chairman Muris, the

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technical professionals and support staff – it has been my privilege to work with you over these past years. This is an incredibly special place because of you and the mission that you so tirelessly pursue every day.

It is impossible to acknowledge the individuals who have helped me – day in and day out – to meet the demands of leading this high performing agency, but indulge me while I mention just a few.

Let me start by acknowledging the extraordinary leadership of Jessica Rich and Debbie Feinstein who set a vision for our dual mission and executed on that vision with an abundance of law enforcement investigations and actions on consumers’ behalf. Jessica has overseen a crushing workload as Director of our Bureau of Consumer Protection, including many high level and complex cases that have put hundreds of millions of dollars back into consumers’ pockets, as well as shutting down pernicious scams up and down the country. Debbie has led the Competition Bureau in a notable series of litigations and investigations that have led to huge victories for competition, getting her own feet wet as a litigator and trial attorney in the process.

I also need to acknowledge Jon Nuechterlein who through his intelligence, wisdom, and wit – not to mention incredible writing skills – is to me the epitome of the ideal general counsel.

And I want to thank my string of superb academics who led our Bureau of Economics and sacrificed their university sabbaticals to work for us – Ginger Jin, Francine LaFontaine, and Marty Gaynor. It has been critical to our mission to have your keen insights from an economic perspective to guide our thinking.

I also want to thank Andy Gavil, Marina Lao, and Tara Koslov who through their thoughtful and enthusiastic leadership have kept our Office of Policy Planning in the news with its many workshops and advocacies promoting competition in many sectors of our economy.

and the rest of my current team – Shaundra Watson, Henry Su, and Kristen Anderson.¹ I also want to acknowledge Katia Barron, my honors paralegal, who never seems to go home and is always ready to jump in to help me on any task.

One of the most difficult things about leaving the Commission is that I have come to know so many of you – so many exceptional people who push themselves every single day to do the right thing for America’s consumers. It has been an honor and a privilege to be here and to have worked with all of you.

Let me share just one last thought that makes leaving the FTC a little less difficult. This institution is larger than any one of us individually; it is the team spirit and sense of mission that allows the agency to evolve and succeed. Knowing all of you as I do, I have no doubt that when I leave, I will leave the Commission in excellent hands, with Commissioners Ohlhausen and McSweeney leading the way, and that the fight for honest, fair, and competitive markets will continue