

insights of its dedicated personnel. But this “return to normalcy” for the agency came to an abrupt halt when Chair Lina Khan arrived in June 2021.

I agree with the admonition you gave your appointees on Inauguration Day: “Everybody is entitled to be treated with decency and dignity.” Unfortunately, Chair Khan has not acted in keeping with this sentiment. Under her leadership, knowledgeable career staff have been scorned and sidelined. Most notably, early in her tenure, a gag order was imposed on staff that prevented them from engaging in consumer and business education — a vote of no confidence in our staff and a disservice to those we serve.

Each year, several hundred FTC employees take the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. For more than a decade, under the leadership of both Republicans and Democrats, the results of the FEV Survey have confirmed the excellence of the FTC: it ranked in the top five mid-sized federal agencies between 2010 and 2017, and ranked either first or second between 2018 and 2020. Since Chair Khan’s arrival, however, the agency’s rankings have plummeted. To the sorrow and dismay of current and former FTC employees and political appointees on both sides of the aisle, the FTC has gone from first to worst.

- x In 2020, 87% of responding FTC employees agreed that senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity; that number fell to 53% in 2021 and declined further to 49% in 2022. Among all surveyed federal agencies, the FTC plummeted from best in 2020 to worst in 2021.
- x In 2020, 83% of surveyed FTC employees agreed that they have a high level of respect for the FTC’s senior leaders; in 2021 and 2022, only 49% and 44% of employees, respectively, still agreed. Here too, the FTC fell from best in 2020 to worst in 2021 among surveyed agencies.
- x In 2020, 80% of FTC respondents agreed that senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce; agreement with this statement dropped to 42% in 2021 and then to 36% in 2022. The agency dropped from highest among surveyed agencies in 2020 to second-lowest in 2021, and ranked last in 2022.

Rampant dissatisfaction among staff has led to the departures of many experienced personnel, causing a notable “brain drain.” Longtime FTC employees cannot remember a similar exodus at any point in the last 30 years.

Another notable trend pertains to the significant declines in both competition and consumer protection enforcement under Chair Khan. This decline cannot be attributed to our seasoned staff, who are as dedicated and productive as ever.

In 2020, the final calendar year under President Donald Trump, Chairman Joseph J. Simons led the FTC. Merger enforcement was at a two-decade high, boasting 31 actions against mergers

¹ The enforcement statistics have been compiled using FTC data, the FTC website, and external analyses. Every effort has been made to present comprehensive and accurate data. If these data presented enforcement by one, or three, or even five cases, the trend remains stark.

(including challenges, consents, and abandonments). In 2021, the FTC took only 15 actions
