

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WARNING: POSSIBLE HOSTILE TAKEOVER OF FTC BY “DOGE” TEAM UNDER ELON MUSK —
CONSUMER PROTECTIONS AT IMMEDIATE RISK

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Alarming reports suggest that individuals associated with the so-called “DOGE team,” acting under the direction of Elon Musk, may be maneuvering to infiltrate and dismantle the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) from within. Sources indicate that DOGE staffers have already embedded themselves inside the agency, potentially with access to sensitive consumer data and a vast trove of corporate trade secrets housed within internal data systems. This setup may be laying the groundwork for illegal mass firings and a reduction in force—an unprecedented power grab that could cripple the FTC’s ability to protect the American public.

While details continue to emerge, the pattern is unmistakable. The DOGE team’s recent actions follow a disturbing playbook: bypassing norms, subverting legal processes, and setting the stage for institutional collapse. And there is at least one clear beneficiary—Elon Musk, whose company X (formerly Twitter) remains under a federal consent decree. A neutered FTC would eliminate one of the final safeguards standing between Musk and unchecked surveillance, exploitation, and algorithmic manipulation of users—including children.

The very foundation of federal consumer protection is in danger.

The FTC plays an irreplaceable role in:

- Shielding seniors and veterans from fraud
- Defending children’s safety and privacy online
- Blocking deceptive advertising and marketing practices
- Enforcing limits on monopolistic behavior and AI-driven risks

Without a fully functioning FTC, corporations would face fewer consequences, and consumers would be left vulnerable to lawless business practices. This would open the floodgates to a “race to the bottom” economy—one where exploitation, manipulation, and impunity replace fair play, innovation, and trust. The consequences would be dire—especially for children, vulnerable populations, and small businesses.

We urge Chair Ferguson and Commissioner Holyoak to act now. Stand firm against the DOGE team’s attempted subversion. Uphold your oaths to the institution—and to the Constitution.

The American public deserves a functioning watchdog—not a hollowed-out institution hijacked by billionaires seeking to rewrite the rules in their favor.

The Center for Digital Democracy is a public interest research and advocacy organization, established in 2001, which works on behalf of citizens, consumers, communities, and youth to protect and expand privacy, digital rights, and data justice. CDD's predecessor, the Center for Media Education, lead the campaign for the passage of COPPA over 25 years ago in 1998.
