Press Release

Op-Ed: The FTC’s Populist Push Is Jeopardizing Its Credibility

PAULINA ENCK | JANUARY 26, 2023

There has been much coverage of the Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC) shift away from the consumer welfare standard of antitrust enforcement and toward a more populist approach of targeting big business. In an op-ed for The Hill, Competition Economics Analyst Fred Ashton examines how this shift could harm the FTC’s ability to accomplish its core mission: protecting the public from deceptive or unfair business practices and unfair methods of competition.

An excerpt:

> The FTC’s lack of success in following its “big is bad” theory of harm not only wastes valuable agency resources but jeopardizes its credibility, as well. Each time the FTC engages in a long-shot endeavor to expand the bounds of its authority or challenge a merger that lacks traditional economic rigor, the agency erodes its own credibility among the courts. Judges, over time, may become less likely to believe the agency is acting within its proper remit, and they may question its neglect of empirical economic reasoning focused on the consumer.

Read this op-ed in its entirety in The Hill.