Press Release

The ACCESS Act Raises More Questions Than It Answers

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Policymakers recently introduced the Augmenting Compatibility and Competition by Enabling Service Switching (ACCESS) Act, a key bill in a legislative package of antitrust bills aimed at “big tech” companies. The ACCESS Act establishes interoperability and data portability mandates for large platforms and proponents of such mandates claim that they will reduce the switching costs that lock-in consumers to existing platforms and give incumbents an unfair advantage. In a new primer, AAF’s Technology & Innovation Policy Analyst Juan Londoño reviews the act’s provisions and examines its potential impact on the tech industry.

Londoño concludes:

> The ACCESS Act seems to raise more questions than it answers. Its interoperability and data portability mandates defer largely to the Federal Trade Commission and neglect to answer many of the key questions around interoperability and portability. Even if it were to lower “switching costs,” as its proponents claim, it could do so at the expense of users’ privacy and safety. When assessing tech platforms, ACCESS focuses too narrowly on certain elements such as user count, and it ignores many important metrics such as screen time and ad revenue that show the digital economy is already both highly competitive and diverse. As a result, despite its intentions to improve the technology market, the interventions in ACCESS could harm consumers as well as both current and emerging platforms.

Read the primer.