

Nowakowski, Sonja

From: Olsen, Andrea (Rep)
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2015 2:22 PM
To: Pope, Christopher (Rep); Regier, Keith (Rep); tom.a.steenberg@gmail.com; Zolnikov, Daniel (Rep); goodwind1.duane@gmail.com; connell4sd43@yahoo.com; Driscoll, Robyn (Sen); cliff@larsenusa.com
Cc: Nowakowski, Sonja; Everts, Todd; Spencer, Nadine
Subject: HJ16

Dear Members of the Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee,

Thank you for your work during the interim. I support the development of "ride sharing" in Montana and voted for the interim study bill, HJ16, which has been assigned to your committee to address the idea of ride-sharing and the legislation that we passed, SB 396, as well as create a Montana made solution to our transportation issues (HJ16). I think it is important during the interim to address some very important consumer protections identified as necessary by the experience in other states and do what we can to prevent the unintended consequences of a bill that passed as a "good idea".

The Federal Trade Commission is also studying "ride-sharing". The Federal Trade Commission has announced the final agenda for its upcoming workshop examining issues raised by the proliferation of internet peer-to-peer business platforms, often referred to as the sharing economy. The event will examine how these new business platforms may affect competition and consumers and explore how effectively existing regulatory frameworks can respond to new sharing economy business models while maintaining appropriate consumer protections.

The daylong event will feature opening remarks by FTC Commissioner Maureen Ohlhausen and an address by Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval of the California Public Utilities Commission. Panels will explore sharing economy platforms, mechanisms for trust in the sharing economy, and various perspectives on the interplay between competition, consumer protection, and regulatory issues. Panelists and speakers will include academics from a number of leading universities, representatives from sharing economy businesses including Uber and Airbnb and self-regulation organizations, and former and current state and local government officials.

Full details are available on the workshop's webpage. **The workshop will be webcast live on the FTC's website, and I hope you will take some time to maybe watch the workshop as part of your work on the Committee.**

The Federal Trade Commission is also seeking public comment on a number of questions, which include:

- How can state and local regulators meet legitimate regulatory goals (such as protecting consumers, and promoting public health and safety) in connection with their oversight of sharing economy platforms and business models, without also restraining competition or hindering innovation?
- How have sharing economy platforms affected competition, innovation, consumer choice, and platform participants in the sectors in which they operate? How might they in the future?
- What consumer protection issues—including privacy and data security, online reviews and disclosures, and claims about earnings and costs—do these platforms raise, and who is responsible for addressing these issues?
- What particular concerns or issues do sharing economy transactions raise regarding the protection of platform participants? What responsibility does a sharing economy platform bear for consumer injury arising from transactions undertaken through the platform?
- How effective are reputation systems and other trust mechanisms, such as the vetting of sellers, insurance coverage, or complaint procedures, in encouraging consumers and suppliers to do business on sharing economy platforms.

Comments can be submitted online until August 4, 2015. I imagine that the interim committee may benefit from this information provided by professionals, as well as the public, to the FTC. **Thank you again for your service and your attention to this issue.**

Sincerely,

Energy & Telecommunications
Interim Committee 2015-16

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