

Federal Trade Commissioners Rebecca Kelly Slaughter and Alvaro M. Bedoya sue Trump administration for attempted illegal firings

MARCH 27, 2025

Defying 90 years of Supreme Court precedent, the Trump administration this month attempted to fire Federal Trade Commissioners Rebecca Kelly Slaughter and Alvaro M. Bedoya, without cause, before their Senate-confirmed terms were up.

Washington, D.C. – On Thursday, March 27, 2025, Federal Trade Commissioners Alvaro M. Bedoya and Rebecca Kelly Slaughter filed a [lawsuit](#) challenging the Trump administration’s improper attempt to fire them last week in violation of long-established federal law. They [filed](#) the case in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

“If the President can ignore a 90-year-old Supreme Court ruling to fire us with no cause, it won’t just shatter norms. It’ll ripple through the whole economy,” **said Federal Trade Commissioner Alvaro M. Bedoya**. “The same precedent that protects us from being removed without cause also applies to the chair of the Federal Reserve, which sets interest rates and has a huge impact on markets. If your retirement is invested in stocks and mutual funds, if you want to buy or sell a house, you benefit from stable leadership in these institutions. If the President can fire us for no reason, at any time, that’s the opposite of stability.”

“The Federal Trade Commission catches scammers, prevents monopolies, and stops landlords from padding your rent bill with junk fees,” **said Federal Trade Commissioner Rebecca Kelly Slaughter**. “We make rules that require tech companies to protect children’s privacy online. We promote competition in the pharmaceutical industry to drive prices down. And we can do all of this because the FTC can’t be bought with campaign contributions or bullied by politicians. Commissioner Bedoya and I may be the ones with our names on this lawsuit — but if you buy things at the grocery store or the pharmacy or the gas station and you care about inflation and the health of our nation’s economy, this is your lawsuit, too.”

On March 18, 2025, Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter received an email from the White House stating that they were terminated effective immediately. The email gave no legal cause for the termination. Yet, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Humphrey’s Executor* in 1935 that the president cannot fire FTC Commissioners without cause. The same principle ensuring FTC Commissioners are insulated from political firing also applies to the Federal Reserve, FDIC, and other key parts of the government. Conditioning the health and stability of the U.S. economy on the political impulses of the president would be unprecedented—and profoundly dangerous.

The [complaint](#), which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia by Protect Democracy and Clarick Gueron Reisbaum LLP, alleges that “[t]he President’s action is indefensible under governing law” and notes that “removal protections like those for FTC Commissioners appear in statutes for myriad agencies, notably including the Federal Reserve.” The complaint calls on the Court to declare the attempted removal of Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter unlawful and ineffective and allow the commissioners to resume their service at the FTC.

“The President’s attempt to terminate Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter is contrary to federal law and nearly a century of Supreme Court precedent,” **said Amit Agarwal, Special Counsel for Protect Democracy**, who previously served as Florida’s Solicitor General under now-U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi and clerked for Justice Alito and then-Judge Kavanaugh. “This isn’t about Democrats vs. Republicans or liberals vs. conservatives—it’s about an economy governed by laws rather than political whims.”

“We are honored to represent Commissioners Bedoya and Slaughter in their effort to preserve the integrity of the FTC and continue to serve the American people,” **said Aaron Crowell, a Partner at Clarick Gueron Reisbaum LLP**. “*Humphrey’s Executor* has been settled law for a lifetime and it is beyond dispute that a President cannot remove an FTC Commissioner without cause. We look forward to our clients’ day in court.”

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