

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. J. RES. 203

Directing the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and report on anti-competitive practices and violations of the antitrust laws in the fire truck manufacturing industry.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 21, 2026

Ms. BALINT (for herself and Mr. CLINE) submitted the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Directing the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and report on anticompetitive practices and violations of the antitrust laws in the fire truck manufacturing industry.

Whereas section 6 of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 46) and the matter under the heading “FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION” of the Independent Offices Appropriation Act, 1934 (15 U.S.C. 46a) authorize Congress, through a resolution passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives, to direct the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and report the facts relating to any alleged violations of the antitrust laws by any corporation;

Whereas there have been credible allegations of violations of the antitrust laws in the fire truck manufacturing industry;

Whereas the fire truck manufacturing industry has become increasingly consolidated over the last decade, largely due to serial acquisitions of independent fire truck manufacturers by private equity firms and larger manufacturers;

Whereas the Merger Guidelines issued by the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice clarify that the antitrust agencies may examine the cumulative effect of a whole series of acquisitions if an individual transaction is part of a firm's pattern or strategy of multiple acquisitions;

Whereas 3 companies control 70 to 80 percent of the fire truck manufacturing market;

Whereas dominant fire truck manufacturers have allegedly used their market power to increase fire truck prices to the point that fire trucks are unattainable for fire departments;

Whereas, between 2013 and 2023, the price for a pumper truck increased from \$500,000 to nearly \$1,000,000, and the price for a ladder truck increased from \$900,000 to nearly \$2,000,000;

Whereas the prices of fire trucks have far outpaced inflation for heavy duty truck manufacturing from 2013 to 2023;

Whereas, since 2019, the lead times for fire truck delivery have increased from between 1 and 2 years to 4.5 years;

Whereas the fire truck manufacturer with the largest market share has permanently shut down some of its own production plants even while demand for fire trucks has increased in recent years;

Whereas higher prices and longer delivery times for fire trucks have prevented fire departments from replacing aging fire trucks, and instead forced fire departments to use outdated fire trucks, threatening fire fighter and public safety;

Whereas fire departments are struggling to procure fire trucks due to rising costs and lengthening delivery backlogs;

Whereas when Los Angeles, California faced deadly wildfires in January 2025, more than half of the fire trucks of the Los Angeles Fire Department were out of service, which hindered the ability of the Department to effectively contain the fires;

Whereas Members of Congress have heard from fire fighters, fire departments, and local officials, including in Massachusetts, Indiana, Vermont, and Virginia, about the economic and safety challenges caused by rising fire truck costs and delivery backlogs; and

Whereas, in August 2025, the City of La Crosse, Wisconsin filed a class action lawsuit against several major fire truck manufacturers, alleging they conspired to use their market power to suppress the supply of fire trucks and raise fire truck prices, in violation of section 1 of the Sherman Act (15 U.S.C. 1) and the antitrust law of the State of Wisconsin (Wis. Stat. Ann. section 133.01):
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That—

1 (1) the Federal Trade Commission is directed
2 to investigate and, not later than 1 year after the
3 date of adoption of this resolution, report to the
4 Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the
5 Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives on—

7 (A) the extent of anticompetitive practices
8 and violations of the antitrust laws (as defined
9 in the first section of the Clayton Act (15
10 U.S.C. 12)) in the fire truck manufacturing in-
11 dustry, including—

- 12 (i) price fixing;
13 (ii) price gouging;
14 (iii) serial acquisitions; and
15 (iv) monopolization;

16 (B) the effects of anticompetitive practices
17 and violations of the antitrust laws in the fire
18 truck manufacturing industry on fire fighters,
19 fire departments, States, municipalities, and
20 small businesses, including monetary and other
21 harms; and

22 (C) recommendations for legislation, or
23 other remedial actions, as appropriate; and

24 (2) if a respondent does not provide timely an-
25 swers to a request for information by the Federal

1 Trade Commission, the Federal Trade Commission
2 shall report to the Committee on the Judiciary of
3 the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of
4 the House of Representatives regarding the conduct
5 of the respondent.

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