

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

## Amazon under fire for allegedly lying to Congress

March 9, 2022



*The tech giant may face legal repercussions over antitrust investigations. Image credit: Amazon*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

U.S. lawmakers are requesting that the Department of Justice investigate potentially criminal conduct from tech giant Amazon.

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In a letter addressed to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland on March 9, House Judiciary Committee members accuse Amazon of obstruction of justice in regards to antitrust investigations conducted over the last two-and-a-half years. They suggest the company engaged in behavior that intended to influence, obstruct or impede the House's investigation.

"Without producing any evidence to the contrary, Amazon has left standing what appear to be false and misleading statements to the Committee," the letter **reads**. "It has refused to turn over business documents or communications that would either corroborate its claims or correct the record to conceal the truth about its use of third-party sellers' data to advantage its private-label business.

"As a result, we have no choice but to refer this matter to the Department of Justice to investigate whether Amazon and its executives obstructed Congress in violation of applicable federal law."

### Ongoing conflict

The House Judiciary Committee initially launched an extensive investigation into Amazon over its use of data to monopolize digital markets in 2019.

In its first appearance before the committee during the investigation, Amazon allegedly lied through an executive's sworn testimony that the company did not use data collected from its third-party sellers to compete with them.



*Amazon is pushing into the physical fashion retail arena amid ongoing investigations. Image credit: Amazon*

Based on investigative reports, the committee suggests otherwise. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, interviews with former Amazon-label employees revealed that Amazon did, in fact, use information from third-party sellers when making and selling its own, branded products.

Additionally, the committee accuses Amazon of attempting to cover up this alleged lie by offering shifting and misleading information regarding its "seller data protection" policy.

The 24-page letter was signed by a bipartisan group of five U.S. House Judicial Committee members: Jerrold Nadler, David N. Cicilline, Ken Buck, Pramila Jayapal and Matt Gaetz.

While the DOJ has yet to respond to the letter, there is potential for legal action as it has made several recent attempts to monopolize the digital space.

In October 2020, the Justice Department hit Google with an antitrust lawsuit arguing that the tech giant unfairly dominates online search and advertising to the point at which consumers and competitors are being harmed.

Since the Justice Department's landmark case against Microsoft nearly 22 years ago, this was the most significant legal action taken by the Department, Congress and state attorneys against a technology corporation ([see story](#)).