

Warren and Zuckerberg Clash Over Breaking up Big Tech

By Neil Chamaki, J.D. Candidate 2022 | October 3, 2019

Senator Elizabeth Warren is [leading polls](#) for the 2020 presidential election and has taken a strong position against tech giants like Facebook. In March 2019, Warren introduced a [proposal in favor of breaking up leading technology companies](#), including Facebook, Amazon, and Google. She noted in a tweet that big technology companies have “engaged in illegal anticompetitive practices, stomped on consumer privacy rights, and repeatedly fumbled their responsibility to protect our democracy.” Earlier this year, she expressed that she is “sick of freeloading billionaires.”

Warren’s tweet was in response to [leaked recordings of Mark Zuckerberg](#), Facebook’s CEO, having an internal discussion with Facebook employees regarding Warren’s position, close to seven months after she rolled out her plan. There, Zuckerberg noted, “if she gets elected president, then I would bet that we will have a legal challenge, and I bet that we will win the legal challenge.”

Warren is seeking to reverse tech company acquisition activity. This includes undoing Facebook’s acquisitions of WhatsApp and Instagram, among others. Her [rationale for breaking up big tech](#) is that “tech companies [have] amassed significant power and face little competition.” Also, that they should “protect your privacy and keep misinformation out of your feed, instead of working together to sell your data, inundate you with misinformation, and undermine our election security.”

Zuckerberg [has his own take on breaking up big tech](#), stating that “breaking up these companies, whether it’s Facebook or Google or Amazon, [is] not actually going to solve the issues” and that breaking up big tech companies “doesn’t make election interference less likely...because the companies can’t coordinate and work together.”

The tension between Warren and Zuckerberg shines a light on big tech antitrust law and whether more stringent regulations need to be placed on tech companies. One could ask: would reversing acquisitions slow technological advancement and disrupt synergistic alliances that only result from companies integrating their ideas, human capital, and collective technology goals? One



could reason that curtailing third-party data distribution, while allowing tech acquisitions to continue, provides society with more overall utility.