

FCC Republican backs Musk's Twitter purchase, slams "restrictions on speech" | Ars Technica

By Jon Brodtkin

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Federal Communications Commission member Nathan Simington says the FCC should "applaud" Elon Musk for buying Twitter, arguing that Musk's "stated intention to ease Twitter's restrictions on speech... would almost certainly enhance competition and better serve those Americans, the majority, who value free speech."

"The FCC cannot, and should not, block this sale," Simington, one of two Republican commissioners on the FCC, said in a statement issued Monday. "We should instead applaud Mr. Musk for doing something about a serious problem that government has so far failed to address." Simington was nominated to the FCC by then-President Donald Trump in 2020 to replace a Republican commissioner who objected to Trump's demand that the FCC crack down on social media "censorship."

There's not much reason to think the FCC would try to block Musk's pending \$44 billion purchase of Twitter, as the commission's authority over mergers and acquisitions is centered on transactions that involve FCC licenses. Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democrat, hasn't issued any statements on the Twitter sale. However, a group called the Open Markets Institute last week claimed that the FCC, Department of Justice, and Federal Trade Commission all have "ample authority" to block the sale.

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