

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 12, 2026

Honorable Gail Slater  
Assistant Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Andrew Ferguson  
Chair  
Federal Trade Commission  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Assistant Attorney General Slater and Chair Ferguson:

We write to express our concern about the growing consolidation of critical services and products that public safety departments nationwide depend on, including incident reporting and data management software solutions used by fire departments.

Recent reports document that one company, ESO Solutions, backed by private equity firm Vista Equity Partners, has acquired multiple fire service software businesses and now controls the software used by approximately 20,000 of the nation's 30,000 fire departments. As the company has consolidated its market position, some fire departments have reported steep price increases, from \$795 per year to more than \$5,000.<sup>1</sup> Reports also note that ESO has removed some of the most cost-effective options previously used by small and volunteer fire departments, effectively pushing fire departments to adopt more expensive, albeit more modern, software.

More broadly, fire departments, and other public safety agencies across the nation, have experienced cost increases as markets consolidate,<sup>2</sup> affecting everything from

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<sup>1</sup> Mike Baker, "Private Equity Finds a New Source of Profit: Volunteer Fire Departments," *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/14/us/fire-department-software-private-equity.html>.

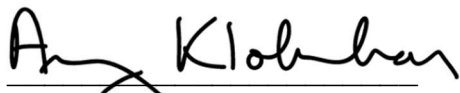
<sup>2</sup> See U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *Sounding the Alarm: America's Fire Apparatus Crisis*, 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session, 2025.

fire engine manufacturing and emergency radios to fire retardants and other essential equipment.

These companies appear to be taking advantage of the fact that communities depend on specialized products and services that are essential to first responders' ability to do their jobs. This market dependence has allowed companies to increase prices without the risk of losing business, especially in communities and local governments that lack alternatives. Smaller emergency agencies, including the thousands of volunteer fire departments across the United States, should not be forced to purchase more expensive products that they neither need nor want simply because consolidation has reduced choice and competition.

We urge you to investigate consolidation in the markets for products and services relied on by public safety agencies to ensure that local communities, and the first responders that protect them, are not victims of anticompetitive conduct and consolidation.

Sincerely,

  
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Senator Amy Klobuchar

  
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Senator Roger Marshall, M.D.