

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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D.C. Joins Federal Trade Commission, Pennsylvania in Opposing Merger between Staples and Office Depot

Merger Would Reduce Competition in Business-to-Business Market for Office Supplies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced today that the District has joined with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in filing a complaint opposing a proposed merger between Staples, Inc., and Office Depot, Inc. Such a merger, the government agencies argue, would lessen competition in violation of federal antitrust laws.

“We believe this proposed merger is anticompetitive and would harm District businesses, and that’s why we’ve joined the FTC and Pennsylvania in opposing it,” Attorney General Racine said.

The complaint, filed under seal Monday in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, seeks a preliminary injunction stopping the merger. The FTC voted to oppose the merger and to seek the preliminary injunction in federal court, describing the proposed merger as “likely to eliminate beneficial competition that large business customers rely upon to reduce the costs of office supplies.”

Staples is the world’s largest vendor of office supplies. The FTC alleges that Staples and Office Depot are the two primary competitors in the market for supplying consumable office supplies – supplies sold to business customers for their own end use – to large business customers.

The Canadian Competition Bureau also moved Monday to block the merger in Canadian markets.

The District joins in the FTC’s claims under the Clayton Act, which may be enforced in federal court by state attorneys general. For more information on the FTC complaint, visit: <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2015/12/ftc-challenges-proposed-merger-staples-inc-office-depot-inc>.

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