

WILMER, CUTLER & PICKERING

2445 M STREET, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037-1420

TELEPHONE (202) 663-6000

FACSIMILE (202) 663-6363

WASHINGTON
BALTIMORE
NEW YORK
LONDON
BRUSSELS
BERLIN

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Antitrust Update

Bush Taps Muris for FTC Chairmanship; Pitofsky to Step Down Early

As expected, on Wednesday, March 21, President Bush announced his intention to nominate Timothy J. Muris as the new Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. Mr. Muris, a professor at George Mason University Law School, headed the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection and then the Bureau of Competition during the Reagan administration. In an Antitrust Update on February 23, we shared some thoughts about what the nominations of Mr. Muris and Charles James as head of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division might portend for the direction of federal antitrust enforcement and the potential for increased state antitrust enforcement should the focus of federal enforcement shift ([Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering - Our Firm](#)). We observed, in particular, that Mr. Muris has publicly criticized some of the vertical cases that the FTC brought during the Clinton administration.

Although his term does not expire until September 2001, FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky announced on Thursday, March 22 that he will step down promptly after the Senate confirms a new chairman. The Senate is expected to hold confirmation hearings on Mr. Muris's nomination in the next few months.

If you would like to discuss the potential course of federal or state antitrust enforcement during the Bush administration or any other issue of U.S. or foreign Antitrust or Competition law, please contact us.

Bill Kolasky
Loring Jetton
Chuck Stark
Robert Bell
Veronica Kayne

Thomas Mueller
Jim Lowe
Ali Stoeppelwerth
Lee Greenfield
Janet Ridge