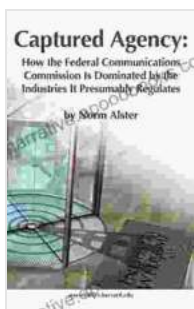


How The Federal Communications Commission Is Dominated By The Industries It Regulates

In 2017, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) repealed net neutrality rules that had prevented internet service providers (ISPs) from blocking, throttling, or prioritizing certain types of web traffic. This decision was a major victory for the telecom industry, which had long lobbied against net neutrality. But how did the FCC come to be so beholden to the industries it regulates?

The answer lies in a phenomenon known as "regulatory capture." Regulatory capture occurs when a regulatory agency becomes beholden to the industries it is supposed to regulate. This can happen in a number of ways, but one of the most common is through the revolving door between government and industry.



Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Commission Is Dominated by the Industries It Presumably Regulates

by Michelle Obama

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled
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The revolving door refers to the practice of government officials leaving their positions to work for the industries they were once responsible for regulating. This can create a cozy relationship between regulators and the industries they oversee, as regulators may be less likely to make decisions that could hurt their future job prospects.

The FCC is a prime example of an agency that has been captured by the industries it regulates. In recent years, a number of former FCC officials have gone on to work for the telecom industry. For example, Michael Powell, who was FCC chairman from 2001 to 2005, is now the president of the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA), the leading lobbying group for the cable industry.

The revolving door is just one of the ways that the FCC has been captured by the telecom industry. Other factors include:

- **Campaign contributions:** The telecom industry is one of the biggest donors to political campaigns. In the 2016 election cycle, the industry gave over \$100 million to candidates and political parties.
- **Lobbying:** The telecom industry spends millions of dollars on lobbying every year. In 2017, the industry spent over \$200 million on lobbying, more than any other industry.
- **Regulatory capture:** The FCC has a history of making decisions that favor the telecom industry. For example, in 2010, the FCC voted to allow ISPs to charge customers for using certain websites and services.

The capture of the FCC by the telecom industry has had a number of negative consequences for consumers. For example, consumers now pay

some of the highest prices in the world for internet access. In addition, consumers have less choice and less control over their internet service. For example, ISPs can now block or throttle certain websites and services without fear of government reprisal.

The capture of the FCC is a serious problem that has hurt consumers and stifled innovation. It is a problem that needs to be addressed if we want to have a truly free and open internet.

What can be done to address the problem of regulatory capture?

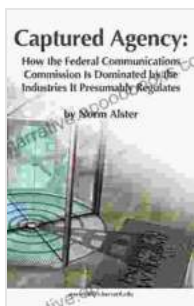
There are a number of things that can be done to address the problem of regulatory capture. These include:

- **Strengthening ethics rules:** Ethics rules can help to prevent government officials from taking actions that could benefit their future job prospects.
- **Increasing transparency:** Transparency can help to shed light on the relationship between regulators and the industries they oversee.
- **Empowering consumers:** Consumers can play a role in addressing regulatory capture by making their voices heard. Consumers can contact their elected officials and let them know their concerns about regulatory capture.

The problem of regulatory capture is a complex one, but it is one that we can solve if we are willing to work together. By strengthening ethics rules, increasing transparency, and empowering consumers, we can help to ensure that our regulatory agencies are working in the best interests of the public.

The Federal Communications Commission is a powerful agency that has a major impact on our lives. It is important that the FCC be independent and free from the influence of the industries it regulates. However, the FCC has been captured by the telecom industry, and this has hurt consumers and stifled innovation.

We need to take action to address the problem of regulatory capture. We need to strengthen ethics rules, increase transparency, and empower consumers. By working together, we can help to ensure that the FCC is working in the best interests of the public.



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