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Trump Nominates Andrew Ferguson to Head FTC and Jared Isaacman as NASA Administrator with Implications for M&A Antitrust Review and Space Policy

This month, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump nominated Andrew Ferguson as Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the U.S. antitrust regulator responsible for Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A) review policy and Jared Isaacman as the new administration's NASA Administrator.

Ferguson is currently an FTC commissioner, and as such, will not require Senate confirmation. He is also a former solicitor general of the state of Virginia. He will take over the commission from Biden appointee Lina Khan, who ushered in a reinvigoration of the FTC's anti-monopoly mandate in reviewing M&A transactions. Among Biden appointees, Khan almost uniquely had support among a number of Republican Senators because of her posture of aggressive oversight of the tech industry. It remains to be seen to what extent Ferguson will pursue vigorous M&A antitrust review, but as mentioned, Khan has fans among the incoming Republican Senate majority. Ferguson will coordinate M&A antitrust review policy with Gail Slater, an attorney who Trump has named to head the Department of Justice Antitrust Division. Trump also named another lawyer, Mark Meador, as the third Republican on the five-member FTC (by tradition, the political party of the President names the majority of the commissioners).

Isaacman is the founder of Shift4, the payments processing company and a "new space" promoter and enthusiast. He is a qualified military jet pilot on several aircraft. Isaacman also set a world record for circumnavigating the globe in a light jet in about 62 hours, smashing

the prior record of 82 hours. He has made two flights into space, as commander of the SpaceX Dragon Inspiration4 and Polaris Dawn missions. On Polaris Dawn, he became the first private citizen to perform an EVA - a spacewalk. Isaacman's position requires Senate confirmation, but that is not expected to be an issue in his case - to say the least.

More information on FTC/DoJ Merger & Acquisition and space policy is available at **Kurtin PLLC Mergers & Acquisitions** and **Kurtin PLLC Satellites & Space**.

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