
AntitrustConnect Blog

Bill Baer Named to Serve as AAG in Charge of Justice Department Antitrust Division

Jeffrey May (Wolters Kluwer) · Saturday, February 4th, 2012

On February 3, the White House announced President Barack Obama's intention to nominate Bill Baer to serve as Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice Antitrust Division.

There was much speculation that Baer would be named to head the Antitrust Division after Sharis A. Pozen, the current acting assistant attorney general for antitrust, announced her intention to resign just over one week ago (see [January 24 blog post](#)). Pozen plans to leave the Justice Department at the end of this month to return to private practice.

Bill Baer is currently the head of the antitrust group at the Washington, D.C. office of Arnold & Porter, LLP. Baer held a number of high-level positions at the Federal Trade Commission, including director of the FTC's Bureau of Competition in the 1990s.

During Baer's tenure, the Bureau of Competition was very active in the merger enforcement area. Among the most notable cases was the FTC's successful challenge to the merger of office supply superstores Staples and Office Depot ((CCH)1997-2 Trade Cases ¶71,867, 970 F. Supp. 1066 (D.D.C. 1997)).

According to the White House [announcement](#), after earning a J.D. at Stanford Law School, Baer began his legal career in 1975 as a trial attorney for the FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection. He joined Arnold & Porter in 1980, becoming a partner at the firm in 1983. In his practice, Baer represents a broad range of companies in U.S. and international cartel investigations, mergers and acquisition reviews, and in antitrust litigation, it was noted.

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