



**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

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## **AMAZON'S HQ2 SEARCH STARTED ONE YEAR AGO, AND IT CONTINUES TO GET LESS TRANSPARENT AND MORE ALARMING BY THE DAY**

*The Tech Giant Is Going Above and Beyond To Keep Taxpayers In The Dark Despite The Fact  
That Billions Of Taxpayer Dollars Are At Stake*

One year ago, Amazon announced that it was planning to build a second headquarters in North America and released a [Request for Proposal](#), which explicitly asks states and cities to offer incentive packages with tax exemptions, utility deals and other special treatment. The RFP should have been dead on arrival, coming from a company that had already received [billions](#) in taxpayer dollars while developing a business model that is designed to crush small businesses and exploit cheap labor. Vague promises of economic development from a company that pays its employees less than [\\$29,000](#) per year and whose warehouses are more like [sweatshops](#) should have been immediately dismissed.

But taxpayers around the country were sidelined and silenced as HQ2 proposals were ironed out behind closed doors. Now, twelve months later, billions more of our dollars could end up in the coffers of the [third-richest company](#) in the world.

“From the get-go, the entire HQ2 process was shrouded in secrecy and it was clear that the so-called winner of HQ2 would be the loser – in the short-term, and more importantly in the long-term,” said Robert B. Engel, chief spokesperson of FFMI. “It makes absolutely no sense for cities to throw away everything they have to lure Amazon instead of using taxpayer dollars to shore up the promises made in pension funds, improve schools, modernize transportation systems and support economic development through the real catalysts of growth - local small- and medium-size businesses. And to think that the details of these HQ2 proposals are being kept under lock and key when they will fundamentally change communities for generations to come – it is outrageous.”

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## **ABOUT THE FREE AND FAIR MARKETS INITIATIVE**

The Free & Fair Markets Initiative (FFMI) is a non-profit coalition of businesses, consumer advocacy groups, workers and community activists committed to scrutinizing and highlighting emerging market trends that are stifling competition and innovation, influencing federal and local government spending, putting consumer data in harm's way and limiting consumer choice. For a list of members, please visit <https://freeandfairmarketsinitiative.org/about-us/members/>. For more information on the Free & Fair Markets Initiative, please visit <https://freeandfairmarketsinitiative.org>.