

**Opening Statement of Chairmen Steve Chabot**  
**Committee on Small Business**  
**Hearing: “Millennials and the Gig Economy”**  
**June 6, 2018**

**AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY**

Good morning. I call this hearing to order.

Throughout history, technological advances have shaped the economic landscape. With each advance, we see an increase in efficiency or output within the market. Today, we will discuss an example of an economic market that is not only shaped by technology, but defined by it – the gig economy.

Today’s hearing will allow us to explore the intricacies of the gig economy, while diving deeper into the questions of who is participating in the gig economy; what does working in the gig economy look like; and how is the growth of the gig economy affecting small businesses?

The concept of the gig economy is not new. It is a marketplace of workers whose businesses are a collection of individual projects or “gigs”. A gig can range from a short-term contract lasting weeks or months to a single task that takes hours to complete. This notion of short term, contractual workers dates back centuries, but has been re-envisioned with the inclusion of technology.

The gig economy is characterized by the use of technology as a means of connecting workers to employers. Digital platforms and mobile apps have been created to not only to provide these connections, but also to provide low cost marketing and basic business tools to those working within the gig economy. Through the inclusion of technology the gig economy has become more efficient and attracted more and more market participants.

While the exact number of workers in the gig economy can be difficult to estimate, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the number of Americans earning income outside the traditional “9 to 5” job to be more than 53 million individuals -- approximately 1 in 3 workers. On average, those workers are currently estimated to be between 47 and 50 years old. By 2020, however, roughly 42 percent of those workers are expected to be between 22 and 37 years old, or of the millennial generation.

Why are so many millennials pursuing careers in the gig economy? Our witnesses today will offer insight into this question and many others. We will hear about the role of coworking in the gig economy, the reality of being an entrepreneur and gig worker, and small business impacts of the gig economy. I look forward to the today’s discussion and thank our witnesses for testifying.

I now yield to the Ranking Member, Ms. Velázquez, for her opening statement.

