

# United States Senate

January 11, 2023

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Chair, Committee on Commerce,  
Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz:

I write to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation hold a hearing on the persistent privacy issues, national security concerns, and troubling influence over our children associated with the social media application TikTok.

Since the last hearing before the Senate Commerce Committee featuring TikTok on October 26, 2021, many of the concerns raised by members on both sides of the aisle have been validated. In fact, TikTok was recently forced to acknowledge that China-based employees of the parent company, ByteDance, have had access to U.S. user data.

In 2020, former President Trump tried to ban the application in the U.S. Now, there is a growing bipartisan recognition of the problem and momentum for further congressional scrutiny. FBI Director Chris Wray confirmed during a recent House Homeland Security Committee hearing that the bureau has ongoing "national security concerns" about the U.S. operations of TikTok. He specifically outlined concerns that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) could use TikTok to obtain data on millions of users, manipulate algorithms to influence our children, and potentially even compromise specific personal devices. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Mark Warner recently agreed that former President Trump was right about the need to ban the application in the U.S. citing the troubling influence that China could exert over American children. CIA Director Bill Burns has also recently voiced concerns, and so too has FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr. Most recently, Congress took an important step in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 to ban the application from all federal government devices. Numerous states, including Alaska, have also banned the application on state government devices. However, more needs to be done.

In light of these renewed bipartisan concerns, and the repeated misrepresentations by TikTok regarding data security and its privacy practices, I urge you to hold a hearing on the risks that Americans, especially our children, face using this platform. The American people need to understand the ramifications of using this application. Such a hearing would serve as a crucial public forum to gather information as Congress and other policymakers consider this important issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator