

Executive Order on Addressing the Threat Posed by TikTok

Issued on: August 6, 2020

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code,

I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, find that additional steps must be taken to deal with the national emergency with respect to the information and communications technology and services supply chain declared in Executive Order 13873 of May 15, 2019 (Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain). Specifically, the spread in the United States of mobile applications developed and owned by companies in the People's Republic of China (China) continues to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. At this time, action must be taken to address the threat posed by one mobile application in particular, TikTok.

TikTok, a video-sharing mobile application owned by the Chinese company ByteDance Ltd., has reportedly been downloaded over 175 million times in the United States and over one billion times globally. TikTok automatically captures vast swaths of information from its users, including Internet and other network activity information such as location data and browsing and search histories. This data collection threatens to allow the Chinese Communist Party access to Americans' personal and proprietary information — potentially allowing China to track the locations of Federal employees and contractors, build dossiers of personal information for blackmail, and conduct corporate espionage.

TikTok also reportedly censors content that the Chinese Communist Party deems politically sensitive, such as content concerning protests in Hong Kong and China's treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. This mobile application may also be used for disinformation campaigns that benefit the Chinese Communist Party, such as when TikTok videos spread debunked conspiracy theories about the origins of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

These risks are real. The Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, and the United States Armed Forces have already banned the use of TikTok on Federal Government phones. The Government of India recently banned the use of TikTok and other Chinese mobile applications throughout the country; in a statement, India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology asserted that they

were “stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users’ data in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India.” American companies and organizations have begun banning TikTok on their devices. The United States must take aggressive action against the owners of TikTok to protect our national security.

Accordingly, I hereby order:

Section 1. (a) The following actions shall be prohibited beginning 45 days after the date of this order, to the extent permitted under applicable law: any transaction by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, with ByteDance Ltd. (a.k.a. Zǐjié Tiàodòng), Beijing, China, or its subsidiaries, in which any such company has any interest, as identified by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) under section 1(c) of this order.

(b) The prohibition in subsection (a) of this section applies except to the extent provided by statutes, or in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses that may be issued pursuant to this order, and notwithstanding any contract entered into or any license or permit granted before the date of this order.

(c) 45 days after the date of this order, the Secretary shall identify the transactions subject to subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 2. (a) Any transaction by a United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding, causes a violation of, or attempts to violate the prohibition set forth in this order is prohibited.

(b) Any conspiracy formed to violate any of the prohibitions set forth in this order is prohibited.

Sec. 3. For the purposes of this order:

(a) the term “person” means an individual or entity;

(b) the term “entity” means a government or instrumentality of such government, partnership, association, trust, joint venture, corporation, group, subgroup, or other organization, including an international organization; and

(c) the term “United States person” means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including foreign branches), or any person in the United States.

Sec. 4. The Secretary is hereby authorized to take such actions, including adopting rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to me by IEEPA as may be necessary to implement this order. The Secretary may, consistent with applicable law, redelegate any of these functions within the Department of Commerce. All departments and agencies of the United States shall take all appropriate measures within their authority to implement this order.

Sec. 5. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

DONALD J. TRUMP

THE WHITE HOUSE,
August 6, 2020.