

Congress wants Apple, Google to warn users about apps posing 'national security risks'

July 17 2020, by Dalvin Brown, Usa Today



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Congress is asking Apple and Google to warn users about apps that pose "national security risks" days after the government showed interest in banning TikTok.

National Security Representative Stephen Lynch wrote separate open letters to both tech giants on Tuesday, calling on them to do more to protect user data from being exploited by foreign "adversaries."

"We remain concerned that mobile applications owned or operated by foreign developers, or that store the user data of U.S. citizens overseas, could enable our adversaries to access significant quantities of potentially [sensitive information](#) on American citizens without their knowledge to the detriment of U.S. national security," the letters said.

At a minimum, the companies should alert App Store and Play store users about the potential privacy risks associated with apps affiliated with U.S. adversaries, Lynch added.

U.S. TODAY reached out to Apple and Google for comment on the letter.

The letters didn't mention China or Russia directly, though the government is reviewing TikTok, which is owned by Chinese firm ByteDance, and has previously looked into Russia-based FaceApp.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently said the White House is looking into banning TikTok in the U.S. The app popular among teens says that it doesn't send U.S. user data to China.

Last year, the FBI took interest in the photo editing platform FaceApp around the time people started doing the #FaceAppChallenge, the cultural phenomenon that saw droves of FaceApp users signing over rights to their image in order to make their face appear older in selfies.

FaceApp has said it doesn't share user data with Russian intelligence.

The open letters to tech giants come ahead of plans for each to testify

before Congress later this month.

Tim Cook of Apple and Sundar Pichai of Google's parent company Alphabet will join Jeff Bezos of Amazon and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook to answer questions broadly related to antitrust concerns.

Lawmakers have shown interest in Apple's App Store terms, while Google's ad business has raised concerns. Facebook has faced scrutiny surrounding how it handles [user data](#) and officials have questioned whether Amazon is abusing its dominance in e-commerce.

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Citation: Congress wants Apple, Google to warn users about apps posing 'national security risks' (2020, July 17) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-07-congress-apple-google-users-apps.html>

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