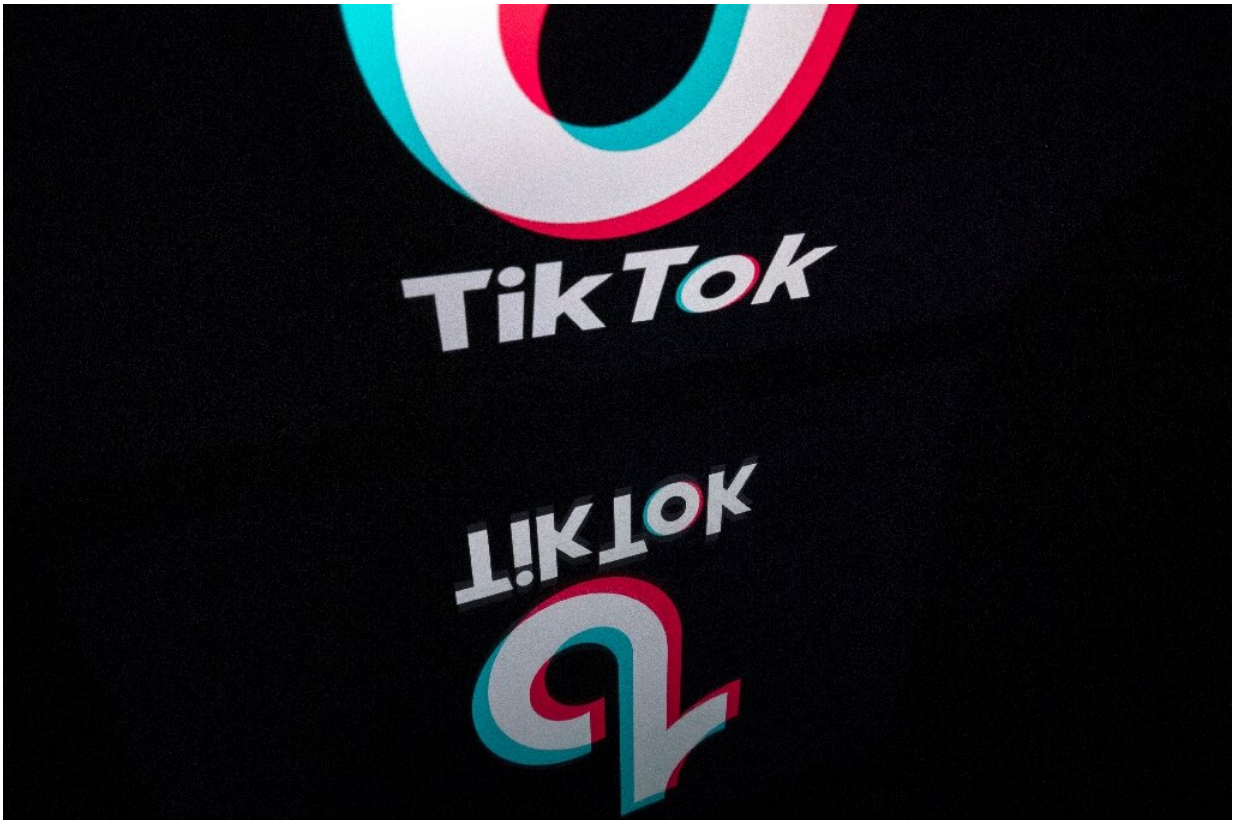


TikTok faces US national security review

July 29 2020



Facing criticism over its ties to China, TikTok pledged a new level of transparency over its algorithms and content policies

A US government national security review of the social media app TikTok is nearly complete and will deliver a recommendation to the White House this week, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Wednesday.

Mnuchin told reporters the review is being conducted by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which deals with companies and acquisitions affecting [national security](#).

"TikTok is under CFIUS review and we'll be making a recommendation to the president on it this week," Mnuchin said. "We have lots of alternatives."

The news comes amid increasing concerns voiced by US officials and lawmakers about TikTok's links to China and its potential use for espionage—an allegation consistently dismissed by the company.

TikTok earlier Wednesday pushed back at what it called "maligning attacks" by Facebook and others that call attention to the video app's Chinese connections.

TikTok chief executive Kevin Mayer said the attacks were "disguised as patriotism and designed to put an end to our very presence in the US."

TikTok, which has grown its user base to an estimated one billion, has consistently denied any links to the Chinese government, as critics warn of potential security risks because of its Chinese-based parent firm ByteDance.

"We are not political, we do not accept [political advertising](#) and have no agenda—our only objective is to remain a vibrant, dynamic platform for everyone to enjoy," Mayer said.

"TikTok has become the latest target, but we are not the enemy."



US Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin said the social media app TikTok faces a national security review

Mayer said TikTok has established a policy on transparency and added that it would go further than others by disclosing more about its internal algorithms.

"We believe all companies should disclose their algorithms, moderation policies, and data flows to regulators," he said.

Competition concerns

TikTok also suggested its presence helps competition in the US

market—in comments hours ahead of a hotly anticipated antitrust hearing with the top executives of Facebook and three other Big Tech firms.

TikTok welcomes "fair competition," Mayer said, while adding that "without TikTok, American advertisers would again be left with few choices."

Several US lawmakers have called for bans on TikTok and one pending bill would make it illegal for [federal employees](#) to use the app on government-issued devices.

Mayer said TikTok welcomes scrutiny but would respect US laws.

"The entire industry has received scrutiny, and rightly so," he said.

"Yet, we have received even more scrutiny due to the company's Chinese origins. We accept this and embrace the challenge of giving peace of mind through greater transparency and accountability."

He said the company wants to demonstrate that "we are responsible and committed members of the American community that follows US laws."

© 2020 AFP

Citation: TikTok faces US national security review (2020, July 29) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-07-tiktok-national.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--