

Youngkin executive order bans TikTok from state computers

December 17 2022



Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin announces transformational behavior health care plan at Parham Doctors' Hospital in Henrico, Va., on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022. Credit: Daniel Sangjib Min/Richmond Times-Dispatch via AP

Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin banned the use of several Chinese-owned apps, including TikTok and WeChat, on state government devices and wireless networks on Friday, calling them a threat to national security.

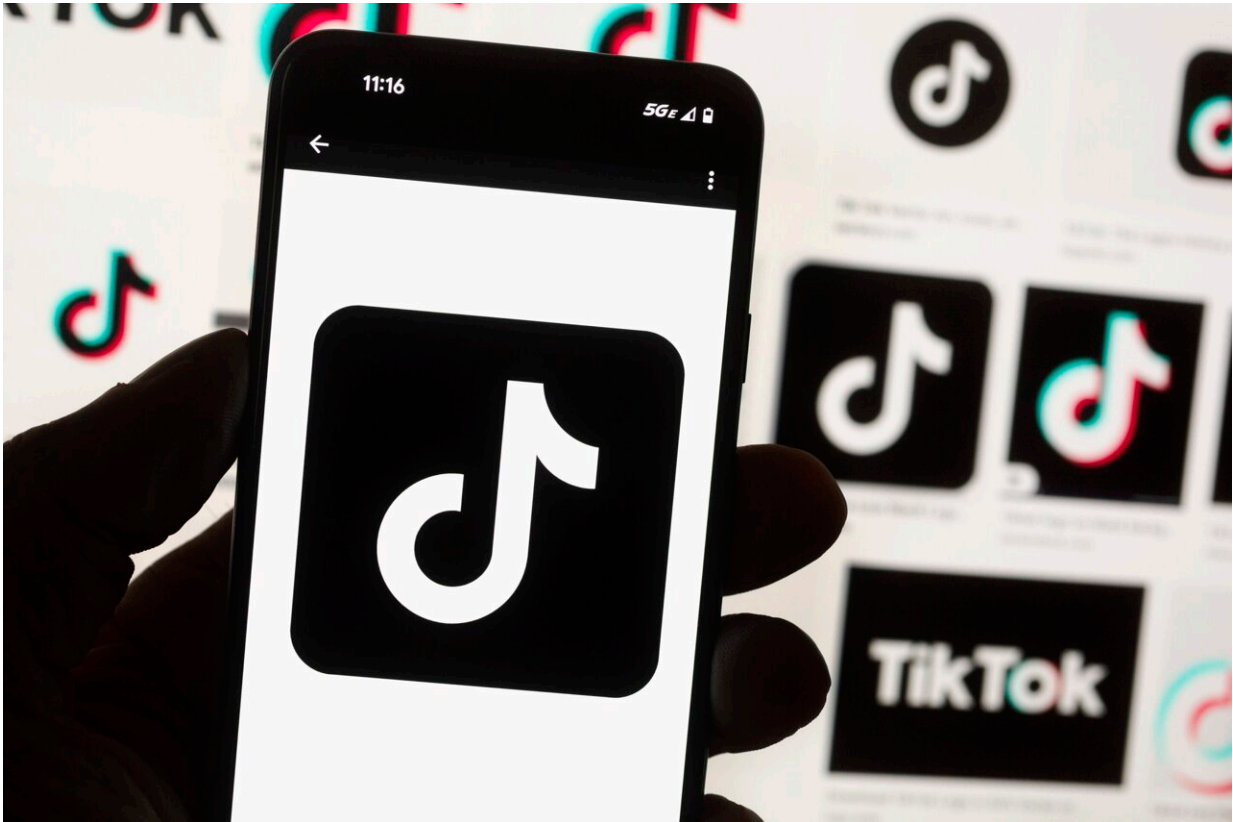
Youngkin's executive order covers apps developed by ByteDance and Tencent. Businesses who contract with Virginia must also prohibit their use on state-owned devices or IT infrastructure.

"TikTok and WeChat data are a channel to the Chinese Communist Party, and their continued presence represents a threat to national [security](#), the intelligence community, and the personal privacy of every single American," Youngkin, a Republican, said in a statement. "We are taking this step today to secure state government devices and wireless networks from the threat of infiltration and ensure that we safeguard the data and cybersecurity of state government."

Youngkin joins at least [14 others governors who have taken such an action](#), amid calls for Congress to also ban the use of the programs on federal government devices.

The executive order drew praise from one of Virginia's Democratic U.S. senators, Mark Warner, who chairs the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

"TikTok has the stamp of approval of the Chinese Communist Party and it poses a serious national security threat due to its data collection practices and its ability to reach and manipulate Americans. I hope to see more states take action to keep our government technology out of the CCP's reach," Warner, a former governor, said in a statement.



The TikTok logo is seen on a cell phone on Oct. 14, 2022, in Boston. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp on Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022, immediately banned the use of TikTok and two popular messaging applications from all computer devices controlled by Georgia's state government, saying the Chinese government may be able to access users' personal information. Credit: AP Photo/Michael Dwyer, File

TikTok spokesperson Jamal Brown said in an emailed statement that it was "disappointing that states and some federal officials are promoting falsehoods to ban the platform instead of advancing sound policies to promote U.S. [national security](#) interests."

"Millions of Americans rely on TikTok to grow their small businesses, reach new audiences, and make their livelihoods," Brown said.

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Citation: Youngkin executive order bans TikTok from state computers (2022, December 17) retrieved 16 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2022-12-youngkin-tiktok-state.html>

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