

US ambassador says Beijing stance on TikTok ban 'supremely ironic'

March 15 2024



The US House of Representatives approved a bill that would force TikTok to break with its Chinese parent company or face a nationwide ban.

The US ambassador to China said Friday that Beijing's position on a potential TikTok ban in the United States was "supremely ironic" given the ruling Communist Party's censorship of online platforms within its

borders.

The US House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a [bill](#) on Wednesday that would force the wildly popular short-video app to break with its Chinese parent company or face a nationwide ban.

China has sharply criticized the approval, slamming what it called Washington's "bandit" mentality and accusing lawmakers of "unjustly suppressing [foreign companies](#)".

US ambassador Nicholas Burns offered a rebuke on Friday, saying Beijing's stance was unjustified given it blocks many Western web platforms from operating in the country.

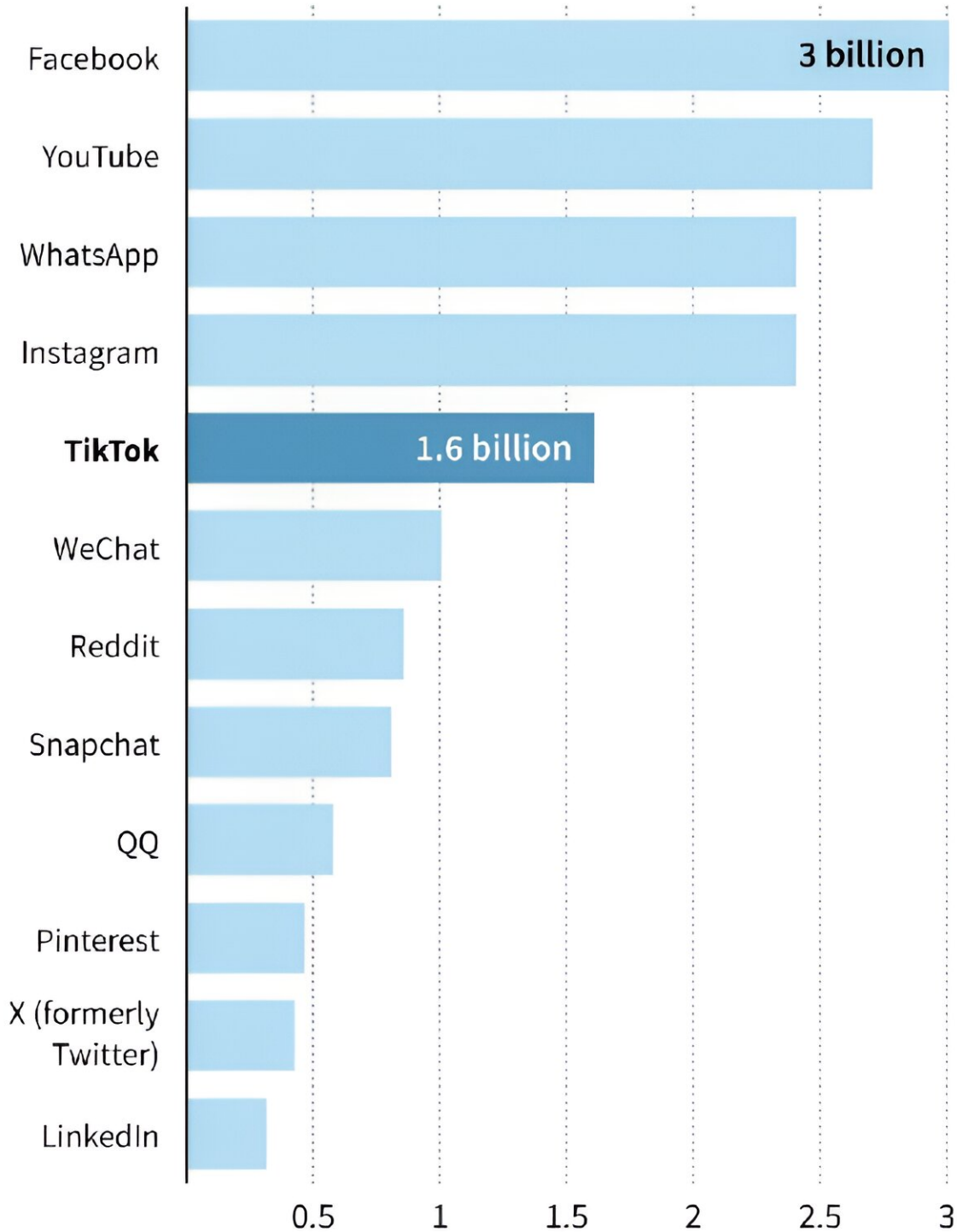
"I find it supremely ironic that [government officials](#) here in China... have been criticizing the United States for the debate we're currently having on TikTok," Burns said during an online seminar held by the East-West Center, a US-based research organization.

"They won't even let TikTok be available to 1.4 billion Chinese," he said in response to a question about the avenues for American public diplomacy in China.

China's government tightly controls the spread of information online and scrubs out social media content it deems politically sensitive.

Most popular social media platforms

Monthly active users worldwide. As of Dec 2023 according to industry analysis platform, Business of Apps



Source: Businessofapps.com



Chart showing the world's top social media platforms as of 2023, by monthly users.

Many Western platforms, including Google, Facebook and Instagram, are blocked from operating in the country.

TikTok's Chinese parent company ByteDance also runs a separate version of the app inside China called Douyin.

Some Western governments have voiced concern about TikTok's soaring popularity, alleging that the app's ownership makes it subservient to Beijing—a claim TikTok denies.

The bill, which has also been criticized by TikTok creators and users, is expected to face a tougher challenge in the US Senate.

The White House has indicated that President Joe Biden would sign the bill into law if it reaches his desk.

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