

*CBS Mornings*

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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok Under Fire; CEO Makes First Appearance on Capitol Hill as Pressure Mounts for Ban]

VLADIMIR DUTHIERS: This morning, TikTok's CEO makes his first ever appearance on Capitol Hill. Today's House hearing on online safety comes as the video sharing app faces intense scrutiny, with some lawmakers proposing a complete ban. A new CBS News poll shows 61 percent of those surveyed favor a ban, but that number is smallest among young people who are more likely to use TikTok. Still 56 percent consider the platform a potential national security risk. Nikole Killion joins us from the hearing room. Nikole, good morning.

NIKOLE KILLION: Hey, good morning to you, Vlad. TikTok's CEO insists his platform is safe and warns any attempts to ban it could hurt businesses and the U.S. economy.

TIKTOK CEO SHOU CHEW: Hi everyone. It's Shou here.

KILLION: Today, the chief executive of TikTok will tout the platform's 150 million users.

CHEW: That's almost half of the U.S. coming to TikTok.

KILLION: And address lawmaker concerns about national security. Shou Zi Chew tells the House Energy and Commerce Committee, its parent company, ByteDance, which is based in Beijing, is not owned or controlled by the Chinese government and he outlines a plan to set up a new firewall to seal up protected U.S. user data from unauthorized foreign access.

CONGRESSMAN KELLY ARMSTRONG (R-ND): We don't want this data in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party period.

KILLION: Chew's testimony comes amid bipartisan calls to restrict the video sharing platform or ban it all together. [TO BLUNT ROCHESTER] You're not ready to go as far as a ban.

CONGRESSWOMAN LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER (R-DE): We need to have all options on the table. Why this is so important to me is because I've got nieces, I've got nephews. I know incredible content creators that are out there. We, as a country, need to make sure that we are all safe.

KILLION: In December, ByteDance admitted that employees access the data of American TikTok users, including journalists and some of their contacts. President Biden signed a law banning the app on government devices over spying concerns and has called on ByteDance to divest from TikTok to avoid a U.S. ban, but the company says it doesn't solve the problem.

UNIDENTIFIED EXPERT: It comes down to, you know, who really controls this company.

TIKTOK CREATOR: We were brought out by TikTok to come to DC and tell our stories.

KILLION: Ahead of the hearing, TikTok has stepped up its lobbying efforts and paid for a group of creators to come advocate in Washington.

TIKTOK CREATOR: If the app were shut down, it would be detrimental, of course, for me and my business.

KILLION: TikTok is one of the most downloaded apps, outpacing rivals like Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook and it's used by a lot of young people. So in today's hearing, Chu will likely face a lot of pressing questions from lawmakers about what TikTok is doing to keep kids safe, Tony.

TONY DOKOUPIL: Yeah. This was also an interest of the Trump administration as well. So now this is the second presidential administration to look at TikTok very hard. Nikole, thank you very much.