

CBS Mornings

03/24/23

7:00:44 a.m. [TEASE]

15 seconds

GAYLE KING: Lawmakers grill the TikTok CEO over concerns the company could share Americans' private information with the Chinese government.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok Testimony]

CONGRESSMAN NEAL DUNN (R-FL): Has ByteDance spied on American citizens?

TIKTOK CEO SHOU ZI CHEW: I don't think the spying is the right way to describe it.

(....)

7:02:02 a.m.

39 seconds

JIMMY KIMMEL [on ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, 03/23/23]: The focus in Congress today was on TikTok of all things. Lawmakers from both sides seem to be headed towards banning TikTok.

AL FRANKEN [on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, 03/23/23]: That's right. We don't need a Chinese company stealing our data and spying on us. That's a job for American companies.
USA. USA. USA.

[ANNOUNCER AD]

KING: I think Al Franken seemed — USA.

VLADIMIR DUTHIERS: He did the USA fist pump.

KING: Some people would say he's not wrong.

DUTHIERS: I —

DOKOUPIL: Yeah.

KING: People would say he's making a very good point.

DOKOUPIL: There is a double standard there.

KING: Some would say.

DUTHIERS: — that is what some people would say.

(....)

7:07:20 a.m.

5 minutes and 57 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok Testimony]

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok CEO Faces Tough Questions; Lawmakers Skeptical of App's Security During CEO's Testimony]

GAYLE KING: The social media app, TikTok came under very intense scrutiny yesterday on Capitol Hill. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle grilled — and grilled is the word here — grilled the company CEO on how the company protects Americans' private information from Chinese government surveillance. Now some support a total ban of this app calling it a risk to US National Security. Nikole Killion has more from Capitol Hill.

NIKOLE KILLION: TikTok's chief executive was met with intense skepticism on Capitol Hill, Thursday, over the app's security and privacy practices.

CONGRESSWOMAN CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS (R-WA): We do not trust TikTok will ever embrace American values.

KILLION: Shou Zi Chew tried to dispel lawmakers' concerns about China's access to American data since its parent company, ByteDance is based in Beijing.

CHEW: ByteDance is not owned or controlled by the Chinese government.

KILLION: But when pressed repeatedly —

CONGRESSMAN TIM WAHLBERG (R-MI): Do ByteDance employees in Beijing have access to American data?

CHEW: We have employees in China, so yes.

DUNN: Has ByteDance spied on American citizens?

CHEW: I don't think that spying is the right way to describe it.

KILLION: — committee members argue the platform remains a national security threat.

CONGRESSWOMAN KAT CAMMACK (R-FL): You damn well know that you cannot protect the data and security of this Committee or the 150 million users of your app because it is an extension of the CCP.

KILLION: Chew said the company is working to build a firewall, the Project Texas to store and

protect user data in the US.

CHEW: I have seen no evidence that the Chinese government has access to that data.

CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO (R-CA): I find that actually preposterous.

KILLION: The panel also broke what safeguards the app has to shield teens from harmful content.

CONGRESSWOMAN KATHY CASTOR (D-FL): TikTok could be designed to minimize the harm to kids, but a decision was made to aggressively addict kids in the name of profits.

KILLION: After more than five hours, many weren't satisfied.

CONGRESSWOMAN DIANA DEGETTE (D-CO): He was completely fake. [SCREEN WIPE] That's not sufficient.

KILLION: In a statement, TikTok fired back saying, "the day was dominated by political grandstanding."

CHEW: Hi everyone. Its Shou here.

KILLION: Chew's testimony comes at a challenging time for the platform, which boasts more than 150 million American users and more than a billion worldwide. Its parent company, ByteDance is under investigation by the Department of Justice for alleged spying and the Biden administration has threatened to ban TikTok unless it divests, while Congress pledge. The Chair of the Committee said she plans to move quickly on legislation involving TikTok. In response to the CEO's testimony, this morning, Chinese leaders announced that China has never nor would it ever ask any company for data or Intelligence in foreign countries. Back to you, Tony.

DOKOUPIL: Yes, lawmakers saying that's hard to believe. Nikole, thank you very much. We are joined now by Commissioner Brendan Carr of the FCC. That's the Federal agency that oversees our country's communication laws and regulations. Commissioner Carr, good morning. I want to clarify, you don't have direct control or regulatory power over TikTok. Now, that could change, but you have been leading and shaping opinion on this issue. So to the more than 100 million Americans who are using this app, apparently without great concern, why do you support a ban?

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok Under Fire; FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr on Whether the App Could Be Banned]

FCC COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR: Yes, look, I think the evidence we have now is crystal clear. For years, TikTok represented that very little data, if any goes back to Beijing, and there was a blockbuster story over the summer that got internal communications that said no, in fact, "everything is seen in China." There was a story that they were using the app, TikTok, to surreptitiously surveil the locations of specific Americans. They denied it. Later, internal e-mails

came out that said, no, we're doing it. As that segment noted, FBI and DOJ are looking at that. Ahead of our most recent Midterm Elections, the CCP state media set up TikTok accounts to target politicians here for divisive content. So, I think we have a lot of evidence of the risk. And look, I've testified before that same Committee many times at that same chair and I've never seen anything like that. Really, it could not have gone any worse for TikTok.

DOKOUPIL: Do you think we'd be having this kind of conversation if TikTok were owned by say a Swedish company or a Finnish company like Angry Birds or Spotify, for example? Is it about it being Chinese that is really driving all this concern?

BRENDAN CARR: You know look, we have a baseline level of concern with all applications, whether they're based in Europe or Silicon Valley itself. We've had a lot of hearings in Congress about that, and there is work right now on sort of data privacy laws that will put some baseline protections in place for everybody, but what we're seeing is something exceptionally unique about TikTok, and one way we can see that as there's a sister app, Douyin that's available in China, TikTok itself is not, and there they show education, material museum exhibits, science experiments to kids. And here we get things like content that shows young girls' eating disorder and self-harm. And so I think there is something very unique about it. That's why you see bipartisan support. FBI Director Chris Wray, Democrat Senator Mark Warner, Chair of Senate Intel, saying that TikTok itself scares the dickens out of him.

DOKOUPIL: Yes, there are parental concerns, there are security concerns. Lawmakers seem to have a pretty clear line of thought on this. You know, TikTok is owned by ByteDance. ByteDance is Chinese and under Chinese law, it is accountable to the Communist Party there in that country. With that chain of events, is there anything short of an outright ban that you would support?

CARR: No, I don't see it at this point. Even the White House last week reports where they went to TikTok and said, look, you either have to divest Chinese government ownership, Chinese ownership, or face a potential ban. I think that's the right thing. The most important thing that the TikTok CEO had to do yesterday was build some level of trust and credibility with Congress. And in that effort, I think he completely failed. And so we'll see. Look, there's still a lot of time left. There are still a lot of issues, potential hurdles to get legislation passed, or to get the Treasury Department, which is looking at this to take action. But really, the trust is just bottoming out for TikTok. It doesn't look good. Look, there's 150 million Americans that are on this for sure and so we've got to make the case to them very clearly that there is a risk here.

DOKOUPIL: All right, Commissioner. Well, you made that case this morning. Thank you very much.

CARR: Thanks.

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8:01:27 a.m.

13 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: TikTok Testimony]

DUTHIERS: Lawmakers grilled TikTok's CEO over privacy and National Security concerns.

CAMMACK: You damn well know that you cannot protect the data and security of this Committee or the 150 million users of your app.