

Insights



Wade Weems, Nathan Park and Beau Barnes on How the U.S. Government can Hurt Chinese Social Media App “TikTok”

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The U.S. cannot outright “ban” TikTok, a social media app many worry is linked to the Chinese government. However, as Kobre & Kim’s Wade Weems, Nathan Park and Beau Barnes wrote in *Foreign Policy*, the U.S. government still has numerous tools to use against the app.

The ownership of TikTok by Beijing-based software company ByteDance is the source of the national security concern. As such, the U.S. can target this relationship with pre-existing tools, such as with the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to force changes in the relationship and company policies or even divestment. The U.S. can also put TikTok on the Commerce Department’s Entity List, which can cripple a company’s operations and effectively restrict TikTok from receiving software updates through the app stores.

Other tools available include the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which empowers the government to deplatform the app from iOS and Android app stores, making the app impossible to maintain. Traditional law enforcement measures can and have also been used, such as with fines and investigations by the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice. These measures allow TikTok to respond, however, such as by revamping their own policies, mounting a public relations campaign or challenging the government’s legal theories.

[Read the full article here.](#)