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As TikTok and Other Chinese Technologies are Deemed Dangerous, What Should State and Local Governments Do?

COMMENTARY | Finding and replacing Chinese-made equipment in state and local government networks will be challenging and expensive. But the threat is genuine and must not be ignored.

TikTok, the popular video app that is used by more than 135 million Americans, is facing an increasingly loud chorus of opposition from U.S. officials concerned about the company's relationship with the Chinese government.

As of April, at least 34 states have issued some sort of prohibition on the app's use on government-owned and -issued devices by agencies, employees and contractors. Montana, has gone so far as to pass legislation restricting the app on personal devices, though the measure is being challenged in court.

Driving all this action is concern that TikTok's parent company ByteDance could be forced to share data on U.S. users, such as their profiles, contacts, messages and location information, with the Chinese government under the country's 2017 National Intelligence Law. That law states that "any organization or citizen shall support, assist, and cooperate with state intelligence work," and experts say that Chinese companies would have no choice but to hand over data if authorities in Beijing requested it.

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Route Fifty

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