



January 12, 2023

Fellow Governors,

With cybersecurity threats on the rise, Governors are leading efforts to protect our citizens' privacy and to safeguard cyber infrastructure.

In keeping with this critical responsibility, we have issued Executive Orders in our states to prohibit the use of TikTok on state-issued cellphones, computers, and other devices. Owned and operated by China-based ByteDance, TikTok is not subject to data protections U.S. companies are required to follow – and can even be compelled by the Chinese government to turn over personal data of U.S. users.

The status quo poses unacceptable risks to data privacy and system integrity. In coordination with our states' cybersecurity officials, we determined this action was necessary to prevent New Jersey and Utah residents' personal information from falling into the wrong hands. Congress banned the use of TikTok on all federal government-issued devices in the Omnibus package and many of you have taken similar actions over the past month.

The FBI and FCC have warned that TikTok poses national security risks, leading the Department of Defense, State Department, and several states to ban the use of TikTok on their government-issued devices. The platform's security risks are also the focus of multiple bipartisan legislative proposals.

As the federal government works toward an overarching solution, we encourage our fellow Governors to join the growing number of states taking action. By acting against foreign cyberthreats like TikTok, Governors can protect our states, bolster national security, and ensure our citizens can trust our states' systems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Murphy".

Phil Murphy
Governor of New Jersey
NGA Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Cox".

Spencer Cox
Governor of Utah
NGA Vice Chair