

December 13, 2021

The Honorable Christine Wormuth  
Secretary of the Army  
U.S. Department of Defense  
101 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Secretary Wormuth:

I write to express my concern that U.S. Army recruiters are using TikTok as a means to recruit young Americans and fear that the Army is either unaware of, or potentially encouraging, this practice. As you know, TikTok's deep connections to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) poses a serious threat to American national security, leading the U.S. Department of Defense to warn personnel to delete the app from their phones. The Office of the Secretary of Defense has explicitly banned the use of TikTok for recruiting purposes because the platform openly collects biometric identifiers and other biometric information from its users. As a result, TikTok has a growing database containing the personal information of almost one-fourth of all Americans.<sup>1</sup>

For years, the CCP has engaged in an overt campaign to collect massive amounts of personal data on a global scale and has passed laws requiring Chinese companies to share any data with the government upon request.<sup>2</sup> Armed with biometric and other personal data, the CCP is able to track, monitor, and collect information on Americans anywhere in the world. From a military perspective, it can track troop movements, build source networks, or compile biographic profiles on military members for purposes of intelligence collection, exploitation, and manipulation. The CCP, a genocidal regime known for controlling, torturing, and killing its own citizens, cannot be trusted with the personal data of American citizens and our future military leaders.

Unfortunately, this threat has not deterred Army recruiters, including a New Jersey Army National Guard stating, "[r]ealistically, all [the Army] care[s] about is the numbers."<sup>3</sup> According to this report, TikTok now accounts for 45 percent of the total number of recruits she draws in. This is not an isolated incident. According to that same report, "a quick TikTok search for 'army recruiter' turns up a scrolling page of uniformed personnel in recruiting offices across the country."<sup>3</sup> It is deeply concerning that Army recruiters are willfully using a social media platform identified as a clear national security threat. I urge you to take decisive action to immediately end this practice.

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<sup>1</sup> [Privacy Policy | TikTok](#)

<sup>2</sup> [TikTok a Dangerous Chinese Social-Media App | National Review](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nextgov.com/cio-briefing/2021/11/army-recruiters-tiktok-dance-around-ban-reach-gen-z/186935/>

I therefore request the following information:

1. What percent of Army recruiters are using TikTok on their personal device for recruiting purposes?
2. What mechanisms are in place to discourage the use of TikTok on personal devices across the Army?
3. What training does the Army provide to recruiters on the dangers posed by the use of social media, particularly by those owned by foreign entities?
  - a. If none is provided, what is the Army doing to ensure recruiters are aware of the risks?

Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator