

Times Up for TikTok: Frequently-Asked Questions

What exactly are we advocating for?

The “Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act” (HR 7521) is a bipartisan bill that would give the administration powerful tools to pressure TikTok, one of the most powerful platforms pushing antisemitism today, and force its owners to make tough choices to keep it running.

Specifically, it would give the administration tremendous leverage by allowing it to block app stores from carrying it and force a divestment from its Chinese ownership. You can read the content of the bill [here](#).

Why are Jewish Federations supporting this bill?

Our community understands that TikTok is a major driver in social media when it comes to antisemitism. The antisemitism being spread by TikTok has a negative effect on our community. This bipartisan bill is a vehicle that can actually address one of the major sources of spreading antisemitism in the United States.

How big of a problem is antisemitism on TikTok?

With over half of all adults getting their news from social media, and much higher proportions of young people turning to TikTok, in particular, for their news, the content social platforms choose to show them can have major impacts on public opinion.

TikTok has an antisemitism problem. One study found that people who use TikTok for 30 minutes or more daily are 17% more likely to hold antisemitic or anti-Israel views, compared with 6% for Instagram and 2% for X. Another study found that in just one-year, antisemitic comments on TikTok rose 912%.

While 80% of American voters support Israel over Hamas (including 57% among those aged 18-24), TikTok’s algorithm gave videos with pro-Palestinian hashtags 15 times more views than videos with pro-Israel hashtags.

What does China have to do with anti-Israel or antisemitic sentiment?

Since October 7th, China has squarely positioned itself against Israel and filled its state-controlled media and social media channels with antisemitic and anti-Israel rhetoric. According to the New York Times, “China’s state-run media is seizing on the conflict to accuse the United States of turning a blind eye to Israeli aggression while perpetuating tropes of Jewish control of American politics.”

FBI Director Christopher Wray recently testified to Congress that “[TikTok’s] parent company is effectively beholden to the Chinese government,” raising three areas of concern: collecting data on users, ability to potentially compromise cell phones, and manipulating of the recommendation algorithm to sow divisiveness and discord in American society.

In other words, if China decides it opposes Israel, it could push the same anti-Israel and antisemitic rhetoric it promotes on its state-run channels to TikTok users, regardless of what its U.S. subsidiaries might say. There is evidence that anti-China positions are less well-represented on TikTok than on other platforms.

How does this bill help fight antisemitism on other social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter/X, Threads, and Meta?

TikTok has seen a rapid rate of growth in antisemitism content – much faster than all of the other social media apps. Actions to fight hate on TikTok send a strong message to all social media companies that they cannot promote antisemitism or allow it to flood their platforms.

It sounds like you're trying to ban TikTok. Doesn't this bill go against a person's right to free speech?

Not at all.

This bill is about national security, not freedom of speech. It is about companies having an unprecedented ability to promote a political agenda to millions of unsuspecting users. It is about foreign influence coming into our homes and reaching out to our children.

The TikTok platform is unique in the sense that it is proliferating antisemitism at a much higher rate than any other major social platform. This is the most concrete way we can see to address that challenge.

Are you calling on the Jewish community to boycott TikTok?

Absolutely not.

We understand the importance of Jewish and pro-Israel voices showing up to be seen and make their case, especially in forums where so many people get their information. That's what so many members of our community are doing on TikTok.

Our concern is the degree to which TikTok's algorithm not only drowns these voices out but overwhelms people's feeds with antisemitic and anti-Israel content.