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84114-2220

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NEWS RELEASE

July 25, 2023

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Gov. Spencer Cox and Attorney General Sean Reyes press TikTok to respond to subpoenas

SALT LAKE CITY (July 25, 2023) – Today, Utah Gov. Spencer Cox, Attorney General Sean Reyes, and Utah Department of Commerce Executive Director Margaret Busse announced a legal filing against the social media company TikTok, Inc. TikTok has been the subject of an investigation by Utah's Department of Commerce's Division of Consumer Protection in the state's ongoing efforts to hold social media companies accountable for the harm they are causing to Utah's children. After months of TikTok delaying and providing incomplete information in response to administrative subpoenas, the Division of Consumer Protection has filed a motion requesting the state district court to hold TikTok in contempt and force it to quickly comply with the subpoena.

“Utah will not stop insisting that social media companies be held accountable for the harm they are causing our youth,” said Gov. Cox. “That TikTok won’t even appropriately respond to the investigative subpoenas speaks volumes about the lack of TikTok’s credibility and transparency.”

This motion is the initial judicial filing in the state of Utah’s unceasing demand that these companies do more to protect children from the harms of social media.

“For too long, two essential questions have gone unanswered: how is TikTok conducting itself in the State of Utah, and how it is impacting the lives of children? As Attorney General, I will never stop fighting for the safety of our children. That is why we have filed a Motion asking the Court to order TikTok to cooperate with our subpoenas. We will not accept further excuses or delays. No one is above the law,” said Attorney General Reyes.

This Motion for Order to Show Cause was filed in Utah state court in the Third Judicial District. The filing against TikTok, one of the largest social media companies in the world, comes after TikTok failed to respond completely to the Division of Consumer Protection’s two investigative subpoenas — one issued in February 2023 and the other issued in May 2023.

“Utah is taking a proactive approach to address the issue of harm to youth on social media,” said Margaret Busse, executive director of the Utah Department of Commerce. “The Utah Governor’s Office, Attorney General Reyes, and the Utah Department of Commerce are not willing to stand by while our young people are at risk. Utah residents deserve to have confidence in the companies they interact with, but TikTok’s evasive actions have eroded that trust.”

The motion is attached.

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