

## Iowa Attorney General Accuses TikTok of Misleading Parents in Lawsuit



Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird has taken legal action against TikTok, alleging that the popular video-based social media platform has been deceptive about children's exposure to inappropriate content. The lawsuit, filed in a state court in Polk County, specifically targets TikTok and its Chinese parent company ByteDance, accusing them of providing false information about the prevalence of explicit content, including drugs, nudity, alcohol, and profanity on their platform.

### Allegations of Misleading Practices

Attorney General Bird, a Republican, emphasized the need to address TikTok's lack of transparency with parents, stating, "TikTok has kept parents in the dark. It's time we shine a light on TikTok for exposing young children to graphic materials such as sexual content, self-harm, illegal drug use, and worse."

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### Consumer Fraud Allegations

Iowa is seeking legal recourse by alleging consumer fraud, with the state aiming for financial penalties and an injunction prohibiting ByteDance-owned TikTok from engaging in deceptive and unfair conduct. The lawsuit highlights concerns about the impact of inappropriate content on minors and calls for accountability from the social media giant.

### TikTok's Response

TikTok defended its platform in response to the allegations, asserting it has "industry-leading safeguards in place for young people, including parental controls and time limits for those under 18." The company was committed to addressing industry-wide challenges and focusing on community safety.

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### Ongoing Legal Battles

This lawsuit is part of a series of legal challenges TikTok faces in the United States. Various states, including Arkansas and Utah, have filed similar cases, illustrating a growing trend of regulatory scrutiny regarding protecting children from harmful online content. While a judge in Indiana dismissed a lawsuit in November, investigations are ongoing in several other states.

### Montana's Unsuccessful Attempt to Ban TikTok

Notably, Montana attempted to implement a first-of-its-kind state ban on TikTok, set to take effect on January 1. However, U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy issued a preliminary injunction in November, blocking the ban. The judge deemed Montana's law unconstitutional, stating it "violates the Constitution in more ways than one" and "oversteps state power."

### TikTok CEO to Testify Before Senate Judiciary Committee

As the legal battles unfold, TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew is scheduled to testify on January 31 before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on online child sexual exploitation. This hearing will likely delve into TikTok's measures to protect young users and address concerns raised by various state authorities.

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