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Rep. Kinzinger Warns About Zoom Use by Federal Government

Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R., Ill.) today warned against conducting “federal business” using the video conferencing platform offered by Zoom Video Communications, Inc., due to security and privacy concerns that have been raised about the service.

He noted recent reports about Zoom temporarily disabling accounts belonging to Chinese dissidents who were using the service for a commemoration of the Tiananmen Square Massacre -- a move for which the company later expressed regrets (TR Daily, June 15).

“During the coronavirus pandemic, our reliance on video conferencing has been critical in staying connected. Among the different platforms, Zoom has grown more than 675% during COVID-19. Despite its popularity in use, I have become increasingly concerned by the platform’s censoring on behalf of the Chinese government, as well as security vulnerabilities,” Rep. Kinzinger said in a statement.

“Zoom has admitted to routing information through China, which would allow the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] access to that information by its own laws. There have also been concerns about the encryption of information and use by federal agencies. In fact, the entire United Kingdom government has been instructed not to use the platform,” he said.

“Given these concerns with Zoom and the availability of other video platforms, federal business should not be conducted on this platform until these concerns can be alleviated,” Rep. Kinzinger added.

“In the interest of security, we have to recognize our vulnerabilities and in the interest of free speech, we have to take action when that freedom is threatened,” he said. “I will soon be introducing legislation to address the potential threats of these concerns like the security of data centers, Internet exchange points, and other similar facilities.” -- Tom Leithauser, tom.leithauser@wolterskluwer.com

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