



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

November 25, 2019

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

On behalf of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), this responds to your letter, dated July 17, 2019, to the FBI and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regarding the mobile software application FaceApp.

The language of FaceApp's terms of service and end user license agreement describes the mechanisms FaceApp uses for access to a device's analytics information, cookies, log file information, device identifiers, and metadata, and to any user content and communications made directly between the user and FaceApp. Social media providers generally use such mechanisms to obtain consent from users. Specific to FaceApp, however, is the submission of a user's photo for manipulation, which FaceApp uploads to cloud servers hosted (according to FaceApp) in the United States, Singapore, Ireland, and Australia. FaceApp has publicly claimed that it removes most photos from its servers 48 hours after submission.

The FBI considers any mobile application or similar product developed in Russia, such as FaceApp, to be a potential counterintelligence threat, based on the data the product collects, its privacy and terms of use policies, and the legal mechanisms available to the Government of Russia that permit access to data within Russia's borders. Russia's intelligence services maintain robust cyber exploitation capabilities as evidenced by, for example, Russia's surveillance system, the System of Operative Search Measures, which allows the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) to obtain telephonic and online communications via direct connection to internet service providers (ISP). In other words, the FSB can remotely access all communications and servers on Russian networks without making a request to ISPs.

If the FBI assesses that elected officials, candidates, political campaigns, or political parties are targets of foreign influence operations involving FaceApp, the FBI would coordinate notifications, investigate, and engage the Foreign Influence Task Force, as appropriate. The FBI's Protected Voices webpage on FBI.gov provides publically accessible videos on the most urgent cybersecurity issues that may leave an election campaign's computer networks vulnerable to attack.

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Page Two

Thank you for your continued support of the FBI, its mission, and its people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'J' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jill C. Tyson
Assistant Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Cc: The Honorable Joseph Simons, Chairman
Federal Trade Commission