

U.S. Appeals Court Upholds Block on Trump's Birthright Citizenship Order

A U.S. appeals court has blocked President Donald Trump's executive order restricting automatic birthright citizenship. The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals denied the administration's emergency request to lift a nationwide injunction issued by a federal judge in Seattle. This executive order, signed on January 20, directed U.S. agencies to deny citizenship to children born in the United States if neither parent is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

The 9th Circuit's decision marks the first appellate review of this policy, which is anticipated to be ultimately resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court. Similar blocks have been instituted by judges in Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, with appeals in progress.

The Justice Department argued that the Seattle-based U.S. District Judge John Coughenour's ruling was overly broad, as it imposed a nationwide injunction at the request of four Democratic-led states. However, the three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit declined to stay the injunction and scheduled arguments for June.

U.S. Circuit Judge Danielle Forrest, appointed by Trump during his first term, concurred with the decision. He emphasized that a hasty ruling could undermine public confidence in the judiciary's impartiality. She noted that the government's proposed exception to birthright citizenship lacks judicial precedent.

The White House and the Justice Department have not provided immediate comments on the ruling.

Opponents of the executive order, including Democratic state attorneys general and immigrant rights advocates, contend that it violates the Citizenship Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. They reference the 1898 Supreme Court case, *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, which affirmed birthright citizenship irrespective of parental immigration status.

Judge Coughenour, appointed by former President Ronald Reagan, initially blocked the order on January 23. He described it as "blatantly unconstitutional." He later extended this block into a preliminary injunction. During a hearing on February 6, Coughenour criticized the administration's attempt to revoke citizenship rights via an executive order. He equated this to a constitutional amendment.

If implemented, the executive order would deny citizenship to over 150,000 children born annually in the United States, as estimated by the state attorneys general.