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Trump fumes as Supreme Court blocks census citizenship question

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday handed President Donald Trump a stinging defeat, ruling that his administration gave a "contrived" explanation for its plan to include a contentious citizenship question in the 2020 census in a decision that will make it difficult to add the query to the population survey.

Conservative Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the 5-4 ruling and joined the court's four liberals in the majority, upholding part of a federal judge's January decision barring the question in a victory for a group of states including New York and immigrant rights organizations that had challenged the plan. Critics have called the citizenship question a Republican ploy to scare immigrants into not taking part in the decennial population count and engineer an undercount in Democratic-leaning areas with high immigrant and Latino populations. That would benefit non-Hispanic whites and help President Donald Trump's party gain seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and state legislatures, the critics said.

Trump said he will see if the census, which the U.S. Constitution requires be carried out every 10 years, can be delayed. Trump eyes U.S. Census delay after Supreme Court setback "I have asked the lawyers if they can delay the Census, no matter how long, until the United States Supreme Court is given additional information from which it can make a final and decisive decision on this very critical matter," Trump wrote on Twitter.

Trump's administration has told the courts that its rationale for adding the question was to better enforce a law that protects the voting rights of racial minorities. Critics called that rationale a pretext, with the Supreme Court's majority embracing that theory.

Roberts said that under a U.S. law called the Administrative Procedure Act, the federal government is required to give a reasoned explanation for its actions. Roberts said the sole stated rationale - enforcement of the Voting Right Act - "seems to have been contrived" and was "more of a distraction."

"We are presented, in other words, with an explanation for agency action that is incongruent with what the record reveals about the agency's priorities and decision-making process," Roberts wrote.



A protester holds a sign outside the U.S. Supreme Court where the court ruled that U.S. President Donald Trump's administration did not give an adequate explanation for its plan to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census, delivering a victory to New York state and others challenging the proposal in Washington, U.S., June 27, 2019.

"Accepting contrived reasons would defeat the purpose of the enterprise," Roberts added.

As part of the ruling issued on the last day of the court's current term, the justices sent the issue back to the Commerce Department for it to decide whether to provide a different rationale for requiring people taking part in the census to declare whether they are citizens.

The clock is ticking, with the administration previously saying that census forms needed to be printed in the coming days. A determination from a federal agency normally would take weeks or months.

"There is really no time. And if the administration tries to rush it that is clearly a red flag," said Dale Ho, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union, one of the challengers. Jason Torchinsky, a lawyer and Republican redistricting strategist, said the deadline could be extended to the fall, which would enable the Supreme Court to review the new decision.

A protester holds a sign outside the U.S. Supreme Court where the court ruled that U.S. President Donald Trump's administration did not give an adequate explanation for its plan to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census, delivering a victory to New York state and others challenging the proposal in Washington, U.S., June 27, 2019. REUTERS/Carlos Barria

"They don't need to redo the entire administrative process, they just need to better justify what they did, in a way that can satisfy the Supreme Court," Torchinsky said.

Justice Department spokeswoman Kelly Laco said the administration is disappointed by the Supreme Court's decision. "The Department of Justice will continue to defend this administration's lawful exercises of executive power," Laco said in a statement.

The census, required by the U.S. Constitution, is used to allot seats in the U.S. House and distribute some \$800 billion in federal funds. Opponents have said the question would instill fear in immigrant households that the information would be shared with law enforcement, deterring them from taking part.

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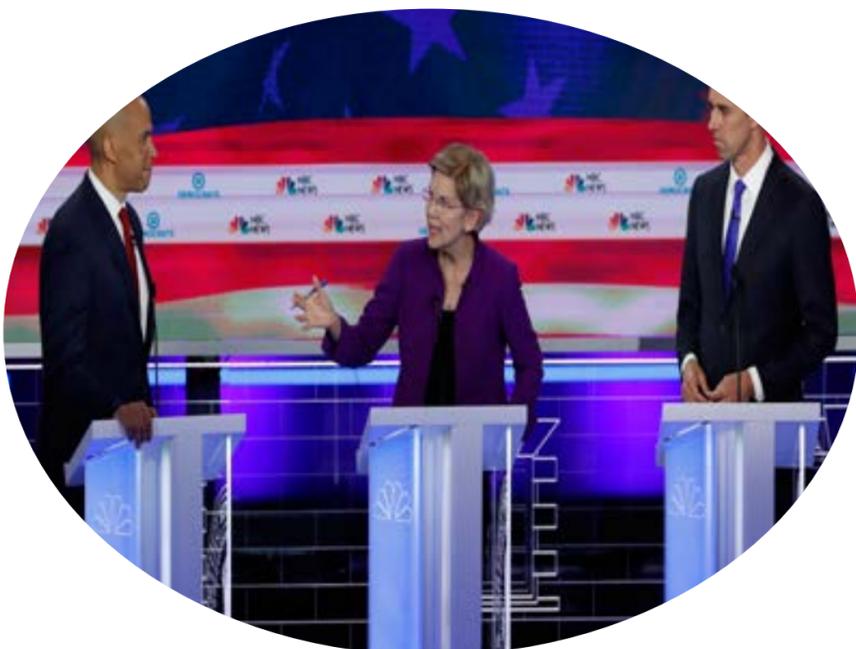
Editor's Choice



Candidates chat during a break at the first U.S. 2020 presidential election Democratic candidates debate in Miami, Florida, U.S.,



U.S. President Donald Trump attends a bilateral dinner with the Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison, ahead of the G20 summit in Osaka, Japan June 27, 2019. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque



Senator Warren speaks at the first U.S. 2020 presidential election Democratic candidates debate in Miami, Florida, U.S.,



U.S. President Trump speaks at Faith and Freedom Coalition's "Road to Majority" conference in Washington



Actor Cuba Gooding Jr. leaves New York Criminal Court in New York



Migrants charge their phones in camp Vucjak in Bihac, Bosnia and Herzegovina, June 26, 2019. REUTERS/Dado Ruvic TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



A festival goer dances during sunset at the stone circle during Glastonbury Festival at Worthy farm in Somerset, Britain June 26, 2019. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



REFILE - QUALITY REPEAT A woman uses a hand pump to fill up a container with drinking water in Chennai, India, June 25, 2019. REUTERS/P. Ravikumar TPX

Students Will Learn How To Write Cursive Letters Beginning In The Second Grade
Texas Students Will Have To Learn Cursive Again Starting This Fall



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

AUSTIN, Texas — Most school districts in Texas don't currently teach cursive. But that's about to change. In 2017, the State Board of Education changed the requirements for the "English Language Arts and Reading" portion of the state education standards known as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS. The changes that were adopted are set to be implemented during the 2019-2020 school year. One of those changes is reintroducing cursive writing to elementary school students.

According to the list of updates issued under the Texas Education Code, starting this year, students will be taught to write cursive letters in second grade. By third grade, students will be expected to be able to "write complete words, thoughts, and answers legibly in cursive writing leaving appropriate spaces between words."

She looks at how language and learning coincide as well as the socio-functional descriptions of both oral and written language. She also has known cursive for quite some time. "In first grade, we learned only cursive," Schallert said. "We never learned to print."

She said learning a language -- in any type of form -- can be valuable for someone's growth. "With language comprehension, there's this reciprocity between producing and comprehending," Schallert said. "By seeing the letter being formed slowly at your control, you're considering its sound-symbol correspondence."

She also said deciding what to include in the state curriculum is more constraining than people think. "There's only so much time in the day," Schallert said. "Whatever you decide to put into the curriculum, you're deciding to take something out. It's a big decision to decide to exclude it or include it. That's hard."



Diane Schallert is a professor with the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin.



By fourth grade, students will be expected to write legibly in cursive to complete assignments. Cursive will be added back into elementary school curriculum during the 2019-2020 school year for all Texas districts. (Courtesy <https://www.wfaa.com>)

Related

Arizona becomes first state to require cursive writing in schools
PHOENIX (AP) - Arizona will require public schools to teach cursive handwriting as one of a number of new education standards approved by the state Board of Education.

The move amends state's current standards, which are based on federal guidelines known as the Common Core. Common Core has become a politicized topic.



The revisions also require students to learn about time and money and memorize spelling lists in early grades and set standards for high-school-level math courses that are not required for graduation.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas says the changes were designed to clarify rules and give teachers and school boards more flexibility. The Board of Education says 48 percent of the Common Core standards on language arts and 40 percent of the Common Core standards on math were revised. (Courtesy <https://www.kvue.com/>)

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Cheerios, Nature Valley Cereals Contain Roundup Ingredient, Study Finds

Roundup For Breakfast: Tests Show Weed Killer In All Kids' Cereals Sampled



OVERVIEW

21 oat-based cereal and snack products such as Cheerios tested positive for traces of glyphosate. The chemical is the active ingredient in Roundup, which has been at the center of several trials alleging the weedkiller causes cancer. All but four of the products tested had glyphosate levels higher than what an environmental group considers safe for children.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Twenty-one oat-based cereal and snack products popular with children contain traces of glyphosate, the active ingredient in the weed killer Roundup, according to tests from the Environmental Working Group. EWG said the tests found glyphosate levels above what it considers safe for children in all but four of the products. The 21 products that were tested are made by General Mills, including six varieties of Cheerios and 14 of General Mills' Nature Valley products, such as Nature Valley granola bars. General Mills said food safety is a "top priority" for the company, which said it's working to minimize the use of pesticides on the ingredients it uses. "Most crops grown in fields use some form of pesticides and trace amounts are found in the majority of food we all eat," the company said in

an emailed statement. "Experts at the FDA and EPA determine the safe levels for food products," which it adheres to, as well as farmers that grow the crops, it added.



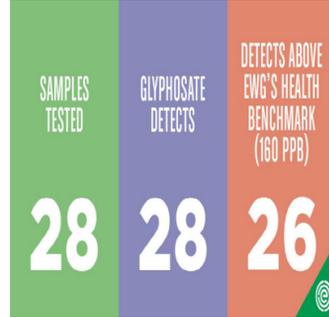
The report is the latest from the EWG to detect traces of glyphosate in cereals. The environmental advocacy group found traces of the chemical in dozens of Cheerios and Quaker brand products in October.

Glyphosate has been at the center of several high-profile lawsuits alleging the chemical causes cancer. A California jury awarded a couple \$2 billion in punitive damages after concluding that sustained exposure to Monsanto's popular Roundup weed killer led to their cancer diagnoses. Monsanto is now owned by Bayer. Several varieties of Cheerios — including Honey Nut, Chocolate Peanut Butter, Oat Crunch and Multi Grain — are included on the list of foods that contain "troubling" levels of glyphosate, the cancer-causing ingredient in the Bayer-Monsanto herbicide Roundup, the Environmental Working Group announced Wednesday. Twenty-one oat-based cereal and snack products — also including several from the Nature Valley line — were sampled in a round of testing commissioned by the group, a new statement said.



All but four of them contained levels higher than what scientists consider safe for children, according to the report. The nonprofit organization has previously said that the level of the ingredient safe for kids is no more than 160 parts per billion (ppb). The highest level of glyphosate is found in Honey Nut Cheerios Medley Crunch — at 833 ppb. The lowest is found in Nature Valley's Dark Chocolate & Nut version of Fruit & Nut Chewy Trail Mix Granola Bar, with only 76 ppb. A second round of tests commissioned by the Environmental Working Group found the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup weed killer in every sample of popular oat-based cereal and other oat-based food marketed to children. These test results fly

in the face of claims by two companies, Quaker and General Mills, which have said there is no reason for concern. This is because, they say, their products meet the legal standards. Yet almost all of the samples tested by EWG had residues of glyphosate at levels higher than what EWG scientists consider protective of children's health with an adequate margin of safety. The EWG findings of a chemical identified as probably carcinogenic by the World Health Organization come on the heels of a major study published in JAMA Internal Medicine that found a significant reduction in cancer risk for individuals who ate a lot of organic food.



The tests detected glyphosate in all 28 samples of products made with conventionally grown oats. All but two of the 28 samples had levels of glyphosate above EWG's health benchmark of 160 parts per billion, or ppb. Products tested by Anresco Laboratories in San Francisco included 10 samples of different types of General Mills' Cheerios and 18 samples of different Quaker brand products from PepsiCo, including instant oatmeal, breakfast cereal and snack bars. The highest level of glyphosate found by the lab was 2,837 ppb in Quaker Oatmeal Squares breakfast cereal, nearly 18 times higher than EWG's children's health benchmark. **Highest glyphosate levels** The two highest levels of glyphosate were detected in Honey Nut Cheerios Medley Crunch and Cheerios, at 833 parts per billion and 729 parts per billion, respectively, the group said. It considers anything over 160 parts per billion to be unsafe for children.

However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a far higher threshold for glyphosate content, ranging from 0.1 to 310 parts per million, rather than per billion. Even though several juries have found in favor of cancer patients who claim their illness is linked to glyphosate exposure, there are conflicting scientific studies. The World Health Organization's cancer agency has said the weedkiller is "possibly carcinogenic to humans," but other organizations have said they believe the link is unlikely.



Glyphosate and oats

Glyphosate is sprayed on oats to dry out the crop, making it easier to harvest, the EWG said. The group said the practice increases the chances the chemical will end up in children's cereal. "The only way to quickly remove this cancer-causing weedkiller from foods marketed to children is for companies like General Mills and Quaker to use oats from farmers who do not use glyphosate as a desiccant," it said in the report. The four products that tested below the EWG's threshold of 160 parts per billion are:
 •Honey Nut Cheerios
 •Nature Valley Fruit & Nut Chewy Trail Mix Granola Bars, Dark Chocolate & Nut
 •Nature Valley Sweet & Salty Nut granola bars, Cashew
 •Nature Valley Soft-Baked Oatmeal Squares, Cinnamon Brown Sugar
 (Courtesy tps://www.cbsnews.com/news)

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