

groups are calling the proposed “pay to protest fee,” stating:

There is fundamental personal dignity in protest — the insistence that one’s voice matters. Protesting is also a patriotic act, as Americans show up to help steer the path of our country.

The public comment period on the proposed rule closed on October 15, by which time the Interior Department had received more than 70,000 comments.

Supreme Court Debates issues on freedom of speech and assembly include the April 2018 issue on “Speech at Polling Places” and the October 2017 issue on “Free Speech at Polling Places.”

Birthright Citizenship

On October 30, President Trump announced that he is considering issuing an Executive Order to end birthright citizenship. Birthright citizenship is the principle that anyone born on American soil is automatically a citizen, regardless of the immigration status of the parents, as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which states, “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and the state wherein they reside.”

The Fourteenth Amendment was adopted in 1868 as part of the Reconstruction Amendments after the Civil War, and was intended to nullify the 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford* ruling that no African Americans could become citizens, regardless of their status at birth.

Critics of the President’s proposal say that birthright citizenship cannot be ended by Executive action because changes to the Constitution can only be made by a two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress or through a constitutional convention called for by two-thirds of State legislatures. They also point out that at least 30 other countries, including Mexico and Canada, also have birthright citizenship.

The issue relates to current concerns about illegal immigration, including the approach of a “caravan” of asylum seekers to the U.S.–Mexico border. The President has sent 5,000 troops to help Border Patrol prevent many of them from entering.

In announcing his effort to end birthright citizenship, the President acknowledged that it will “probably” go to the Supreme Court.

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (WI-R) pointed out that Republicans in Congress objected when President

Barack Obama tried to use Executive Orders to make immigration policy, saying that the same objection applied here. “I think in this case the Fourteenth Amendment is pretty clear, and that would involve a very, very lengthy constitutional process,” he said, adding that he agreed with the President that the “root issue” was “unchecked illegal immigration.” ■

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