

California judge blocks Trump administration order against WeChat

CE Noticias Financieras English

September 20, 2020 Sunday

Copyright 2020 Content Engine, LLC.

All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2020 CE Noticias Financieras All Rights Reserved

Length: 451 words

Body

A California judge on Sunday blocked the order of U.S. President Donald Trump's government to ban downloads of The Chinese messaging network WeChat (the Chinese WhatsApp) into the U.S. app market. Federal Magistrate Laurel Beeler of a Northern District of California court issued a preliminary order to block the ban on WeChat downloads that was going to take effect on Sunday.

"Certainly the government's general national security interest is significant, but (...) while the government has established that China's activities pose significant national security concerns, it has given little evidence that the effective WeChat ban on all users in the US addresses these concerns," the judge explained in a brief. "And as the plaintiffs point out, there are obvious alternatives to a complete ban, such as banning WeChat from government apparatuses, as Australia has done, or taking other measures to address data security," Beeler added. This decision is a victory for WeChat's owner company, Chinese technology company Tencent Holdings, and the WeChat User Alliance in the US, an organization that claims it is not linked to the company that filed a lawsuit against the Trump Administration in August. The judge reasoned that in WeChat users in the US they have expressed in their lawsuit "serious issues" about the threat that the government's order may pose to their rights recognized in the First Amendment of the US Constitution, which guarantees freedoms of expression, worship, press and assembly. And he mentioned that this social network is useful for members of the Chinese-American community or Chinese speakers in the American country. "The plaintiffs' evidence reflects that WeChat is indeed the only means of communication for many in the community, not only because China prohibits other applications, but also because Chinese speakers with little English professed have no choice but WeChat," she reasoned.

This court decision comes after the U.S. Department of Commerce announced Saturday that it was going to delay a week of similar measures against TikTok, which were originally going to take effect today, after Trump gave his "blessing" to a preliminary agreement so that he can operate in the country, in partnership with Americans Oracle and Walmart. On Friday, the U.S. government reported that it would block downloads of TikTok and WeChat on U.S. app purchase sites starting on Sunday and that U.S. authorities would veto their full use as of November 12, citing national security concerns. In the case of WeChat, any transfer of funds or payments in the U.S. through this app was also to be vetoed as of this Sunday, which has also been paralyzed by the California judge's order.

Load-Date: September 21, 2020