

December 12, 2006

Charles R. Fulbruge III
Clerk

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

No. 05-41743
Conference Calendar

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

versus

JUAN FIDENCIO SALINAS-CHAVEZ,

Defendant-Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of Texas
USDC No. 7:05-CR-538-ALL

Before KING, WIENER, and OWEN, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:*

Juan Fidencio Salinas-Chavez appeals his guilty-plea conviction for unlawful reentry in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1326(b). In his sole issue on appeal, Salinas-Chavez argues that § 1326(b)'s treatment of prior felony and aggravated felony convictions as sentencing factors rather than elements of the offense that must be found by a jury is unconstitutional in light of Apprendi v. New Jersey, 530 U.S. 466 (2000).

* Pursuant to 5TH CIR. R. 47.5, the court has determined that this opinion should not be published and is not precedent except under the limited circumstances set forth in 5TH CIR. R. 47.5.4.

Salinas-Chavez's constitutional challenge to § 1326(b) is foreclosed by Almendarez-Torres v. United States, 523 U.S. 224, 235 (1998). Although Salinas-Chavez contends that Almendarez-Torres was incorrectly decided and that a majority of the Supreme Court would overrule Almendarez-Torres in light of Apprendi, we have repeatedly rejected such arguments on the basis that Almendarez-Torres remains binding. See United States v. Garza-Lopez, 410 F.3d 268, 276 (5th Cir.), cert. denied, 126 S. Ct. 298 (2005). Salinas-Chavez properly concedes that his argument is foreclosed in light of Almendarez-Torres and circuit precedent, but he raises it here to preserve it for further review.

AFFIRMED.