

October 22, 2003

Charles R. Fulbruge III  
Clerk

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

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No. 03-40462  
Conference Calendar

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

versus

WENCESLAO MENDOZA-CHAVIRA,

Defendant-Appellant.

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Appeal from the United States District Court  
for the Southern District of Texas  
USDC No. B-02-CR-677-1  
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Before KING, Chief Judge, and JOLLY and STEWART, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:\*

Wenceslao Mendoza-Chavira ("Mendoza") appeals his conviction and the 41-month sentence imposed following his plea of guilty to being found in the United States after deportation, in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1326. Mendoza argues that the "felony" and "aggravated felony" provisions of 8 U.S.C. § 1326(b)(1) and (2) are unconstitutional.

Mendoza acknowledges that his argument is foreclosed by Almendarez-Torres v. United States, 523 U.S. 224, 235 (1998), but he asserts that the decision has been cast into doubt by Apprendi

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 R. 47.5, the court has determined that this opinion should not be published and is not precedent except under the limited circumstances set forth in 5TH CIR.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

v. New Jersey, 530 U.S. 466, 490 (2000). He seeks to preserve his argument for further review.

Apprendi did not overrule Almendarez-Torres. See Apprendi, 530 U.S. at 489-90; United States v. Dabeit, 231 F.3d 979, 984 (5th Cir. 2000). This court must follow Almendarez-Torres "unless and until the Supreme Court itself determines to overrule it." Dabeit, 231 F.3d at 984 (internal quotation marks and citation omitted). The judgment of the district court is AFFIRMED.

Given the above disposition, we do not decide whether Mendoza's appeal is barred by the waiver provision of his plea agreement.

AFFIRMED.