

United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

No. 25-10895
Summary Calendar

United States Court of Appeals
Fifth Circuit

FILED

January 14, 2026

Lyle W. Cayce
Clerk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff—Appellee,

versus

JOEL ZAVALA-GARCIA,

Defendant—Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Northern District of Texas
USDC No. 4:25-CR-61-1

Before HIGGINBOTHAM, ENGELHARDT, and RAMIREZ, *Circuit Judges.*

PER CURIAM:*

Joel Zavala-Garcia appeals following his conviction and sentence under 8 U.S.C. § 1326(a) for illegal reentry into the United States after deportation, arguing that the statutory sentencing enhancement in § 1326(b) is unconstitutional. Zavala-Garcia concedes that his argument is foreclosed by *Almendarez-Torres v. United States*, 523 U.S. 224 (1998), and seeks to

* This opinion is not designated for publication. See 5TH CIR. R. 47.5.

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preserve it for possible Supreme Court review. The Government has filed an unopposed motion for summary affirmance or, alternatively, for an extension of time to file its brief.

As he concedes, Zavala-Garcia's argument is foreclosed. *See United States v. Pervis*, 937 F.3d 546, 553-54 (5th Cir. 2019); *see also Erlinger v. United States*, 602 U.S. 821, 838 (2024) (explaining that *Almendarez-Torres* "persists as a narrow exception permitting judges to find only the fact of a prior conviction" (internal quotation marks and citation omitted)). Summary affirmance is thus appropriate. *Groendyke Transp., Inc. v. Davis*, 406 F.2d 1158, 1162 (5th Cir. 1969).

Accordingly, the motion for summary affirmance is GRANTED, the alternative motion for an extension of time is DENIED, and the judgment of the district court is AFFIRMED.