

United States Court of Appeals
for the Fifth Circuit

No. 25-50568
Summary Calendar

United States Court of Appeals
Fifth Circuit
FILED
September 10, 2026
Lyle W. Cayce
Clerk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff—Appellee,

versus

THOMAS JORGE FINCH,

Defendant—Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Western District of Texas
USDC No. 5:22-CR-463-1

Before KING, HIGGINSON, and DOUGLAS, *Circuit Judges*.

PER CURIAM:*

Thomas Jorge Finch entered a conditional guilty plea to conspiracy to transport illegal aliens. He appeals the district court's denial of his motion to suppress the evidence that was derived from the stop of his vehicle for failing to use his turn signal.

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

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“For a traffic stop to be justified at its inception, an officer must have an objectively reasonable suspicion that some sort of illegal activity, such as a traffic violation, occurred, or is about to occur, before stopping the vehicle.” *United States v. Lopez-Moreno*, 420 F.3d 420, 430 (5th Cir. 2005). In Texas, a driver must signal to indicate his intention to change lanes. TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. § 545.104(a); see *Mahaffey v. State*, 364 S.W.3d 908, 913 (Tex. Crim. App. 2012). Contrary to Finch’s argument, the Texas courts have not rejected the police officer’s interpretation of § 545.104(a). See *United States v. Alvarado-Zarza*, 782 F.3d 246, 249-50 (5th Cir. 2015). We therefore agree with the district court that, even if the officer had a mistaken understanding of the signal statute, his reliance on it to stop Finch’s vehicle was objectively reasonable. See *Heien v. North Carolina*, 574 U.S. 54, 60, 66 (2014). Accordingly, the district court properly denied Finch’s motion to suppress. See *id.* at 68.

AFFIRMED.