

No. _____

IN THE
Supreme Court of the United States

JACE CREHAN

PETITIONER,

V.

STATE OF LOUISIANA,

RESPONDENT.

**ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE
LOUISIANA COURT OF APPEAL, FIRST CIRCUIT**

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTION PRESENTED

This Court has granted certiorari in *Ramos v. Louisiana*, 139 S.Ct. 1318 (2019) (No. 18-5924). This case also involves a non-unanimous jury verdict, giving rise to the following question:

Whether Petitioner was constitutionally entitled to a unanimous jury under the Fifth, Sixth, and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution?

PARTIES TO THE PROCEEDING

The petitioner is Jace Crehan, the defendant and defendant-appellant in the courts below. The respondent is the State of Louisiana, the plaintiff and plaintiff-appellee in the courts below.

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(Unpublished).

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PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

Petitioner, Jace Crehan, respectfully petitions for a writ of certiorari to the Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal in *State v. Jace Crehan*, 2018 WL 5785479 (La. App. 1 Cir. 11/5/18) (Unpublished). *Appendix “A”, Pet. App. 1a-11a.*

OPINIONS BELOW

The judgment of the Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal is an unpublished opinion reported at *State v. Jace Crehan*, 2018 WL 5785479 (La. App. 1 Cir. 11/5/18) (Unpublished). *Appendix “A”, Pet. App. 1a-11a.* The Louisiana Supreme Court’s order denying review of that decision is reported at *State v. Jace Crehan*, 2019 WL 1760742 (La. 4/15/19). *Appendix “B”, Pet. App. 12a.*

JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT

The judgment and opinion of the Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal were entered on November 5, 2018. *Appendix “A”, Pet. App. 1a-11a.* The Louisiana Supreme Court denied review of that decision on April 15, 2019. *Appendix “B”, Pet. App. 12a.* This Court’s jurisdiction is pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1257(a).

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

The Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides, in pertinent part: “In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury” U.S. Const. Amend. VI.

The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides, in pertinent part:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

U.S. Const. Amend. XIV.

Article 782(A) of the Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure provides, in pertinent part: “Cases in which punishment is necessarily confinement at hard labor shall be tried by a jury composed of twelve jurors, ten of whom must concur to render a verdict.” La. C.Cr.P. art. 782(A).

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner was charged by grand jury indictment with second-degree murder, a violation of LSA-R.S. 14:30.1. He was found guilty as charged by a vote of 11-1;¹ Petitioner was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

On direct appeal to the First Circuit Court of Appeal, petitioner argued, among other things, that his conviction should be vacated because the jury verdict was not unanimous. One of the jurors voted that the State did not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that petitioner was guilty as charged. Relying on *State v. Bertrand*, 2008-2215 (La. 03/17/09), 6 So.3d 738, the Court of Appeal rejected petitioner's argument. The Court further noted:

“While *Apodaca* was a plurality rather than a majority decision, the United States Supreme Court, as well as other courts, has cited or discussed the opinion various times since its issuance and, on each of these occasions, it is apparent that its holding as to non-unanimous jury verdicts represents well-settled law. *Bertrand*, 6 So.3d at 742.”

Pet. App. 9a.

However, Circuit Court Judge Guidry concurred, arguing:

“Given an intent by the defense bar of Louisiana to pursue the issue in other venues, it is only a matter of time before this persuasive and newly collected data is presented to this court or the supreme court.”

State v. Jace Crehan, 2018 WL 5785479 (2018) at Pet. App. 11a.

¹ See *State v. Jace Crehan* at Pet. App. 9a (defendant challenged the constitutionality of his non-unanimous jury verdict).

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

Mr. Crehan was convicted and sentenced to life without the possibility of parole by a non-unanimous jury. On March 18, 2019, the Court granted a petition for a writ of certiorari in *Evangelisto Ramos v. Louisiana*, 139 S.Ct. 1318 (2019) (No. 18-5924). For the reason stated in that petitioner, as well as reasons stated in similar petitions filed over the last 45 years, the decision in *Apodaca v. Oregon*, 406 U.S. 404 (1972) deserves reexamination and disavowal.

The Sixth Amendment requires a unanimous verdict to convict a defendant of a nonpetty offense, and the Fourteenth Amendment applies that requirement to the states. Full incorporation is an established principle on which the Court itself has relied for several decades. This Court should overrule *Apodaca*'s idiosyncratic and incorrect holding and apply the Sixth Amendment's unanimity guarantee to the states.

This Court should hold this petition pending its decision in *Ramos*, and then dispose of the petition as appropriate in light of that decision.

CONCLUSION

The petition for writ of certiorari should be held pending this Court's decision in *Evangelisto Ramos v. Louisiana*, 139 S. Ct. 1318 (2019), and then be disposed of as appropriate in light of that decision.

Respectfully Submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Undersigned counsel certifies that on this date, the 18th day of June, 2019, pursuant to Supreme Court Rules 29.3 and 29.4, the accompanying motion for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* and petition for a writ of *certiorari* was served on each party to the above proceeding, or that party's counsel, and on every other person required to be served, by depositing an envelope containing these documents in the United States mail properly addressed to each of them and with first-class postage prepaid.

The names and addresses of those served are as follows:

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