

No. __-_____

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

ANTONLI TORRES ABONZA,

Petitioner,

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Respondent.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

APPENDIX

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Northern District of Texas

APPENDIX A

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT**

No. 18-10527

United States Court of Appeals
Fifth Circuit

FILED

May 3, 2019

Lyle W. Cayce
Clerk

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff-Appellee

v.

ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA,

Defendant-Appellant

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Northern District of Texas
USDC No. 3:17-CR-327-3

Before HIGGINBOTHAM, JONES, and COSTA, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:*

On May 5, 2017, Antolin Torres Abonza was arrested during a drug transaction with undercover police officers in Garland, Texas. Abonza, a 61-year old Mexican national, was in the United States illegally; he had been removed following convictions and imprisonment for his participation in a 2008 drug conspiracy. Abonza pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, namely cocaine. Probation prepared a pre-sentence report (PSR) recommending a sentence in the range

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 R. 47.5, the court has determined that this opinion should not be published and is not precedent except under the limited circumstances set forth in 5TH CIR.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

of 151 to 188 months. The PSR calculated his offense level at 29; it included in this calculation a six-point enhancement based on Abonza's two previous convictions, making him a career offender under Sentencing Guideline § 4B1.1(b)(3).

Abonza objected to the PSR's enhancement recommendation, arguing the PSR incorrectly applied the Guidelines because his "two predicate convictions stem from a single prior criminal scheme"; that "[h]is two prior convictions . . . are not the kind that should trigger a Career Offender enhancement." Abonza had been convicted in 2009 in the Eastern District of Texas of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, in connection with his role in a cocaine distribution scheme. In 2012, in the Northern District of Illinois, Abonza was convicted of using a communication facility to commit a drug offense, namely a phone call supposedly made in the course of the same drug conspiracy. In these two cases, Abonza was named in separate indictments, and was sentenced on separate dates.

The district court overruled Abonza's objections, and applied the career offender enhancement. Quoting the language of Guideline § 4B1.1, the district court found that Abonza's "contention that the two prior convictions are related and should be counted as one . . . is unavailable to the Court"; that although the telephone call underlying the 2010 Northern District of Illinois conviction was concurrent with Abonza's participation in the Eastern District of Texas cocaine conspiracy, "the Illinois indictment does not specifically reference the drug activity that took place in Texas on or about the same time." In other words, "it's possible that the conspiracy involved similar cocaine distribution conduct but not necessarily the same common plan or scheme. . . . [T]he dots do not connect." The district court determined that the Guideline range for the sentence was 151 to 188 months. The court observed that only six months after

his release from prison for his previous crimes, Abonza reentered the country illegally to commit his third cocaine-trafficking felony conviction in eight years. Despite being over 50 years old, Abonza offered no indication that “prior sentences []or his age has decreased his recidivism or [deterred] him from engaging in the same or similar type of conduct.” Considering the seriousness of the offense, the need to promote respect for the law, the need for just punishment, protection of the public from potential further crime, and Abonza’s need for correctional treatment, the court imposed a sentence of 151 months. This appeal followed.

A district court must “impose a sentence sufficient, but not greater than necessary” to reflect the seriousness of the offense, promote respect for the law, provide just punishment, afford adequate deterrence, protect the public from further crimes of the defendant, and to “provide the defendant with needed educational or vocational training, medical care, or other correctional treatment in the most effective manner.”¹ Under Sentencing Guideline § 4B1.1, where a career offender’s offense statutory maximum is 20 years or more, but less than 25 years, his offense level will be 32.² A “career offender” is a defendant who was at least eighteen at the time he committed the offense, the offense is a felony crime of violence or a controlled substance offense, and “the defendant has at least two prior felony convictions of either a crime of violence or a controlled substance offense.”³ “If there is no intervening arrest, prior sentences are counted separately unless . . . the sentences resulted from offenses contained in the same charging instrument; or . . . the sentences were

¹ 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a).

² U.S.S.G. § 4B1.1(b)(3). This provision does not apply if the offender’s offense level is otherwise greater than 32. *Id.*

³ *Id.* § 4B1.1(a).

imposed on the same day.”⁴ We review the substantive reasonableness of a sentence using an abuse-of-discretion standard,⁵ applying a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness to a properly calculated, within-guidelines sentence.⁶ We affirm unless the district court did not account for a factor that should have received significant weight, gave significant weight to an irrelevant or improper factor, or represented a clear error of judgment in balancing sentencing factors.⁷

Abonza does not challenge the district court’s application of the career offender enhancement as inconsistent with the Guidelines. Rather, he argues only that the 151-month sentence is substantively unreasonable because it is “shockingly high” and does not account for the origin of Abonza’s predicate convictions in the same underlying conduct. Abonza argues the district court erred in applying the enhancement, though he concedes it was true to “the literal language of the current version of the Guidelines.” Abonza instead points to the 2006 version of the Guidelines, under which he insists his two predicate convictions would have been treated as “related cases,” such that no enhancement would have applied, arguing that the district court failed “to consider that under the old version of the Guidelines, [he] would not have been treated as a career offender . . . and would have had an advisory imprisonment range as low as 57–71 months.”

We need not resolve whether Abonza’s predicate convictions in fact arise from the same conspiracy, because it would not change the outcome of this appeal. Abonza concedes that the district court imposed a within-guidelines

⁴ *Id.* § 4A1.2(a)(2).

⁵ *Gall v. United States*, 552 U.S. 38, 51 (2007).

⁶ *United States v. Cooks*, 589 F.3d 173, 186 (5th Cir. 2009).

⁷ *Id.*

sentence, which is due a presumption of reasonableness. Abonza shows us no missed factor that should have received significant weight, no factor that was accorded improper weight, nor any error of judgment in balancing sentencing factors. He offers no authority to support his contention that the district court should have adhered to the approach of the 2006 Guidelines. Neither his unsupported contention that we should follow old versions of the Guidelines nor his bare assertions of the unreasonableness of his sentence rebut the presumption of reasonableness. We find no abuse of discretion.

The district court's sentencing decision is AFFIRMED.

APPENDIX B

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS DALLAS DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

JUDGMENT IN A CRIMINAL CASE

v.

ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZACase Number: **3:17-CR-00327-L(3)**USM Number: **15301-078****Leandro Delgado**

Defendant's Attorney

THE DEFENDANT:

<input type="checkbox"/>	pleaded guilty to count(s)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	pleaded guilty to count(s) before a U.S. Magistrate Judge, which was accepted by the court.	Count 1 of the Indictment filed June 20, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	pleaded nolo contendere to count(s) which was accepted by the court	
<input type="checkbox"/>	was found guilty on count(s) after a plea of not guilty	

The defendant is adjudicated guilty of these offenses:

Title & Section / Nature of Offense

21:846, 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C) Conspiracy To Possess With Intent To Distribute A Controlled Substance

Offense Ended

05/05/2017

Count

1

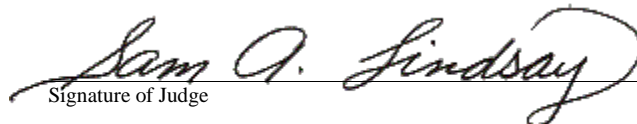
The defendant is sentenced as provided in pages 2 through 7 of this judgment. The sentence is imposed pursuant to the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984.

- ☐ The defendant has been found not guilty on count(s)
- ☐ Count(s) ☐ is ☐ are dismissed on the motion of the United States

It is ordered that the defendant must notify the United States attorney for this district within 30 days of any change of name, residence, or mailing address until all fines, restitution, costs, and special assessments imposed by this judgment are fully paid. If ordered to pay restitution, the defendant must notify the court and United States attorney of material changes in economic circumstances.

April 30, 2018

Date of Imposition of Judgment



Signature of Judge

Sam A. Lindsay, United States District Judge

Name and Title of Judge

April 30, 2018

Date

DEFENDANT: ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA
CASE NUMBER: 3:17-CR-00327-L(3)

IMPRISONMENT

Pursuant to the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, but taking the Guidelines as advisory pursuant to United States v. Booker, and considering the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. Section 3553(a), the defendant is hereby committed to the custody of the United States Bureau of Prisons to be imprisoned for a total term of: **One hundred fifty-one (151) months as to Count 1. This sentence shall run concurrently with any sentence imposed in Case No. F-1724517 pending in the 282nd Judicial District Court of Dallas County in Dallas, Texas. Pursuant to United States Sentencing Commission Guidelines Manual, in particular, Section 5G1.3(c), the November 2016 Edition, the court intends for Antolin Abonza Torres to receive a sentence adjustment to account for any time that he has spent in custody beginning on May 5, 2017, that the Bureau of Prisons will not credit under Title 18 United States Code 3585(b). This adjustment is necessary to ensure that Defendant's federal sentence runs fully concurrent with any sentence that has been imposed or might be imposed in state court, unless otherwise stated by the court.**

- ☐ The court makes the following recommendations to the Bureau of Prisons:
- ☒ The defendant is remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal.
- ☐ The defendant shall surrender to the United States Marshal for this district:
- ☐ at ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m. on
- ☐ as notified by the United States Marshal.
- ☐ The defendant shall surrender for service of sentence at the institution designated by the Bureau of Prisons:
- ☐ before 2 p.m. on
- ☐ as notified by the United States Marshal.
- ☐ as notified by the Probation or Pretrial Services Office.

RETURN

I have executed this judgment as follows:

Defendant delivered on _____ to _____

at _____, with a certified copy of this judgment.

UNITED STATES MARSHAL

By
DEPUTY UNITED STATES MARSHAL

DEFENDANT: ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA
CASE NUMBER: 3:17-CR-00327-L(3)

SUPERVISED RELEASE

Upon release from imprisonment, the defendant shall be on supervised release for a term of : **Three (3) years.**

MANDATORY CONDITIONS

1. You must not commit another federal, state or local crime.
2. You must not unlawfully possess a controlled substance.
3. You must refrain from any unlawful use of a controlled substance. You must submit to one drug test within 15 days of release from imprisonment and at least two periodic drug tests thereafter, as determined by the court.
☐ The above drug testing condition is suspended, based on the court's determination that you pose a low risk of future substance abuse. *(check if applicable)*
4. ☐ You must make restitution in accordance with 18 U.S.C. §§ 3663 and 3663A or any other statute authorizing a sentence of restitution. *(check if applicable)*
5. ☒ You must cooperate in the collection of DNA as directed by the probation officer. *(check if applicable)*
6. ☐ You must comply with the requirements of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (34 U.S.C. § 20901, et seq.) as directed by the probation officer, the Bureau of Prisons, or any state sex offender registration agency in which you reside, work, are a student, or were convicted of a qualifying offense. *(check if applicable)*
7. ☐ You must participate in an approved program for domestic violence. *(check if applicable)*

You must comply with the standard conditions that have been adopted by this court as well as with any additional conditions on the attached page.

DEFENDANT: ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA
CASE NUMBER: 3:17-CR-00327-L(3)

STANDARD CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION

As part of your supervised release, you must comply with the following standard conditions of supervision. These conditions are imposed because they establish the basic expectations for your behavior while on supervision and identify the minimum tools needed by probation officers to keep informed, report to the court about, and bring about improvements in your conduct and condition.

1. You must report to the probation office in the federal judicial district where you are authorized to reside within 72 hours of your release from imprisonment, unless the probation officer instructs you to report to a different probation office or within a different time frame.
2. After initially reporting to the probation office, you will receive instructions from the court or the probation officer about how and when you must report to the probation officer, and you must report to the probation officer as instructed.
3. You must not knowingly leave the federal judicial district where you are authorized to reside without first getting permission from the court or the probation officer.
4. You must answer truthfully the questions asked by your probation officer.
5. You must live at a place approved by the probation officer. If you plan to change where you live or anything about your living arrangements (such as the people you live with), you must notify the probation officer at least 10 days before the change. If notifying the probation officer in advance is not possible due to unanticipated circumstances, you must notify the probation officer within 72 hours of becoming aware of a change or expected change.
6. You must allow the probation officer to visit you at any time at your home or elsewhere, and you must permit the probation officer to take any items prohibited by the conditions of your supervision that he or she observes in plain view.
7. You must work full time (at least 30 hours per week) at a lawful type of employment, unless the probation officer excuses you from doing so. If you do not have full-time employment you must try to find full-time employment, unless the probation officer excuses you from doing so. If you plan to change where you work or anything about your work (such as your position or your job responsibilities), you must notify the probation officer at least 10 days before the change. If notifying the probation officer at least 10 days in advance is not possible due to unanticipated circumstances, you must notify the probation officer within 72 hours of becoming aware of a change or expected change.
8. You must not communicate or interact with someone you know is engaged in criminal activity. If you know someone has been convicted of a felony, you must not knowingly communicate or interact with that person without first getting the permission of the probation officer.
9. If you are arrested or questioned by a law enforcement officer, you must notify the probation officer within 72 hours.
10. You must not own, possess, or have access to a firearm, ammunition, destructive device, or dangerous weapon (i.e., anything that was designed, or was modified for, the specific purpose of causing bodily injury or death to another person such as nunchakus or tasers).
11. You must not act or make any agreement with a law enforcement agency to act as a confidential human source or informant without first getting the permission of the court.
12. If the probation officer determines that you pose a risk to another person (including an organization), the probation officer may require you to notify the person about the risk and you must comply with that instruction. The probation officer may contact the person and confirm that you have notified the person about the risk.
13. You must follow the instructions of the probation officer related to the conditions of supervision.

U.S. Probation Office Use Only

A U.S. probation officer has instructed me on the conditions specified by the court and has provided me with a written copy of this judgment containing these conditions. I understand additional information regarding these conditions is available at www.txnp.uscourts.gov.

Defendant's Signature _____

Date _____

DEFENDANT: ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA
CASE NUMBER: 3:17-CR-00327-L(3)

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF SUPERVISION

As a condition of supervised release, upon the completion of the sentence of imprisonment, the defendant shall be surrendered to a duly-authorized immigration official for deportation in accordance with the established procedures provided by the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101 et seq. As a further condition of supervised release, if ordered deported or removed, the defendant shall remain outside the United States. In the event the defendant is not deported upon release from imprisonment, the defendant shall comply with the standard conditions contained in this Judgment and shall comply with the mandatory and special conditions.

DEFENDANT: ANTOLIN TORRES ABONZA
 CASE NUMBER: 3:17-CR-00327-L(3)

CRIMINAL MONETARY PENALTIES

The defendant must pay the total criminal monetary penalties under the schedule of payments on Sheet 6.

	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>JVTA Assessment*</u>	<u>Fine</u>	<u>Restitution</u>
TOTALS	\$100.00	\$.00	\$.00	\$.00

- ☐ The determination of restitution is deferred until *An Amended Judgment in a Criminal Case (AO245C)* will be entered after such determination.
- ☐ The defendant must make restitution (including community restitution) to the following payees in the amount listed below.

The defendant must make restitution (including community restitution) to the following payees in the amount listed below.

If the defendant makes a partial payment, each payee shall receive an approximately proportioned payment. However, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3664(i), all nonfederal victims must be paid before the United States is paid.

- ☐ Restitution amount ordered pursuant to plea agreement \$
- ☐ The defendant must pay interest on restitution and a fine of more than \$2,500, unless the restitution or fine is paid in full before the fifteenth day after the date of the judgment, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3612(f). All of the payment options on Sheet 6 may be subject to penalties for delinquency and default, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3612(g).
- ☐ The court determined that the defendant does not have the ability to pay interest and it is ordered that:
- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> the interest requirement is waived for the | <input type="checkbox"/> fine | <input type="checkbox"/> restitution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the interest requirement for the | <input type="checkbox"/> fine | <input type="checkbox"/> restitution is modified as follows: |

* Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-22

** Findings for the total amount of losses are required under Chapters 109A, 110, 110A, and 113A of Title 18 for offenses committed on or after September 13, 1994, but before April 23, 1996.

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SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Having assessed the defendant's ability to pay, payment of the total criminal monetary penalties is due as follows:

- A** ☐ Lump sum payments of \$ _____ due immediately, balance due
☐ not later than _____, or
☐ in accordance ☐ C, ☐ D, ☐ E, or ☐ F below; or
- B** ☐ Payment to begin immediately (may be combined with ☐ C, ☐ D, or ☐ F below); or
- C** ☐ Payment in equal _____ (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) installments of \$ _____ over a period of _____ (e.g., months or years), to commence _____ (e.g., 30 or 60 days) after the date of this judgment; or
- D** ☐ Payment in equal 20 (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly) installments of \$ _____ over a period of _____ (e.g., months or years), to commence _____ (e.g., 30 or 60 days) after release from imprisonment to a term of supervision; or
- E** ☐ Payment during the term of supervised release will commence within _____ (e.g., 30 or 60 days) after release from imprisonment. The court will set the payment plan based on an assessment of the defendant's ability to pay at that time; or
- F** ☒ Special instructions regarding the payment of criminal monetary penalties:
It is ordered that the Defendant shall pay to the United States a special assessment of \$100.00 for Count 1, which shall be due immediately. Said special assessment shall be paid to the Clerk, U.S. District Court.

Unless the court has expressly ordered otherwise, if this judgment imposes imprisonment, payment of criminal monetary penalties is due during imprisonment. All criminal monetary penalties, except those payments made through the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Inmate Financial Responsibility Program, are made to the clerk of the court.

The defendant shall receive credit for all payments previously made toward any criminal monetary penalties imposed.

- ☐ Joint and Several
See above for Defendant and Co-Defendant Names and Case Numbers (including defendant number), Total Amount, Joint and Several Amount, and corresponding payee, if appropriate.
- ☐ Defendant shall receive credit on his restitution obligation for recovery from other defendants who contributed to the same loss that gave rise to defendant's restitution obligation.
- ☐ The defendant shall pay the cost of prosecution.
- ☐ The defendant shall pay the following court cost(s):
- ☐ The defendant shall forfeit the defendant's interest in the following property to the United States:

Payments shall be applied in the following order: (1) assessment, (2) restitution principal, (3) restitution interest, (4) fine principal, (5) fine interest, (6) community restitution, (7) JVT Assessment, (8) penalties, and (9) costs, including cost of prosecution and court costs.