

No. 21-5731

---

---

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

---

SHERIDAN SISK, PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

---

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI  
TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

---

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES IN OPPOSITION

---

ELIZABETH B. PRELOGAR  
Solicitor General  
Counsel of Record  
Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001  
SupremeCtBriefs@usdoj.gov  
(202) 514-2217

---

---

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

---

No. 21-5731

SHERIDAN SISK, PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

---

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI  
TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

---

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES IN OPPOSITION

---

Petitioner contends (Pet. 7-20) that his previous Indiana conviction for dealing cocaine, in violation of Ind. Code Ann. § 35-48-4-1 (LexisNexis Supp. 2019), is not a "controlled substance offense" within the meaning of Sentencing Guidelines § 4B1.2(b), on the theory that a "controlled substance offense" under Section 4B1.2 must involve a controlled substance under the federal Controlled Substances Act. See Pet. App. 2a (noting that "positional isomers" of cocaine are controlled under Indiana law but not under federal law). For the reasons given in the government's brief in opposition to the pending petition for a

writ of certiorari in Guerrant v. United States, No. 21-5099 (Nov. 3, 2021), the question presented does not warrant this Court's review. We have served petitioner with a copy of the government's brief in opposition in Guerrant, and the brief is also available on this Court's website.

As the government explained in its brief in Guerrant, this Court ordinarily does not review decisions interpreting the Sentencing Guidelines, because the Sentencing Commission can amend the Guidelines to eliminate any conflict or correct any error. See Br. in Opp. at 5-7, Guerrant, supra (No. 21-5099). And in any event, the court of appeals' decision is correct. The Sentencing Guidelines define the term "controlled substance offense" to include "an offense under \* \* \* state law, \* \* \* that prohibits \* \* \* the possession of a controlled substance \* \* \* with intent to \* \* \* distribute." Sentencing Guidelines § 4B1.2(b). As the government has explained, that definition encompasses offenses involving substances that are controlled under state law, even if those substances are not also controlled under federal law. See Br. in Opp. at 7-10, Guerrant, supra (No. 21-5099).

Petitioner contends (Pet. 7-20) that the courts of appeals disagree about the meaning of the term "controlled substance" in Section 4B1.2(b). But as explained in the brief in opposition in Guerrant, any circuit disagreement is recent and limited, which counsels even further against this Court's review and in favor of

allowing the Sentencing Commission the opportunity to address it.

See Br. in Opp. at 11-12, Guerrant, supra (No. 21-5099).\*

Respectfully submitted.

ELIZABETH B. PRELOGAR  
Solicitor General

NOVEMBER 2021

---

\* The government waives any further response to the petition for a writ of certiorari unless this Court requests otherwise.