

No. 23-6892

---

---

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

---

CLIFFORD LAINES, JR., PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

---

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

---

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES

---

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. 23-6892

CLIFFORD LAINES, JR., PETITIONER

v.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

---

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

---

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES

---

Petitioner contends (Pet. 30) that his prior cocaine conviction under Florida law, see Pet. 5, does not qualify as a "serious drug offense" under the Armed Career Criminal Act of 1984 (ACCA), 18 U.S.C. 924(e)(2)(A). Specifically, petitioner argues (Pet. 30) that the classification of his prior state conviction as a "serious drug offense" under the ACCA should depend on the federal controlled-substance schedules in effect at the time of his federal offense conduct, rather than at the time of his prior state crime.

This Court has granted certiorari in Brown v. United States, 143 S. Ct. 2458 (2023) (No. 22-6389) (argued Nov. 27, 2023), and Jackson v. United States, 143 S. Ct. 2457 (2023) (No. 22-6640) (argued Nov. 27, 2023), to consider whether the classification of a prior state conviction as a “serious drug offense” under the ACCA depends on the federal controlled-substance schedules in effect at (1) the time of the defendant’s prior state crime; (2) the time of the federal offense for which he is being sentenced; or (3) the time of his federal sentencing. The petition for a writ of certiorari here should accordingly be held pending the Court’s decision in Brown and Jackson and then disposed of as appropriate.\*

Respectfully submitted.

ELIZABETH B. PRELOGAR  
Solicitor General

APRIL 2024

---

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