

26-5595

No. _____

ORIGINAL

Supreme Court, U.S.
FILED

MAY 28 2026

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

IN THE

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

William Wayne Stedman PETITIONER
(Your Name)

vs.

State of Texas — RESPONDENT(S)

ON PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals
(NAME OF COURT THAT LAST RULED ON MERITS OF YOUR CASE)

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

William Wayne Stedman
(Your Name)

#2499056
Wallace Unit
(Address) 1675 S. FM 3525

Colorado City, TX 79512
(City, State, Zip Code)

N/A
(Phone Number)

RECEIVED

JUL -8 2026

OFFICE OF THE CLERK
SUPREME COURT, U.S.

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether a state criminal conviction entered without a valid indictment deprives the trial court of subject-matter jurisdiction in violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.
2. Whether state courts violate the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment by refusing to adjudicate a properly presented challenge to subject-matter jurisdiction in post-conviction proceedings.
3. Whether an indigent prisoner seeking post-conviction habeas corpus relief is constitutionally entitled, upon a showing of particularized need, to obtain trial transcripts and other court records necessary to present constitutional claims.

LIST OF PARTIES

Pursuant to Rule 14.1(b), the parties to the proceeding in the court whose judgment is sought to be reviewed are:

Petitioner

William Wayne Stedman

Respondent

State of Texas

RELATED CASES

Pursuant to Rule 14.1(b)(iii), petitioner states that there are no related cases within the meaning of Rule 14.1(b)(iii).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Questions Presented	1
List of Parties	2
Related Cases	2
Table of Authorities	3
Opinions and Orders Below	4
Statement of Jurisdiction	5
Constitutional and Statutory Provisions Involved	6
Statement of the Case	8
Reasons for Granting the Writ	10
Conclusion	15
Proof of Service	16
Appendix	A-1
Appendix A – Order Denying Motion for Leave to File Original Petition for Writ of Mandamus (Jan. 29, 2026)	A-2
Appendix B – Order Dismissing Suggestion for Reconsideration as Moot (Mar. 24, 2026)	A-3
Appendix C – Notice Acknowledging Receipt of Original Habeas Application (Dec. 15, 2025)	A-4
Appendix D – Motion Requesting Transcripts and Records	A-5
Appendix E – Order Denying Request for Transcripts and Records	A-6

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Cases

Apprendi v. New Jersey, 530 U.S. 466 (2000)

Ex parte Avant, 2009 Tex. App. LEXIS 6199

Basso v. Utah Power & Light Co., 495 F.2d 906 (10th Cir. 1974)

Branzburg v. Hayes, 408 U.S. 665 (1972)

Pennoyer v. Neff, 95 U.S. 714 (1878)

Chick Kam Choo v. Exxon Corp., 486 U.S. 140 (1988)

Claflin v. Houseman, 93 U.S. 130 (1876)

Constantin v. Smith, 57 F.2d 227 (1932)

Eisler v. Stritzler, 535 F.2d 148 (1976)

Ex parte Ayers, 123 U.S. 507

Ex parte McCardle, 74 U.S. 506 (1868)

Ex parte McIver, 586 S.W.2d 851 (Tex. Crim. App. 1979)

Gilbert v. David, 235 U.S. 561 (1915)

Hammond Packing Co. v. Arkansas, 212 U.S. 322 (1909)

Heath v. State, 817 S.W.2d 335 (Tex. Crim. App. 1991)

Marathon Oil Co. v. Ruhrgas A.G., 115 F.3d 315 (1997)

Old Wayne Mut. Life Ass'n v. McDonough, 204 U.S. 8 (1907)

Reagan v. Farmers' Loan & Trust Co., 154 U.S. 362 (1894)

Register v. Thaler, 681 F.3d 623 (2012)

Rice v. Sioux City Mem. Park Cemetery, Inc., 349 U.S. 70 (1955)

Tafflin v. Levitt, 493 U.S. 455 (1990)

Tex. Dep't of Parks & Wildlife v. Miranda, 133 S.W.3d 217 (Tex. 2004)

Trejo v. State, 280 S.W.3d 258 (Tex. Crim. App. 2009)

Von Dunser v. Aronoff, 915 F.2d 1071 (6th Cir. 1990)

Williamson v. Berry, 49 U.S. 495 (1850)

Smith v. Bennett, 365 U.S. 708 (1961)

Walker v. Packer, 827 S.W.2d 833 (Tex. 1992)

Statutes and Rules

28 U.S.C. § 1257

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure art. 11.07

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure art. 1.05

Texas Constitution art. I, § 10

Texas Rule of Appellate Procedure 52.1

Texas Government Code § 552.321

Texas Const. art. V, § 12(b)

Texas Const. art. I, § 19

U.S. Const. amend. XIV

Supreme Court Rule 10(b)

Supreme Court Rule 10(c)

OPINIONS AND ORDERS BELOW

The judgment and orders for which review is sought were entered by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals denied Petitioner's Motion for Leave to File an Original Petition for Writ of Mandamus by unpublished order entered on January 29, 2026. A copy of that order appears in Appendix A.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals dismissed Petitioner's Suggestion for Reconsideration as moot by unpublished order entered on March 24, 2026. A copy of that order appears in Appendix B.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals acknowledged receipt of Petitioner's Original Application for Writ of Habeas Corpus by notice dated December 15, 2025. A copy of that notice appears in Appendix C.

No published opinion was issued by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION

The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1257(a).

The judgment and orders sought to be reviewed were entered by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. On January 29, 2026, that court denied Petitioner's Motion for Leave to File an Original Petition for Writ of Mandamus by unpublished order. Petitioner timely filed a Suggestion for Reconsideration, which the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals dismissed as moot by unpublished order entered on March 24, 2026.

This petition is timely filed under Rule 13 of the Rules of this Co

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

United States Constitution

Fourteenth Amendment

"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."

Texas Constitution

Article I, Section 10

"In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall have a speedy public trial by an impartial jury. He shall not be compelled to give evidence against himself, nor shall he be deprived of life, liberty, property, privileges or immunities, or in any manner disfranchised, except by the due course of the law of the land."

Article V, Section 12(b)

"An indictment is a written instrument presented to a court by a grand jury charging a person with the commission of an offense. The presentment of an indictment or information to a court invests the court with jurisdiction of the cause."

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

Article 1.05

"No person shall be convicted of an offense unless the offense is defined by law or unless the prosecution is based upon an indictment or information authorized by law."

Article 11.07

Article 11.07 governs applications for writs of habeas corpus in felony cases in which the applicant seeks relief from a final conviction imposing a sentence other than death.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Petitioner, William Wayne Stedman, is currently confined in the custody of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice pursuant to a felony conviction entered by a Texas state court.

Following his conviction, Petitioner sought post-conviction relief in the Texas courts. Petitioner contends that his conviction is void because the trial court lacked subject-matter jurisdiction, asserting that the indictment and grand jury proceedings were legally defective. Petitioner further contends that the resulting judgment violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

To support his post-conviction claims, Petitioner requested transcripts and other court records that he contends were necessary to investigate and present claims concerning subject-matter jurisdiction and ineffective assistance of counsel. Those requests were denied.

On December 15, 2025, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals acknowledged receipt of Petitioner's Original Application for Writ of Habeas Corpus.

Thereafter, Petitioner sought leave to file an original petition for writ of mandamus requesting relief related to his post-conviction proceedings. On January 29, 2026, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals denied that request by unpublished order.

Petitioner filed a Suggestion for Reconsideration, which the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals dismissed as moot by unpublished order entered on March 24, 2026.

Petitioner contends that the Texas courts failed to address the merits of his jurisdictional claims and that the denial of access to records prevented meaningful review of substantial constitutional questions. This petition seeks review of those issues under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE WRIT

I. This Petition Presents Important Questions Concerning the Constitutional Limits of State Criminal Jurisdiction.

This case presents important questions concerning whether a state criminal conviction may stand when the petitioner alleges that the trial court lacked subject-matter jurisdiction because of defects in the indictment and grand jury proceedings. Petitioner contends that a judgment entered without jurisdiction is void and that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits the continued enforcement of such a judgment.

The questions presented extend beyond Petitioner's individual case and concern the constitutional obligation of state courts to determine whether jurisdiction exists before enforcing a criminal conviction.

II. This Court's Review Is Warranted Because the Constitutional Claims Were Not Addressed on Their Merits.

Petitioner repeatedly presented jurisdictional challenges and sought post-conviction review in the Texas courts. According to Petitioner, those courts denied relief without addressing the merits of the constitutional issues presented.

Petitioner contends that when a litigant presents a substantial claim that a criminal judgment is void for lack of subject-matter jurisdiction, due process requires meaningful judicial consideration of that claim.

III. The Questions Presented Affect the Administration of Justice Beyond This Case.

This petition presents recurring constitutional questions concerning:

- the obligation of courts to determine the existence of subject-matter jurisdiction before enforcing criminal judgments;
- the availability of meaningful post-conviction review for jurisdictional claims;

- the ability of indigent prisoners to obtain records necessary to present constitutional claims; and
- the proper application of the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses in state post-conviction proceedings.

These questions arise with sufficient frequency that guidance from this Court would assist state and federal courts in the uniform application of constitutional principles.

IV. This Case Presents an Appropriate Vehicle for Review.

The constitutional issues presented were raised in Petitioner's state post-conviction proceedings and are preserved in the record. The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals entered final orders disposing of Petitioner's requests for relief. The questions presented are legal in nature and do not require resolution of disputed facts.

For these reasons, Petitioner respectfully submits that this case presents important federal questions warranting the exercise of this Court's certiorari jurisdiction.

CONCLUSION

The petition for a writ of certiorari should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

William Wayne Stedman

Date: Aug 14, 2026

AFFIDAVIT OF WILLIAM WAYNE STEDMAN

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF Mitchell

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared William Wayne Stedman, who, after being duly sworn, stated as follows:

1. My name is William Wayne Stedman. I am the Petitioner in this action and have personal knowledge of the facts stated herein.
2. I have reviewed the accompanying Petition for a Writ of Certiorari and the supporting appendix.
3. The factual statements contained in the petition are true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge and belief.
4. The attached exhibits are true and correct copies of the documents received from or filed with the Texas courts, unless otherwise indicated.
5. I make this affidavit in support of my Petition for a Writ of Certiorari before the Supreme Court of the United States.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this 22 day of June, 2026.

William Wayne Stedman, Affiant
TDCJ No. 2499056