SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

I	N THE	SUPREME	COURT	OF	THE	UNITED	STATES
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PARKER D	RILLII	NG MANAGI	EMENT)	
SERVICES	, LTD	• ,)	
		Petition	ner,)	
	V.) No. 3	L8-389
BRIAN NE	WTON,)	
		Responde	ent.)	
						_	

Pages: 1 through 67

Place: Washington, D.C.

Date: April 16, 2019

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1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	UNITED STATES
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3	PARKER DRILLING MANAGEMENT)
4	SERVICES, LTD.,)
5	Petitioner,)
6	v.) No. 18-389
7	BRIAN NEWTON,)
8	Respondent.)
9		
10	Washington, D.	C.
11	Tuesday, April 16	, 2019
12		
13	The above-entitled	matter came on for
14	oral argument before the Supre	me Court of the
15	United States at 10:04 a.m.	
16		
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	PAUL D. CLEMENT, ESQ., Washing	ton, D.C.;
19	on behalf of the Petitione	r.
20	CHRISTOPHER G. MICHEL, Assista:	nt to the
21	Solicitor General, Departm	ent of Justice,
22	Washington, D.C.; for the	United States,
23	as amicus curiae, in suppo	rt of the Petitioner
24	DAVID C. FREDERICK, ESQ., Wash	ington, D.C.;
25	on behalf of the Responden	t.

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7	For the United States,	
8	as amicus curiae, in support	
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:04 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear
4	argument first this morning in Case 18-389,
5	Parker Drilling Management Services versus
6	Newton.
7	Mr. Clement.
8	ORAL ARGUMENT OF PAUL D. CLEMENT
9	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
10	MR. CLEMENT: Mr. Chief Justice, and
11	may it please the Court:
12	California wage-and-hour law is
13	neither applicable on the Outer Continental
14	Shelf nor consistent with the federal Fair
15	Labor Standards Act. The Ninth Circuit's
16	contrary approach, which treats California as
17	supplying the rule of decision whenever
18	California law pertains to the subject matter
19	at hand and is not preempted by federal law, is
20	inconsistent with the text and context of the
21	the of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands
22	Act.
23	More particularly, by treating state
24	law as the default rule only and only to be
25	displaced by inconsistent federal law, the

- 1 Ninth Circuit effectively treats the Outer
- 2 Continental Shelf no differently from the
- 3 mainland, where California is sovereign, and
- 4 contradicts the most basic --
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Not -- not quite.
- 6 MR. CLEMENT: -- judgments --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Not quite. The
- 8 Secretary could override the state law, which
- 9 is not what generally happens in conflict
- 10 preemption. Federal law -- federal agents have
- 11 to enforce state law. There are substantial
- 12 differences built into the Act.
- 13 What I don't see is a clear statement
- 14 that says something like you want the word
- 15 "applicable" to mean, only if there's a gap or
- 16 a void.
- 17 MR. CLEMENT: Well, Justice Sotomayor,
- 18 I think some of the unusual characteristics
- 19 about state law when it's borrowed and then
- 20 sort of transformed into federal law on the
- 21 shelf actually, I think, help provide the
- 22 context that informs the meaning of the word
- 23 "applicable."
- I -- I don't think there's any real
- doubt here that "applicable" means suitable or

- appropriate or fit for a purpose. So then the question really becomes, when is it appropriate to have state law be transformed into federal

law for use on the shelf?

And I think --

4

- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But tell me why --
- 7 when it's not inconsistent. Meaning -- and
- 8 that's my problem. It's suitable only -- and
- 9 the language says, when it's inconsistent.
- 10 But, here, federal law clearly states that
- 11 state law can supplement federal law.
- 12 So where's the inconsistency?
- MR. CLEMENT: Well, to -- I want to
- 14 answer your question, Justice Sotomayor, but I
- 15 -- first, I do want to point out I view the
- 16 statute as really having two requirements, that
- 17 it has to be state law applies to the extent it
- is applicable and not inconsistent.
- Now, to talk to the non-inconsistent
- 20 piece, here, I think the inconsistency is
- 21 pretty glaring. In fact, the whole reason
- 22 we're here is because California has a very
- 23 different rule for addressing sleeping time on
- the employer's premises than the federal rule.
- 25 And the federal regulators looked at this and

- 1 they decided generally we're not going to have
- 2 sleeping time be treated as work hours, and
- 3 we're generally going to respect the agreements
- 4 of the employer and the employee.
- 5 California looked at that specifically
- 6 and said: Well, we like that rule for
- 7 healthcare workers and one or two others, but
- 8 not for most other workers. We reject the
- 9 federal analysis.
- Now, to me, that makes them pretty
- 11 glaringly inconsistent. Now my friends on the
- 12 other side, and I take the import of your
- 13 question, would say: Ah, but there's the
- 14 savings clause.
- Well, there's at least three problems
- 16 I see with the savings clause.
- 17 The first is the savings clause is not
- 18 even implicated by its terms unless state law
- 19 and federal law are inconsistent. If state law
- 20 and federal law are consistent, you don't need
- 21 the savings clause. You never get there. They
- 22 don't -- when the savings clause applies,
- 23 moreover, it doesn't make federal law and state
- law consistent. It basically tells the
- 25 employer which of two inconsistent laws they

- 1 need to follow, which I think is quite
- 2 different.
- 3 The second problem with the savings
- 4 clause is I think you can't divorce the savings
- 5 clause from the reason that it's in the FLSA
- 6 and most statutes, which is to respect the fact
- 7 that states are, and have been since the
- 8 framing, the primary regulators of employment
- 9 relationships and the like.
- 10 And so, when a state is applying its
- law in its sovereign territory, I would say
- it's understandable and laudable that the
- 13 federal government wants to say: Well, your
- 14 state law can apply if it's more demanding.
- 15 But that principle is completely out of place
- on the Outer Continental Shelf, where all law
- 17 is federal law.
- 18 We have a third reason, which I'm
- 19 happy to get out, which is Congress also knows
- 20 -- and we have some statutes collected at
- 21 Footnote 3 of the blue brief -- Congress
- 22 actually knows how to enact a -- call it a
- 23 super-savings clause or a savings clause that's
- 24 specific to federal enclaves. And with respect
- 25 to certain state laws, state unemployment

- 1 compensation laws, state workers' comp laws,
- 2 Congress has said we want the state law to
- 3 apply even on a federal enclave. But that's
- 4 not what it did with the Fair Labor Standards
- 5 Act.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mister --
- 7 MR. CLEMENT: The Fair Labor Standards
- 8 -- sorry.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Finish your sentence.
- 10 MR. CLEMENT: The Fair Labor Standards
- 11 Act is an ordinary savings clause which I think
- 12 accommodates federalism but wouldn't apply in
- 13 the -- a federal enclave.
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: After all that, I'm
- 15 going to take you back to the work -- word
- 16 "applicable." The language here is clearly not
- the clearest way of expressing what you want to
- 18 express, which is that state law applies when
- 19 there's a gap in federal law. So you rightly
- 20 say that we look to context as well.
- 21 And as far as I can see -- and tell me
- 22 if I'm wrong about this -- really, your main
- 23 argument from context is the statement about
- 24 enclaves, right, that these -- that this should
- 25 be treated the same way as federal enclaves

- 1 are, is that correct?
- 2 MR. CLEMENT: I would really say I
- 3 have two principal arguments. One of them is
- 4 the enclave point. But I think even before you
- 5 get there, I mean, the -- the fact that
- 6 1333(a)(2) converts the state law into federal
- 7 law to be applied by federal administrators
- 8 seems to tell me that something odd is going on
- 9 here.
- 10 And then particularly, if you read
- 11 that in conjunction with 1333(a)(1), which
- 12 extends the whole body of federal law to the
- shelf, the way I think about it, just to put it
- 14 simply, is even apart from federal enclave
- 15 principles, like why would you create surrogate
- 16 federal law, which is what 1333(a)(2) does,
- 17 unless you had a gap in the actual federal law
- that was extended to the shelf by 1333(a)(1)?
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, possibly because
- 20 you know that you want this to be administered
- 21 by federal agents, and if it's going to be
- administered by federal agents, it should be
- 23 federal law.
- So -- and let -- let's just go to the
- 25 enclaves business --

```
1
               MR. CLEMENT:
                             Sure.
 2
               JUSTICE KAGAN: -- because I think
 3
      that that's an important part of your argument,
      and -- and it's something on which people seem
 4
 5
      to disagree, and it seems as though it should
 6
      have a clear answer, but I'm honestly not
 7
      finding it.
 8
               So, as I understand Mr. Frederick's
 9
      position, he says that, apart from the ACA, the
      crimes act, that -- that, in fact, in federal
10
      enclaves, state civil law is applied. Do you
11
12
      think that that's wrong?
13
               MR. CLEMENT: We do think that's
14
      wrong, and, you know, I think fortunately for
15
      me, the federal government agrees with me and
16
      has agreed with me in an unbroken chain at
      least since about 1958, when they put together
17
18
      that exhaustive survey, which the Solicitor
      General cites, which is roughly contemporaneous
19
20
      with OCSLA, and the Justice Department was up
21
      there testifying in front of Congress.
22
               So I tend to think that I'm in pretty
23
      good company on my understanding of federal
24
      enclave law, but I do understand federal
25
      enclave law very -- very succinctly as this,
```

- 1 which is, when you have a new federal enclave,
- 2 you don't borrow state law as a general matter
- and you specifically don't borrow state law
- 4 when there's federal law on the same matters,
- 5 which I think is the language right from
- 6 McGlinn.
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: Even as to preexisting
- 8 state law?
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: Even as to preexisting
- 10 state law. And the reason I think that
- 11 makes --
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: And do -- how do we
- 13 know that? Where do -- where is that coming
- 14 from? Do we have cases that say that? Do we
- 15 -- is there some like federal manual that says
- 16 that? What -- what's --
- 17 MR. CLEMENT: So --
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: I feel as though
- 19 people -- this should be something with an
- answer, and all we have is sort of assertions
- 21 on both sides.
- MR. CLEMENT: So there's -- there's
- 23 three places I would look. I would look to
- 24 McGlinn. I would look to this comprehensive
- 25 federal survey. I mean, my goodness, it's like

- 1 200 pages long, and it comes to the same
- 2 collusion. And then the third place I would
- 3 look to is the Assimilated Crimes Act, because
- 4 I don't think the way to understand the
- 5 Assimilated Crimes Act, which, as to criminal
- 6 law, makes this point more specific, as being
- 7 something unique to criminal law.
- 8 It's really that the Congress in 1825
- 9 addressed criminal law because they had a
- 10 particular problem that they didn't have with
- 11 civil law, right? Which is the United States
- 12 v. Hudson case, which says you can't have
- 13 common law crimes.
- 14 So Congress was forced to act with
- 15 respect to criminal law, and when it acted,
- 16 what I'd say it did with the Assimilated Crimes
- 17 Act is it reflected the broader principle,
- which is it didn't say we're going to apply
- 19 federal criminal law and state -- rather,
- 20 borrow state criminal law even where we have an
- 21 on-point federal criminal statute. It said,
- 22 no, we're going to borrow it to fill the gaps.
- 23 And if you take a step back, I think
- 24 that is the basic problem that you have in a
- 25 newly created federal enclave, which is, you

- 1 know, the -- it's the same problem Congress had
- in enacting OCSLA, which is you -- you've made
- 3 it a federal enclave, so you're not anxious to
- 4 have a lot of state law applying there, but,
- 5 you know, the law, like nature, abhors a
- 6 vacuum, so you just don't want to have all
- 7 sorts of, whether it's a cow wandering on to
- 8 the railroad or whether it's people having a
- 9 bet and, you know, no contract law, you just
- don't want there to be a vacuum.
- 11 So you look --
- 12 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Are there -- are
- 13 there federal enclaves inside California?
- MR. CLEMENT: There are.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: And what is the
- 16 labor law regime there?
- 17 MR. CLEMENT: The -- the majority view
- 18 is that the Fair Labor Standard Acts -- Act
- does not apply to the federal enclaves when
- 20 they are within a state. My -- my friend has
- 21 found an unpublished opinion that applies a
- 22 different rule, but we found something like
- 23 four or five or six opinions that go the other
- 24 way.
- 25 So there is -- I think the majority

- 1 view is that even on land, the Fair Labor
- 2 Standards Act doesn't apply on a federal
- 3 enclave. You have one federal minimum wage.
- 4 And, again, I think that's -- that
- 5 that conclusion is probably buttressed by the
- 6 example of state worker's comp law and state
- 7 unemployment law, where you have specific
- 8 federal statutes collected in Footnote 3 in our
- 9 brief which make those laws applicable even on
- 10 a federal enclave.
- 11 So the law in California is that when
- 12 Congress is specific that a federal employment
- 13 statute applies to the enclave, it applies to
- 14 the enclave, but otherwise, one federal minimum
- 15 wage law is enough on the federal enclaves.
- 16 So --
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And it would be the
- 18 state law?
- 19 MR. CLEMENT: No, no. It would be the
- 20 federal law. One federal minimum wage is
- 21 enough on the federal enclaves. It's the one
- 22 provided by the FLSA.
- 23 So the higher California minimum wage
- law does not apply on the federal enclaves. I
- 25 mean, so I -- I think we have the much better

- 1 view of the federal enclave law.
- If you're a little nervous, though,
- 3 about making a definitive holding about federal
- 4 enclave law, I suppose you really can get to
- 5 the same conclusion just based on the structure
- of 1333 and the fact that (a)(1) extends the
- 7 whole body of actual federal law to the shelf,
- 8 and Congress even was clear that that meant the
- 9 Fair Labor Standards Act, and then, when you
- get to (a)(2), you don't needlessly take state
- 11 law and convert it into federal law to be
- 12 administered by federal officials.
- 13 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Can we -- can we go
- 14 back to something --
- MR. CLEMENT: Sure.
- 16 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- Justice
- 17 Sotomayor suggested, and I wonder if you agree
- 18 with it, that there's no problem because the
- 19 Secretary can knock out any state reg -- any
- 20 state law it doesn't -- doesn't want by
- 21 regulation.
- MR. CLEMENT: We -- we don't agree
- with that, Justice Ginsburg. So I appreciate
- 24 the opportunity to make that clear.
- 25 As we read -- the provision that --

- 1 that I think my friend on the other side is
- 2 relying on is 1334(a) of OCSLA, and that
- 3 provision as I read it gives the Secretary of
- 4 Interior the authority to promulgate
- 5 regulations addressing leasing or leases on the
- 6 Outer Continental Shelf.
- 7 Now I suppose, if I lost this case, I
- 8 might want to make an ambitious argument that
- 9 working conditions has something to do with
- 10 leases on the Outer Continental Shelf, but I
- 11 don't think that's the better argument, and I
- don't think it's as simple as the Secretary of
- 13 the Interior can trump anything he or she
- wants.
- I think that the regulatory authority
- is a little more modest under --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, but
- 18 isn't it that --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Is there anything
- 20 but leasing on the continental shelf?
- 21 MR. CLEMENT: I'm sorry?
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Is there anything
- 23 but leasing on the continental shelf? Nobody
- owns those operations. I thought they were
- 25 fairly heavily regulated by the Secretary

- 1 generally.
- 2 MR. CLEMENT: Sure, but -- but the
- 3 specific term says the leases, not leasing.
- 4 And, again, you know, I don't want to say that
- 5 I couldn't make an argument, but I -- I would
- 6 say based on the plain language of the
- 7 regulatory authority, I don't think the
- 8 Secretary of Interior has that authority, and I
- 9 think it would be a little weird, frankly, for
- 10 the Secretary of Interior to effectively have
- 11 to take action to vindicate the judgment of the
- wage-and-hour division regulators, who looked
- 13 at the specific issue of how to treat sleep
- 14 time and came to a considered conclusion that
- 15 sleep time, we don't want to make automatically
- 16 part of hours worked.
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: One -- one of the
- 18 difficulties I have here is, how do you define
- 19 void or gap? So let's talk about that, because
- you can always define it broadly or narrowly.
- 21 If there's a state law that says you
- 22 can't fire somebody for going to jury service
- for a state calling, not a federal, is that a
- void or gap that the federal law doesn't do
- 25 that?

1 MR. CLEMENT: I -- I -- I would 2 probably say in that situation that there's not 3 a gap in federal law because federal law 4 addresses the general subject of sort of 5 employment discrimination and the like. 6 I -- I actually think that -- I mean, 7 obviously, the jury service example's probably 8 uniquely unlikely to arise directly on the 9 Outer Continental Shelf and it also might be 10 the kind of thing --11 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Not quite. I 12 mean, people can be called. They're given X 13 number of extensions. And then they're told 14 show up. 15 MR. CLEMENT: Yeah. And so I --16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And you go to your employer and you say, out on the shelf: I got 17 18 to take a week because I've got to go serve. 19 MR. CLEMENT: And -- and -- well, and 20 so there's a --21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And to you, that's 22 not -- can you see the other side of that 23 argument? 24 MR. CLEMENT: I -- I can see the other 25 side of that argument and I can also see that

- 1 that --
- 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So that -- that --
- 3 that begs the question, which is, I know
- 4 conflict preemption and I know that some of my
- 5 colleagues don't like it, but at least there's
- 6 a well-defined body of law.
- 7 Under your views, we're back to now
- 8 defining a different kind of conflict
- 9 preemption, one that has to do with voids and
- 10 gaps.
- 11 MR. CLEMENT: Well, so, Justice
- 12 Sotomayor, a couple --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So why isn't a
- 14 statute of limitations or a failure to have one
- not a void? There is a federal common law. We
- don't like to use it, but we have a case that
- 17 said we're going to use Louisiana's statute of
- 18 limitations. That wasn't a void or gap, even
- 19 though we had federal law.
- 20 MR. CLEMENT: Well, specifically, in
- 21 that case, you were -- you were looking at the
- 22 question of whether you should borrow a statute
- 23 of limitations from federal common law. And it
- 24 seemed clear to this Court from the legislative
- 25 history that federal common law was not what

- 1 Congress wanted you to use for gap-filling.
- 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: How about the high
- 3 seas -- Death on the High Seas Act? That was
- 4 federal law.
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: That -- that's right.
- 6 And -- and this --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And we still
- 8 borrowed state law.
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: Exactly. Because this
- 10 Court found a gap, and I actually think that
- 11 Rodrigue, which is the case where you look to
- 12 state law borrowed through the lands act as
- 13 opposed --
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But we had federal
- 15 law that answered --
- 16 MR. CLEMENT: -- to the Death on the
- 17 High Seas Act --
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- but we had
- 19 federal law that answered the question.
- 20 MR. CLEMENT: Exactly. But it didn't
- 21 answer the question on the platforms. It only
- 22 answered the question on the seas. And this
- 23 Court said -- and this was, you know, as I
- 24 understand it, basically its holding, that, you
- 25 know, since there was sort of no federal law

- 1 that directly applied, there was a gap, and you
- 2 borrowed state law.
- 3 And I would only add before I sit down
- 4 that the Fifth Circuit, and really every court
- 5 that's wrestled with this question until the
- 6 Ninth Circuit in the decision below, has been
- 7 applying this Court's cases, which they
- 8 understood as applying this gap-filling
- 9 analysis, and none of them have had a real
- 10 problem with that.
- 11 And, certainly, I don't think any of
- 12 them would identify a gap here, where the Fair
- 13 Labor Standards Act comprehensively addresses
- 14 issues of overtime and the like.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Just on that, Mr.
- 16 Clement, and I apologize, but I think people
- 17 are a little bit overreading the Fifth Circuit
- 18 decision or let me just put out the possibility
- 19 that that's true.
- 20 The Fifth Circuit decision, when it
- 21 talks about these gaps, is really saying that
- there's a federal remedial scheme that covers a
- 23 problem and so that there's no need to look for
- 24 remedies anyplace else.
- 25 And that's a very different kind of

situation than the one we have here, isn't it? 1 2 MR. CLEMENT: No, I -- I think this is 3 exactly the same situation, which is you do 4 have a federal remedial regime that provides a 5 remedy for overwork, and you don't need to look 6 to state law to borrow a different regime that 7 you would then make a second and duplicative 8 and I think inconsistent federal minimum wage 9 statute. 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, 11 counsel. 12 MR. CLEMENT: Thank you. 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Michel. 14 ORAL ARGUMENT OF CHRISTOPHER G. MICHEL 15 FOR THE UNITED STATES, AS AMICUS CURIAE, IN SUPPORT OF THE PETITIONER 16 MR. MICHEL: Mr. Chief Justice, and 17 18 may it please the Court: 19 More than 70 years ago, in United 20 States versus California, this Court clarified 21 the federal government's paramount sovereignty 22 over the continental shelf. Congress 23 reinforced that interest throughout OCSLA, including its choice of law provision. 24

Now, unlike a typical choice of law

- 1 provision, Section 1333 of OCSLA does not
- direct a choice between two bodies of law.
- 3 Instead, it creates one body of law, a body of
- 4 federal law, and it adopts state law as "the
- 5 law of the United States" to the the extent it
- 6 is applicable and not inconsistent with other
- 7 federal law.
- 8 Now, as this Court and virtually every
- 9 other court has recognized for 50 years, those
- 10 words refer to gap-filling in federal law.
- 11 Respondent's position, by contrast, would
- 12 essentially replicate the position on mainland
- 13 California on the Outer Continental Shelf, with
- 14 the small exception that federal officials
- 15 would enforce the law, which we think is
- inconsistent with the text, the purpose, and
- 17 the history of -- of OCSLA.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How would
- 19 federal officials enforce the state law? Are
- 20 there sort of administrative responsibilities
- 21 with respect to the state employment law that
- the federal officials would have to undertake
- 23 or --
- 24 MR. MICHEL: That -- that is -- it's a
- 25 -- that is a big concern that -- that -- that

- 1 we have. You know, I think, if you look at
- 2 this case in particular, it's actually state
- 3 administrative law that's being construed by
- 4 the California Supreme Court, I think it's Wage
- 5 Order 16 that the Mendiola case is construing.
- 6 So you do have federal officials sort
- 7 of trying to interpret the -- the work
- 8 of state administrators, which is difficult.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But, I mean, I
- 10 -- are they filling out forms, are they
- 11 enforcing? I mean, I don't quite know what
- 12 you're talking about when you say federal
- officials will have to administer.
- I mean, it -- are they just simply
- 15 checking to make sure that they're being paid
- 16 whatever it is, \$12 or --
- 17 MR. MICHEL: I see, yeah. I mean, it
- 18 varies, obviously, depending on the regulation.
- 19 With something like this, you know, presumably,
- it's the -- it would be the Wage-and-Hour
- 21 Division of the Labor Department that ensures
- 22 compliance with minimum wage laws in the same
- 23 way that it does on the mainland, although, of
- 24 course, it would have to adopt all of this
- 25 state law where we already have a federal law.

- 1 And as we reproduce in the appendix to our
- 2 brief, you know, federal law, including Labor
- 3 Department regulations, address a lot of these
- 4 issues already.
- 5 And I do think, you know, if you sort
- 6 of picture page -- at page 8a of our -- our
- 7 brief, for example, we have the statute on the
- 8 minimum wage, which, at the bottom, says it's
- 9 \$7.25 an hour.
- 10 Given this unique choice of law
- 11 provision, what we're -- what Respondent is
- 12 essentially saying is that you should adopt
- another sub-provision that has a different
- 14 federal minimum wage. And I -- I do think it's
- just a very odd concept and one that has no
- 16 support in -- in the statute's history to say
- 17 we're going to have two federal minimum wages,
- where federal law has already answered this
- 19 question.
- 20 JUSTICE BREYER: The -- what -- one --
- 21 two questions, but one is minor. And if you
- 22 don't know, just say.
- What percentage, rough guess, of Outer
- 24 Continental Shelf activity takes place in the
- 25 Fifth Circuit? Is it more like -- that's one

- 1 question. And do you want -- if you have a
- 2 quick answer, I have another question.
- 3 MR. MICHEL: I have a pretty quick
- 4 answer. I think it's about 97 percent.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: Ninety-seven percent,
- 6 okay. Now my second question is this, that --
- 7 that has federal enclaves in mind. There are
- 8 dozens and dozens of federal regulatory
- 9 programs. They have to do with, you know,
- 10 safety, OSHA, NHTSA, drugs, you name it. And
- in those thousands and thousands of federal
- 12 regulations, there's quite a lot of room for
- 13 state activity, even in tort law. We've had
- 14 cases like that, the FDA.
- What's been the practice? That is to
- say, there is room in the sense that federal
- 17 law does not preempt the state law, but it does
- lay down rules that generally apply. All
- 19 right. In federal enclaves in general, can you
- 20 shed any light on whether, with those thousands
- of other statutes and regulations, there has
- 22 been a practice of just limiting it to
- 23 preemption, otherwise state law applies, or a
- 24 practice of looking for a gap?
- 25 MR. MICHEL: So I -- I think, to

- 1 start, there is a default federal enclave rule.
- 2 And I -- and I -- my friend is correct that you
- 3 can customize enclaves in different ways. But
- 4 the basic rule is pretty straightforward. On
- 5 the criminal side, since 1825, it's been the
- 6 Assimilated Crimes Act.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Yeah, yeah, but I'm
- 8 thinking of civil and I'm thinking of
- 9 regulatory.
- 10 MR. MICHEL: And -- and on the civil
- 11 side, the -- the law, at least since 1885 in
- this Court's decision in McGlinn, is that
- 13 federal law is exclusive in the enclave, with
- 14 the exception of preexisting state law that is
- not in conflict with and not inconsistent with
- 16 federal law.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: Oh, so I understand
- 18 you and Mr. Clement to have a little bit of a
- 19 gap there, because I understood Mr. Clement --
- 20 (Laughter.)
- 21 JUSTICE KAGAN: I understood
- 22 Mr. Clement to say that even as to preexisting
- 23 state law, that that did not apply of its own
- force as the default rule. And you're saying
- 25 preexisting civil, state law, does apply. Is

- 1 that correct?
- 2 MR. MICHEL: I -- I think that's --
- 3 that's the rule of McGlinn. In an onshore
- 4 enclave, of course, you know, the Court, as Mr.
- 5 Clement suggested, doesn't need to confront
- 6 that here because the one thing we know about
- 7 the Outer Continental Shelf is that there was
- 8 no preexisting state law. There was no --
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: Yeah, but we do have
- 10 to confront it, I think, because, after all, it
- 11 -- there is a lot of preexisting state law in
- 12 respect to many federal enclaves.
- And so, if the rule was no gap is
- 14 necessary, all we look to see is preemption,
- then there was a vast amount of non-preempted
- 16 state law that federal enclaves had to accept
- 17 as theirs, namely, all preexisting.
- 18 And so why would there be a different
- 19 rule where the statute is different and the
- 20 words don't require a gap -- they might -- why
- 21 would you want to have, though, a different
- rule for a subsequent state law? I mean, of
- 23 course, if it's preempted, it's out.
- MR. MICHEL: Yes.
- 25 JUSTICE BREYER: But I mean

- 1 non-preempted.
- 2 MR. MICHEL: Right. So, to be clear,
- 3 the -- preemption has never been the law on --
- 4 on federal enclaves. This preexisting -- the
- 5 preexisting law rule is borrowed from an
- 6 international law rule, as the Court explains
- 7 in McGlinn. There's some hint at this in Chief
- 8 Justice Marshall's opinion in the Canter case,
- 9 that American territorial courts had applied a
- 10 similar rule to the former territory when --
- 11 when the United States was there.
- 12 But the basic federal enclave rule
- does not accommodate preemption. I think a --
- 14 an illustrative example are the two cases the
- 15 Court issued on the same day in 1943, one in
- 16 the Pacific Dairy case and the other in the
- 17 Penn Dairy case. And the Pacific Dairy case
- 18 was at Moffett Field in --
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: My question is not
- 20 about preemption. My question is about
- 21 non-preempted state law. And to be very simple
- 22 about it, my question is, if all non-preempted
- 23 state law that was preexisting applied to
- federal enclaves, what practical reason would
- 25 there be for having a different rule where the

- 1 state law was passed subsequent to the
- 2 territory becoming a federal enclave?
- 3 MR. MICHEL: Yeah, I -- I think it
- 4 goes to -- to the core nature of a federal
- 5 enclave, Justice Breyer. When -- when the
- 6 United States takes exclusive jurisdiction,
- 7 that's the word that the -- that the
- 8 Constitution uses, it displaces federal -- it
- 9 displaces state authority.
- 10 The -- the preexisting rule is really
- 11 sort of an emergency measure to, as the Court
- 12 said in one of its cases, make sure that
- there's not an area that has an absolute law.
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could you address
- 15 the -- the Secretary of the Interior's -- the
- 16 extent of the power as you see it? Do you
- 17 agree with Mr. Waxman that it's limited to just
- 18 leasing or leases, or do you think it's a
- 19 broader power?
- 20 MR. MICHEL: I think it's a little
- 21 broader, but I'm relying on the same provision
- that my friend did, which is 1334(a). It's the
- 23 next provision in the statute, and it provides
- 24 regulatory authority over leasing, and it goes
- on to say also for -- to provide for the

- 1 prevention of waste and conservation of natural
- 2 resources and the protective -- protection of
- 3 correlative rights.
- 4 So that -- that we do think is broad
- 5 authority, but I -- I do think it would be hard
- 6 to get to wage-and-hour law from there. It is
- 7 -- it is not -- although there was some
- 8 versions of the statute that initially gave the
- 9 Interior secretary sort of general preemptive
- 10 authority over the entire OCS, that's not the
- 11 statute that Congress ultimately adopted, and
- 12 so we don't think -- although, of course, we
- don't think you need to get to the Interior
- secretary's authority here, but we don't think
- 15 the Interior secretary could preempt a
- 16 wage-and-hour law at the end of the day. As my
- 17 friend suggested, that -- it would be within
- 18 the Labor Department; it wouldn't be within the
- 19 Interior secretary's authority under -- under
- 20 OCSLA or under its organic statutes.
- 21 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Michel, if -- if
- 22 you are right, what work is the word
- "inconsistent" doing? In other words, how can
- 24 a state law be inconsistent with federal law if
- 25 there's a total void in federal law?

- 1 MR. MICHEL: So I -- I agree with you
- 2 that, you know, the -- the -- the two words
- 3 shed a lot of light on each other, and -- and
- 4 there may not be a huge gap, so to speak,
- 5 between them, but I do think there are some
- 6 examples. We cite some in our briefs.
- 7 Another example that I think has come
- 8 up in this Court's enclave cases is the general
- 9 principle that when the federal government
- 10 takes an enclave, state law, whatever else it
- 11 does, cannot interfere with the federal
- government's use of the enclave for the purpose
- 13 of the enclave.
- So, even if there was some gap in
- 15 federal law and the state came along with a law
- that would, say, make it impossible or, not
- 17 even that bad, interfere with the government's
- 18 use of an enclave for a military base or a
- 19 national park or something like that, even in
- 20 the absence of federal -- of a -- of an
- 21 on-point federal law, that -- it would still be
- 22 inconsistent.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I guess I'm having a
- 24 little bit of a hard time -- sorry.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Go ahead.

JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, just 1 2 understanding that example and the ones in your 3 brief. Are you saying that even if it's 4 inconsistent with a federal law, it can be inconsistent with sort of broad-scale federal 5 6 policy and that that's what the statute is 7 looking towards? 8 MR. MICHEL: I think it's both. 9 Federal law is the most obvious example, but 10 the cases have also referred to federal policy. So inconsistency with either, we think, would 11 be a reason not to assimilate the statute. 12 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, 14 counsel. 15 Mr. Frederick. ORAL ARGUMENT OF DAVID C. FREDERICK 16 17 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT 18 MR. FREDERICK: Thank you, Mr. Chief 19 Justice, and may it please the Court: 20 Our position is that the plain 21 language of OCSLA and the Fair Labor Standards Act control this case and that the Ninth 22 23 Circuit was correct in determining that the 24 California Labor Code provisions at issue here 25 are both applicable and not inconsistent with

- 1 federal law. OCSLA, therefore, incorporates
- 2 them as federal law.
- 3 I'd like to --
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: How -- how close
- 5 does your position come to the one thing we
- 6 know Congress rejected; that is, direct
- 7 application of state law? Instead, state law
- 8 is incorporated as federal law. It's
- 9 administered by federal officials.
- 10 MR. FREDERICK: Yes. We -- we do know
- 11 that OCSLA, however, was a compromise, and the
- 12 compromise was between having state control
- over the law of the Outer Continental Shelf and
- 14 federal law, but federal law did not encompass
- 15 all of the legal relationships and matters that
- 16 concern human endeavors.
- 17 And that's why what Congress did was
- 18 to incorporate state law as federal law, with
- 19 federal law having supremacy and the Secretary
- 20 having the authority to issue the appropriate
- 21 regulations.
- 22 And if I could just start there, the
- 23 first sentence of Section 1334(a), in answer to
- 24 your question, Justice Sotomayor, reads as
- 25 follows: "The Secretary shall ... prescribe

- 1 such rules and regulations as may be necessary
- 2 to carry out such provisions."
- 3
 I'm astonished that the other side
- 4 thinks that that language isn't broad enough to
- 5 displace any state rule that gets in the way of
- 6 what the federal government deems to be
- 7 necessary.
- 8 We know through practice that the EPA
- 9 is regulating Outer Continental Shelf air
- 10 emissions that are prescribed by California,
- and it is doing so pursuant to a memorandum of
- 12 understanding.
- There are memorandum of understanding
- 14 between the Secretary of Interior and the Coast
- 15 Guard and the EPA and the National Park Service
- 16 and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
- 17 Administration that concern the
- interrelationships of how law enforcement
- 19 occurs with state law as the substance of what
- 20 is being enforced.
- 21 That happens every day in the National
- 22 Park Service, where national park rangers are
- 23 enforcing hunting and fishing rules that are
- 24 prescribed by states.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Which -- which

- 1 federal agency has Congress given preemptive
- 2 authority with respect to the Outer Continental
- 3 Shelf?
- 4 MR. FREDERICK: The Interior
- 5 Department.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So, even on a
- 7 question of labor law, the Interior Department
- 8 could issue regulations that of their own force
- 9 would preempt the California rules?
- 10 MR. FREDERICK: Yes, yes. And that's
- 11 what 1334(a) stands for. And it is why in the
- way this is implemented the Interior Department
- 13 has these memorandum of understanding with
- 14 states and with other federal agencies in order
- to determine which laws are going to be
- 16 applicable.
- Now, notably, this gap-filling notion
- on the other side is expressly written into two
- 19 statutes that we cite in our brief: the
- 20 Assimilative Crimes Act and the Civil Rights
- 21 Attorney's Fees Awards Act.
- 22 But Congress didn't choose to use
- those words in the OCSLA. Instead, what
- 24 Congress did was to say that applicable and not
- inconsistent state law would be applied.

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1
               JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: How -- how is a --
 2
               CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: On the
 3
      consistence -- on the consistency point, I
 4
      understand what -- I understand it to be our
 5
      basic rule in preemption analysis that
 6
      something like this would generally not be
      inconsistent. If the federal minimum wage is 7
 7
 8
      and the California is 12, you can comply with
 9
     both by paying 12.
10
               But, here, what's distinctive is that
      it's not a disagreement between federal and
11
      state law. This is -- both are federal law
12
13
      under operation of OCSLA.
14
               So, if you ask the question, what is
15
      the federal minimum wage, it is inconsistent,
     because, in one case, you would say: Well,
16
      it's $7 under the federal FLSA, but it's also
17
      -- but it's $12 under the federal law that's
18
19
      incorporated from California.
               So doesn't that make a difference in
20
21
      how you apply the inconsistency point?
22
               MR. FREDERICK: No. You decided --
23
               CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought you
24
     might say that.
25
               (Laughter.)
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MR. FREDERICK: Well, and let me refer 1 2 you to one of your cases, Your Honor. It's the 3 Powell case, and in that case, the Court had 4 before it an application of the Fair Labor 5 Standards Act minimum wage and a minimum --6 minimum wage that was set higher by virtue of 7 another federal statute that applied to certain 8 federal operations. And this Court held in 9 Powell that the higher standard applied, and it 10 did so by looking at the plain language of the savings clause. 11 12 And if I can refer you to page 9(a) --CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But was that a 13 14 consistency analysis that -- of the sort that 15 you would apply in -- it couldn't have been 16 under the normal preemption cases, because it's two different sources of federal law, whether 17 18 -- rather than federal or state. 19 MR. FREDERICK: No, but let me refer 20 you to the savings clause plain language, 21 because, again, I think that the statute operates in our favor. At 9(a) of the gray 22 23 brief, the government has set forth the 24 language, and let me read it: "No provision of 25 this chapter or any order thereunder shall

- 1 excuse non-compliance with any federal or state
- 2 law or municipal ordinance establishing a
- 3 minimum wage higher than the minimum wage
- 4 established under this chapter or maximum work
- 5 week."
- 6 And so the way the savings clause
- 7 works in the federal, comparing federal law, if
- 8 there's a higher federal law, the savings
- 9 clause says apply the higher federal law. If
- 10 there's a higher municipal ordinance or a
- 11 higher state law, you apply the higher one.
- 12 That's what the savings clause provides.
- 13 And what the other side wants to do is
- 14 to take one part of the Fair Labor Standards
- 15 Act, the part that says \$7.25 an hour, and
- ignore the words that come right before that,
- 17 which read "not less than."
- 18 And so --
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: But how does that
- 20 apply to this particular case?
- 21 MR. FREDERICK: It applies to this
- 22 particular case because California has issued
- 23 wage orders that provide for more generous
- 24 minimum wage per hour standards, as well as
- definition of what a work week is and the per

- 1 hour --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, I thought the
- 3 dispute was about the definition of a work
- 4 week.
- 5 MR. FREDERICK: It is in part a
- 6 dispute about the definition of a work week and
- 7 in part a definition of whether or not certain
- 8 things that are done within that work week,
- 9 time spent, for instance, meal allowances, how
- 10 sleep time is calculated, et cetera, are within
- 11 the word -- within the limit.
- 12 And so, to that extent, Your Honor,
- 13 what we have in the Fair Labor Standards Act
- 14 are some provisions that do speak to the
- 15 question with the savings clause and some that
- do not speak at all. For instance, the Labor
- 17 Department doesn't speak to issues of mealtime
- 18 allowances and how pay stubs are to be done to
- 19 inform workers.
- 20 And what the Department of Labor has
- 21 said in its regulatory guidance -- and we set
- this out, I think it's at page 8 of our brief
- 23 -- is that where there is silence in the FLSA,
- 24 a higher or more generous standard by the state
- 25 shall prevail.

Т	And our position is that what Congress		
2	intended in OCSLA to do was to incorporate		
3	those as applicable and not inconsistent		
4	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: If your		
5	MR. FREDERICK: with the standards		
6	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Frederick, on		
7	the savings clause, I thought the savings		
8	clause was meant to allow a state to apply its		
9	own more protective regime in a domain over		
10	which the state is sovereign, but a state is		
11	not sovereign over the Intercontinental Shelf.		
12	MR. FREDERICK: That's correct, but		
13	what in in the same way, Your Honor, that		
14	in Powell, this Court determined that one		
15	federal statute provided for a higher minimum		
16	wage than what the FLSA did, we're not arguing		
17	which sovereign gets to determine the rules.		
18	What we're saying is the content of		
19	those rules varies depending on the source.		
20	And, here, the source just because the		
21	source of that happens to be California law		
22	doesn't affect things.		
23	You asked earlier about enclaves in		
24	California, and let me give you a different		
25	answer than the one my colleagues on the other		

- 1 side gave.
- 2 There is a district court decision
- 3 called Korndobler which we cite in our brief
- 4 and we discuss. That's a case in which the
- 5 district court was looking at whether the Fair
- 6 Labor Standards Act provisions for minimum wage
- 7 predated the creation of Sequoia National Park.
- 8 And the Court did a very extensive
- 9 analysis to determine that, in fact,
- 10 California, as of 1913, had established a
- 11 minimum wage rule. And it applied this Court's
- 12 decisions -- and I'll talk about those in just
- 13 a second -- to say that, in fact, the
- 14 preexisting state law of minimum wage was
- 15 bought into the Sequoia National Park when
- 16 Congress created that as a federal enclave.
- 17 And so I do think that the other side
- 18 is not consistent with each other as to what
- 19 the standards are. And let me talk about this
- 20 --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: That just --
- 22 before -- that's an awful lot of weight to
- 23 place on one unpublished district court
- 24 decision.
- MR. FREDERICK: Well, it was

- 1 answering -- and the reason why the three cases
- 2 that he cites are not apposite is because,
- 3 there, the state law came into existence after
- 4 the creation of the federal enclave. So the
- only case that's on point agrees with us.
- 6 And let me talk about the two cases
- 7 from this Court that actually give the
- 8 standards. Justice Kagan, you were talking and
- 9 asking about the standards. And there are two
- of them.
- 11 One of them is called James Stewart,
- 12 and the other is called Paul. In the James
- 13 Stewart case, what this Court did was it took a
- 14 personal injury that occurred in a federal
- 15 enclave in New York, where, because there were
- 16 no -- because there -- it adopted the general
- 17 enclave principles, it incorporated state
- 18 standards with respect to what steel beams
- 19 needed to be used in construction.
- There, the worker was injured because
- of a violation of the state standard. And what
- 22 this Court held was that that state standard
- 23 had been incorporated into the federal enclave
- law and, therefore, was the law of the United
- 25 States, I think was the phrase this Court used.

1 So it was incorporated federal law, 2 even though the source of the standard and the 3 substance of the standard derived from state 4 And that all happened prior to -- as the 5 federal enclave was being created. 6 Similarly, in this Court's decision in 7 Paul versus United States, which was an early 8 '60s decision, there, the Court applied exactly 9 the same notion, which is that preexisting state law came into the law of the enclave and 10 it was incorporated federal law to be applied 11 12 as federal law. 13 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Mr. Frederick, can I 14 take you back to a -- a question I think Justice Alito was pursuing a moment ago? And I 15 16 understand one of the important parts of your case is the definition of the work week and 17 18 whether stand-by hours should be incorporated. 19 California's treatment of them is subject to 20 the minimum wage requirement. 21 But the savings -- the savings clause, 22 at least as I understand it, and you can 23 correct me if I'm wrong, while it preserves the ability of states to raise the minimum wage, it 24 doesn't allow them to define the work week 25

- 1 differently than federal law does.
- 2 So how do we deal with that? Why
- 3 isn't your client's claim at least inconsistent
- 4 with federal law to that extent?
- 5 MR. FREDERICK: Well, what the -- as
- 6 the Seventh Circuit has held in terms of
- 7 determining what is a minimum wage, you have to
- 8 look at both the pay rate and what you're
- 9 multiplying that pay rate by, which is what
- 10 constitutes a working hour.
- 11 And a working hour is what we're
- dealing with when we deal with situations like
- is the worker under the control of the
- employer, subject to the employer's call-back
- or emergency call, et cetera. And so the issue
- 16 about the work week constitutes how you define
- 17 what is a working hour.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Do you agree that
- 19 federal law and state law differ in how they
- 20 define that?
- 21 MR. FREDERICK: I -- they do differ,
- 22 except insofar as what the Labor Department has
- 23 determined is not a difference in work week.
- Just so we're clear about that, the 40 hours
- 25 applies and the federal standard applies.

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1
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right. But how
 2
     we --
 3
               MR. FREDERICK: But what constitutes a
 4
      compensable hour?
 5
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yeah.
 6
               MR. FREDERICK: And it's that hour and
 7
     what the Department of Labor's regulations say
 8
      is that there is a multi-factor test for
 9
     determining when a worker is under the control
10
      of the employer.
11
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- I understand
12
      that.
13
              MR. FREDERICK: Yes.
14
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: But I quess my
15
      question is still don't federal -- federal law
      and its definition is different than --
16
17
               MR. FREDERICK: I don't --
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               JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- state law? Is
19
      that -- is that not right?
               MR. FREDERICK: I -- I -- I --
20
21
      well, I would say two things about it, Justice
22
     Gorsuch. One is that the Labor Department's
23
      regulations give room for states to define what
24
      is a compensable hour. We're not talking about
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any difference in 40. We -- we all agree 40 is

- 1 the --
- 2 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- we're on the
- 3 same page, right?
- 4 MR. FREDERICK: Yeah, yeah.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: We are.
- 6 MR. FREDERICK: Yeah, but -- but the
- 7 issue is what constitutes a compensable hour.
- 8 That actually is a fact question with --
- 9 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- I understand
- 10 that, but we have a federal law standard and we
- 11 have a state law standard and they're
- 12 different, arguably.
- MR. FREDERICK: Yes.
- 14 JUSTICE GORSUCH: And the savings
- 15 clause doesn't speak to this particular issue,
- 16 right? It speaks to what you multiply that by,
- 17 \$12 or 7, whatever.
- 18 MR. FREDERICK: Right.
- 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: It doesn't deal with
- 20 this issue. So the savings clause can't help
- 21 you with respect to this issue, it seems to me.
- 22 MR. FREDERICK: It --
- 23 JUSTICE GORSUCH: What -- what do we
- 24 do about that?
- MR. FREDERICK: Well, what the Labor

- 1 Department has done is issued regulations and
- 2 guidance where there is silence in the FLSA,
- and what it says is where there's silence, you
- 4 incorporate or you deal with the state law and
- 5 how the state law applies.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Frederick, I
- 7 have --
- 8 MR. FREDERICK: And we've got those
- 9 regulations in our brief.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- I have poor
- 11 memory on this issue, but didn't the court
- 12 below remand to see whether there were actual
- inconsistencies with certain of your claims?
- MR. FREDERICK: Yes.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Number one, which
- were they? And, secondly, how do you deal with
- 17 Mr. Clement's point that your view basically
- 18 makes this identical to normal state conflict
- 19 preemption? What differences do you see in the
- 20 two?
- MR. FREDERICK: Okay. Let me take the
- 22 first one first.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Why would your
- reading still result in a difference between
- 25 normal -- the normal conflict preemption

- 1 situation?
- 2 MR. FREDERICK: Well, let me start
- 3 with the second one first then. In this
- 4 Court's decision in Guerra, the Court construed
- 5 the words "not inconsistent with" and it said
- 6 that they had the same content as normal
- 7 conflict preemption. Is there a difference
- 8 that would make it akin to conflict preemption?
- 9 And that was a statutory interpretation case.
- 10 Our position is that the most coherent
- 11 way to understand the words "not inconsistent
- 12 with" is to apply the same standards that you
- have in the preemption canon, where you look
- 14 at, is it impossible to comply? Does it stand
- as an obstacle? And -- and the like.
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: But that means that
- 17 California then extends 200 miles out to sea.
- MR. FREDERICK: So --
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: And Congress could
- 20 have just said that and said California extends
- 21 200 miles out to sea; however, within this part
- of California, federal officials will enforce
- 23 the law.
- 24 MR. FREDERICK: So, remember, Justice
- 25 Alito, that our client's shift begins and ends

- 1 in California onshore in the uplands. The
- 2 first two to three hours of every one of his
- 3 shifts is exclusively within California, when
- 4 he gets briefed for safety, when he gets the
- 5 bus down to the port to take the -- the vessel
- 6 out to the rig, and --
- 7 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: But I -- I don't
- 8 think --
- 9 MR. FREDERICK: -- and so --
- 10 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- respectfully,
- 11 that's responsive to the question, which is, if
- 12 -- if your position were correct, then ordinary
- 13 preemption principles would apply and this -- a
- 14 lot of this language would seem pointless.
- MR. FREDERICK: Well, let me try to
- 16 wrap it together in this way, Justice
- 17 Kavanaugh, which is that if you're looking at
- the substance of the law, looking at whether
- there's conflict and inconsistency, the
- 20 preemption cases give you an intellectual way
- 21 to understand the substance of that.
- 22 I'm not here to argue that California
- 23 controls the outcome. The federal government
- 24 does. And the Secretary has the authority to
- 25 issue regulations if the Secretary perceives

- there to be a difference that would matter in
- 2 the context of the Outer Continental Shelf.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Is -- is that what you
- 4 think the principal difference is? Because I
- 5 have the same concern here. This is an awful
- 6 lot of stuff to go through if all that Congress
- 7 wanted to do was to essentially set up the
- 8 regime that applies everywhere else, and
- 9 especially in light of the fact that Congress
- 10 seemed to have rejected a -- a -- a draft
- 11 statute that said exactly that.
- 12 So -- so -- so what is the difference
- as you see it between this statute and -- and
- one that would just say, you know, here on the
- Outer Continental Shelf, just as in California,
- 16 preemption principles apply?
- 17 MR. FREDERICK: Well, number one, who
- decides? That's a big difference in terms of
- 19 what regulatory power is given to displace a
- 20 state standard.
- Number two, you have a decision, and
- 22 you talk about the compromise, but let me give
- you the other part of the compromise, which was
- that it was advocated to have federal admiralty
- law apply to the Outer Continental Shelf, and

- 1 the Court -- Congress said no. And where they
- 2 came in the middle was to create OCSLA, where
- 3 they incorporated these state standards, as
- 4 federal law, to be implemented in that manner.
- 5 But please keep in mind that the
- 6 development of the Outer Continental Shelf
- 7 encompasses relationships with the state. And
- 8 that's why this Court in Huson said that the
- 9 special relationship between the adjacent state
- 10 to the oil rig is important.
- 11 Why? Because that's where the worker
- is coming from. That's where his lawyer can be
- 13 expected to understand what the applicable
- 14 standards are. That's why, if something
- happens to him, he's going to know where to
- 16 look for a legal redress. And there are many
- oil rigs within the three-mile limit.
- 18 And as this Court held in Valladolid,
- 19 there is overlapping coverage between state
- 20 workers' compensation and the Longshore/Harbor
- 21 Workers' Compensation Act, and it discussed a
- 22 case called Herb's Welding, which says that
- 23 within the three-mile limit, state law controls
- 24 completely.
- 25 And so what we're talking about is a

- 1 very fluid situation, if you will, between
- 2 workers who might go to a rig within the
- 3 three-mile limit and be governed exclusively by
- 4 state law one shift, come back onshore, then go
- 5 back out to a shift that would be on the Outer
- 6 Continental Shelf.
- 7 And the question is, what legal regime
- 8 is going to cover those people? And it's quite
- 9 -- quite sensible why Congress would have said,
- 10 substantively, we think that the state law
- ought to apply, but, to the extent that the
- 12 Secretary of Interior perceives there to be
- inconsistencies with the federal standard,
- we're going to give the Secretary the
- authority, regulatory authority, to displace
- 16 that standard.
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: That makes sense. A
- difficult argument, both sides, and what's
- 19 gnawing at me is the word "applicable," and the
- 20 Fifth Circuit has for 50 years interpreted it
- 21 to require a gap. And you heard the answer
- they gave to the question I asked, which was
- that 97 percent of those involved in this are
- 24 in the Fifth Circuit.
- 25 So I'm slightly worried.

1 MR. FREDERICK: Yes. 2 JUSTICE BREYER: I don't know if it's 3 determinative, but I'm slightly worried about 4 overturning a set of court of appeals decisions 5 under which industry and labor and everyone 6 have worked, 97 percent of them, for 50 years. 7 MR. FREDERICK: Let me --8 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Now 9 what --10 MR. FREDERICK: Yeah. JUSTICE BREYER: I do want to hear 11 12 what you have to say. 13 MR. FREDERICK: I -- I do, and I have 14 a number of things to say, Justice Breyer, and 15 I appreciate you raising this so that I can 16 address them orally. 17 First, the Fifth Circuit decided that 18 gap standard in a case called Continental Oil, 19 which was a classic maritime law case. There, 20 the vessel went and it collided into the 21 offshore rig. And the court was faced with the 22 question, what law applies? 23 And what the Court said was maritime 24 law applies, because there's no gap there. You

know what happens with a marine casualty

- 1 situation. The admiralty law will govern that
- 2 situation.
- The same judge, Judge John R. Brown,
- 4 who is one of the most distinguished admiralty
- 5 law judges ever to serve in this Court, decided
- 6 a case about 20 years -- or not in this Court,
- 7 in the courts -- 20 years later decided a case
- 8 called PLT.
- 9 Now, if you want to look at what
- 10 reliance interests are, you should look at that
- 11 case, not the Continental Oil case, because, in
- 12 PLT, Judge Brown's decision for the Fifth
- 13 Circuit did not use gap-filling. Rather, he
- 14 used a standard that is very much like what the
- 15 Ninth Circuit did in this case.
- Moreover, the standards that you would
- 17 be worried about applying here are not likely
- 18 to arise in the Fifth Circuit cases because
- 19 state law has already made an affirmative
- 20 determination not to apply their state laws to
- 21 the Outer Continental Shelf.
- 22 Both Louisiana and Texas have, by
- 23 statute, determined that their worker's
- 24 compensation is not going to apply to the Outer
- 25 Continental Shelf. And their state labor laws

- will not apply to the Outer Continental Shelf.
- 2 So, to the extent that you perceive
- 3 there to be a problem that would be unique in
- 4 correcting the law in the Fifth Circuit, I
- 5 don't think you have to have a similar type of
- 6 worry as the kind of case that we have here,
- 7 because neither Texas nor Louisiana have
- 8 comparable state laws that seek to go above the
- 9 federal floor in the FLSA.
- Now the word "applicable" I do think
- 11 has meaning, and the other side fluctuates
- between it being surplusage or irrelevant or
- 13 whatever, but I do want to point out that it's
- 14 not just applicable state law that the federal
- 15 -- that the Secretary is administering, it's
- 16 also applicable federal law.
- So, if the word "applicable" really
- does mean gap-filling, you strain to wonder how
- 19 is it that the Secretary is supposed to
- 20 determine what applicable law is if you give it
- 21 an authoritative construction that the word
- 22 "applicable" means gap-filling, because then
- 23 you have a complete contradiction and you have
- 24 read the statute in a -- a very bizarre way,
- 25 because, ordinarily, what the Secretary is

- doing is reading the word "applicable" federal
- 2 law to decide does the Clean Air Act apply.
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Why -- why doesn't
- 4 "not inconsistent with" suggest gap-filling in
- 5 this context, in this statute?
- 6 MR. FREDERICK: Well, for the reason
- 7 that this Court in Powell explained why and
- 8 also why this Court in Guerra explained why.
- 9 "Not inconsistent with" in its ordinary
- 10 parlance would mean not incompatible with.
- 11 And "incompatible" is a word that is
- 12 stronger than simply the creation of a void or
- 13 a gap. You would look at whether there is a
- 14 conflict or inconsistency.
- So if you're looking at the words as
- 16 --
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, I would say
- in ordinary parlance, two different
- 19 requirements are not consistent with one
- another.
- 21 MR. FREDERICK: Well, you look at
- 22 whether or not the two requirements that may be
- 23 different can be accommodated to each other.
- 24 And that's why in --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: That sounds like

- 1 impossibility.
- 2 MR. FREDERICK: No, in -- in Guerra,
- 3 the Court looked at the application of
- 4 California's standards regarding pregnancy
- 5 relief and discrimination and the federal
- 6 standard for pregnancy and it determined that
- 7 they were different, but the fact that the
- 8 California standard was more protective meant
- 9 that it was not inconsistent with what the
- 10 federal law was.
- 11 And so, for that reason, I think that
- 12 case is the most closely on point to the actual
- words that we have to work with here. And so,
- 14 rather than sort of conjure up some concepts
- 15 that are not appropriate, as the other side is
- trying to weave, I think if you just read the
- 17 statutes here, the statutes by their plain
- 18 language give you the answer. We know --
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, if I think that
- 20 not inconsistent is -- is consistent -- is --
- 21 can be interpreted either the way you interpret
- it or the way Mr. Clement interprets it, where
- 23 do I go from there?
- MR. FREDERICK: Well, Mr. Clement
- doesn't give a definition in his opening brief.

1 JUSTICE ALITO: All right. Well, let 2 me amend --3 MR. FREDERICK: In his open -- in his 4 closing brief --5 JUSTICE ALITO: Then I'll amend the 6 question. So, if I think that "not inconsistent" can mean in conflict with, 7 8 irreconcilable, but also simply different in an 9 important way, where do I go from there? MR. FREDERICK: Well, I think then you 10 11 look at the source of the law that's supposedly 12 different. And, here, where I think that the statute is best understood is that the word 13 14 "applicable" focuses on the state law and the 15 phrase "not inconsistent with" focuses on the federal law. And if --16 17 JUSTICE ALITO: I don't know what you 18 can get out of "applicable." Is it -- can --19 can you conceive a situation in which somebody 20 is directed to apply law that is inapplicable? MR. FREDERICK: Well, the -- the best 21 22 example that I could give, California in its 23 public resources code has quite extensive rules concerning drilling and mining on land. 24 And one could well conclude that the 25

- 1 word "applicable" could be used to say those 2 standards don't apply to the marine environment 3 of drilling offshore. And so that would be an 4 area of law that, if you looked at it, you 5 might say those mining and drilling 6 requirements would seem to be applicable. 7 And then, if you thought a little 8 harder about it and said: You know, actually, 9 it's quite a different environment and quite a different situation, you might say that, in 10 fact, they are not applicable. 11 12 And I think that the -- the way you would judge the interplay of those standards 13 14 through the "non-inconsistent with" is that if you then go to the text of the Fair Labor 15
- 16 Standards Act and when it invites higher
- 17 standards to be created by not just other state
- 18 statutes or federal statutes but municipal
- ordinances, you are seeing Congress's pointer
- 20 that we are not going to view these labor
- 21 standards as something that's going to create
- 22 the sort of conflicts or differences that would
- 23 give rise, Justice Alito --
- 24 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: But, if -- if
- 25 there are --

1 MR. FREDERICK: -- to the concern that 2 you're expressing. JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: -- to pick up on 3 4 Justice Alito's question, if there are two 5 different ways one could imagine interpreting 6 "not inconsistent with," why isn't the better 7 answer to look at the overall context here, 8 which, as Justice Kagan said, the overall 9 context is a clear preference, a clear 10 congressional choice to make federal law the primary, and so that you would choose the 11 12 interpretation of "not inconsistent with" that 13 says different from? 14 So what -- what's your response to 15 that? MR. FREDERICK: Well, I think that 16 17 this Court's cases have said otherwise, in both Powell and Guerra. I think the statute says 18 19 otherwise. 20 And I think that, ultimately, the trump card here is 1334(a), which says that the 21 22 Secretary shall have the power to prescribe 23 regulations. The fact that the Secretary here 2.4 has chosen not to issue rules that would

displace California's more-generous-to-worker

- 1 provisions, I think, is indicative.
- 2 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: And you think the
- 3 Secretary clearly has that authority under that
- 4 language?
- 5 MR. FREDERICK: That's -- under a
- 6 plain reading of the statute, Justice
- 7 Kavanaugh, the Secretary does have that. And
- 8 that's why I was quite surprised to hear the
- 9 other side disclaim a regulatory authority that
- is written in such plain English.
- I would like to point out one other
- thing, which is that because, in the state's
- 13 territorial limits, we know that state law is
- going to apply, what the other side's provision
- does is to create a condition for the kind of
- 16 labor disharmony that Congress surely was
- 17 trying to legislate against.
- 18 That labor disharmony would arise
- 19 whenever a crew is assigned to an onshore or
- 20 within state territorial waters rig, as opposed
- 21 to one that goes out on the Outer Continental
- 22 Shelf, because the worker who's assigned
- in-state knows he is going to get the benefit
- of the California State rules and he's going to
- 25 get the benefit of state worker's compensation,

- 1 whereas the worker who's assigned to a crew to
- 2 go with the Outer Continental Shelf under their
- 3 version is going to be given lower protections
- 4 and lower wages.
- 5 And so, because Congress in what --
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Do you know what
- 7 happens now with worker's comp?
- 8 MR. FREDERICK: Yes.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: What -- what
- 10 happens on the Outer Shelf with worker's comp?
- 11 Because there's no FLSA rules related to that.
- MR. FREDERICK: Yes.
- 13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So how does it
- 14 happen?
- MR. FREDERICK: In Valladolid, what
- this Court considered was the overlap between
- 17 state worker's comp and the Longshore/Harbor
- 18 Workers' Compensation Act as it was
- 19 incorporated.
- The solicitor general at the oral
- 21 argument -- and I invite you to look at the
- 22 transcript -- said: Both state worker's
- compensation law and Longshore/Harbor apply and
- the worker can get the benefit of whichever one
- is more generous. And that's why there is an

- 1 offset provision in 903(e) of the
- 2 Longshore/Harbor Workers' Compensation Act.
- 3 Thank you, Your Honor.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 5 counsel.
- 6 Mr. Clement, you have three minutes
- 7 remaining.
- 8 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF PAUL D. CLEMENT
- 9 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- 10 MR. CLEMENT: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 11 Justice. Just a few points in -- in rebuttal.
- 12 First of all, my friend wants to draw
- something from the fact there are no on-point
- 14 regulations here addressing this by the
- 15 Secretary of the Interior.
- 16 Well, the obvious two reasons why
- there are no regulations is that the United
- 18 States Government agrees with us on the
- interpretation of the statute, and agrees with
- 20 us and is doubtful on its authority to
- 21 promulgate those regulations.
- 22 As to the specific issue of workmen's
- 23 comp, the reason that that can be -- state law
- 24 can apply is because that's one of the places
- 25 where Congress has said specifically that state

- 1 law can apply even on a federal enclave. And
- that's 40 U.S.C. 3172. That's the kind of
- 3 super --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: It begs the
- 5 question, why is that a gap?
- 6 MR. CLEMENT: Well, they're --
- 7 they're --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I -- I --
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: No, they -- I think what
- 10 that --
- 11 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You get paid for
- 12 working. You don't get paid for not working.
- 13 So if the federal law doesn't pay you for work
- 14 -- not working, except under the long --
- longshoreman's act, why would state law apply?
- MR. CLEMENT: Because there's a
- 17 specific federal statute that operates as a
- 18 super-savings clause specific to federal
- 19 enclaves, and that's what's missing in the
- 20 FLSA.
- 21 A few other points just to make. My
- friend wants to say that you should interpret
- 23 OCSLA differently from the Assimilated Crimes
- 24 Act. It seems to me the much better course is
- 25 to say that OCSLA is trying to get at the same

- thing and is trying to do gap-filling.
- 2 If you don't adopt that rule, then
- 3 you're going to be saying that there's a
- 4 greater role for state law, criminal law, on
- 5 the Outer Continental Shelf than on any other
- 6 federal enclave.
- 7 And keep in mind that OCSLA joins
- 8 civil and criminal law at the hip. So the same
- 9 regime on the Outer Continental Shelf applies
- 10 to criminal law and civil law. And I suggest
- 11 the way to harmonize all of those federal
- 12 statutes is to require gap-filling in every
- instance.
- 14 Also, in thinking about this case, do
- 15 keep in mind that the Outer Continental Shelf
- is a super federal enclave in the sense that no
- other state was previously sovereign. So you
- 18 don't have the issues where you have to go back
- 19 to 1913 and look at what the conditions a state
- 20 might have put on the grant of land to the
- 21 federal government. None of that applies on
- 22 the Outer Continental Shelf.
- 23 My friend relies on Powell and Guerra
- 24 as his two most apposite cases. So Powell is
- 25 an apposite -- inapposite because, there, you

- 1 have two separate congressional provisions,
- 2 both of which go through bicameralism and
- 3 presentment. And, of course, this Court is
- 4 going to try to do anything it can to reconcile
- 5 two federal statutes.
- 6 You don't have that situation here.
- 7 The second body of inconsistent law was the
- 8 product of a Sacramento labor commission. It
- 9 doesn't -- you don't apply that the same way.
- 10 Guerra is equally inapposite because
- 11 Guerra is just a plain old preemption case.
- 12 And the problem my friend on the other side has
- 13 -- has, as the Court has pointed out, is you
- just can't read the Outer Continental Shelf
- 15 Lands Act and conclude that the Court -- that
- 16 Congress wanted these preemption principles to
- 17 work the same way onshore as in the Outer
- 18 Continental Shelf. It's a federal enclaye; all
- 19 the law is federal law.
- Thank you.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 22 counsel. The case is submitted.
- 23 (Whereupon, at 11:06 a.m., the case
- 24 was submitted.)

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