## SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

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UNITED	STA	ATES	,						)		
			Peti	tio	ner,	,			)		
		v.							) No.	19-67	
EVELYN	SIN	IENE1	NG-SI	/ITH	,				)		
			Resp	ond	ent.	•			)		
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Pages: 1 through 66

Place: Washington, D.C.

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## HERITAGE REPORTING CORPORATION

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1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	UNITED STATES
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3	UNITED STATES,	)
4	Petitioner,	)
5	v.	) No. 19-67
6	EVELYN SINENENG-SMITH,	)
7	Respondent.	)
8		
9		
10	Washington, D.	.C.
11	Tuesday, February	z 25, 2020
12		
13	The above-entitled	d matter came on
14	for oral argument before the	Supreme Court of the
15	United States at 10:27 a.m.	
16		
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	ERIC J. FEIGIN, Deputy Solici	tor General,
19	Department of Justice, Was	shington, D.C.;
20	on behalf of the Petition	er.
21	MARK C. FLEMING, ESQ., Boston	, Massachusetts;
22	on behalf of the Responder	nt.
23		
24		
25		

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:23 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear
4	argument this morning in Case 19-67, United
5	States versus Sineneng-Smith.
6	Mr. Feigin.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF ERIC J. FEIGIN
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
9	MR. FEIGIN: Thank you, Mr. Chief
10	Justice, and may it please the Court:
11	Respondent acknowledges that in the
12	context of a criminal law, the terms "encourage"
13	and "induce" can refer solely to acts that
14	facilitate or solicit unlawful activity. That's
15	the meaning that they have in the context of
16	this criminal law.
17	There's no reason to reach out and
18	give them a vastly more expansive interpretation
19	simply to strike the statute down. Prohibitions
20	on facilitating or soliciting unlawful activity
21	have existed since before the founding and are
22	perfectly constitutional.
23	Interpreting this law to be
24	unconstitutionally overbroad would deviate from
25	that tradition and directly contradict the canon

1	of constitutional avoidance.
2	Historical understanding and practice
3	confirm that Congress didn't use these familiar
4	criminal law terms to enact a novel and broad
5	ban on speech. Predecessors to this statute
6	have been on the books since the late 19th
7	Century, and this provision has existed in
8	substantially its current form for decades.
9	Yet, Respondent and her amici have
10	identified no actual instances in which the
11	statute has been applied to protected First
12	Amendment activity or any concrete documented
13	instances of chilling speech.
14	The absence of such evidence isn't
15	just happenstance, and it doesn't just reflect
16	long-standing executive self-restraint. It's
17	because the statute isn't aimed at speech, and
18	it certainly doesn't encompass substantial
19	amounts of it.
20	To the extent that it could be applied
21	to protected speech, that can be handled through
22	the normal mechanism of as-applied First
23	Amendment challenges in those cases. This isn't
24	such a case because Respondent's own activity of
25	fraudulently inducing aliens to pay her for a

1 false path to lawful permanent residence isn't 2 protected by the First Amendment, and she is not 3 entitled to the last resort remedy of overbreadth invalidation that the Ninth Circuit 5 on its own initiative reached out to impose. That's particularly so because she was 6 7 convicted of an offense that required the jury 8 to find beyond a reasonable doubt that she acted 9 for the purpose of financial gain. Yet, she --10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You -- you 11 would acknowledge, though, that there are situations in which this would be 12 unconstitutional as applied? 13 14 MR. FEIGIN: Your Honor, I -- I 15 suppose there might be some circumstances where 16 this could be unconstitutional as -- as applied. 17 I don't know that anyone's identified any actual 18 such applications that the statute would reach 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, let's 20 21 suppose --22 MR. FEIGIN: -- under our reading. 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- you know, a

grandmother whose granddaughter is in the United

States illegally, tells the granddaughter, you

24

1 know, I hope you will stay because, you know, I 2 will miss you, things will not get better if you 3 go back, so I encourage you to stay. That --MR. FEIGIN: Well --4 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- that -that would be illegal under the statute, right? 6 7 MR. FEIGIN: -- it would not be 8 illegal under the statute, Your Honor, and 9 here's why: First of all, the issue of when 10 verbal acts or other acts cross the line into 11 criminal complicity or solicitation is not a --12 an issue unique to this statute. It's one that the criminal law has dealt with for centuries. 13 14 And something that abstract and attenuated is 15 not going to be criminal complicity. 16 In particular, this statute, we think, covers a more narrow subset of criminal 17 18 complicity and solicitation that really requires 19 substantial participation in some unlawful 20 venture or trying to gin up some unlawful 21 venture with the goal that that unlawful venture 22 actually occur. And the --23 JUSTICE GINSBURG: There was -- there 24 was a decision that Circuit Judge Tashima cited -- I think it was a district court in 25

1	Massachusetts in which he said that that was
2	an instance where this statute was applied to
3	encroach on First Amendment rights.
4	MR. FEIGIN: So, Your Honor, I don't
5	I don't think Judge Tashima thought that that
6	particular prosecution, which was not subject to
7	a First Amendment challenge itself, was in
8	violation of the First Amendment. I think what
9	worried Judge Tashima was a colloquy that
10	occurred during that case in which a discussion
11	was had about a hypothetical case in which, for
12	example, the statute could in theory be applied
13	to the actions of a lawyer.
14	Now, again, the actions of a lawyer
15	and when those cross the line into criminal
16	complicity or solicitation is also not a problem
17	that is unique to this statute, but it is an
18	issue that the criminal law has dealt with for
19	quite a long time.
20	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: What
21	MR. FEIGIN: In fact
22	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: what about a
23	MR. FEIGIN: I'm sorry.
24	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: What about a

charity? So a charity provides food to someone

- 1 who's in the country unlawfully.
- 2 MR. FEIGIN: So, first of all, Your
- 3 Honor, I think that would be conduct rather than
- 4 speech, so I don't think it would factor into
- 5 the overbreadth analysis.
- 6 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Is it covered
- 7 under this statute?
- 8 MR. FEIGIN: So, if a charity were to
- 9 give out food to people that the charity knew or
- 10 recklessly disregarded were in the country
- 11 unlawfully on the same terms that it gives out
- 12 food to other needy people, then -- then no,
- 13 Your Honor.
- 14 Furthermore, I think, in interpreting
- 15 the statute, it's important to remember that
- 16 it's part of the Immigration and Nationality --
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: What if it's not
- on the same terms; it's designed to provide food
- for people who can't get it elsewhere and they
- 20 know that the people taking advantage of that
- are here unlawfully?
- MR. FEIGIN: So, Your Honor, there is
- 23 no explicit exception in the -- in the statute
- 24 for activities that are denominated as
- 25 charitable. So, to the extent that a charity

- were doing something that violated the plain
  terms of the statute, that amounted to giving --
- 3 effectively giving money to people to -- or
- 4 something that is the equivalent of money to
- 5 people with the purpose that those people reside
- 6 in the United States unlawfully, that might
- 7 violate the statute.
- 8 But I think another important limiting
- 9 feature of the statute is to recall that it is
- 10 part of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and
- 11 that statute has to be interpreted as a whole
- 12 and not to be at war with itself.
- And in 8 U.S.C. 1621, the Immigration
- 14 and Nationality Act expressly contemplates that
- there are going to be circumstances in which
- 16 public and private benefits may be given to
- 17 people who are in the United States unlawfully.
- 18 The statute has never been used, to my
- 19 knowledge, and Respondent and her amici have not
- 20 come up with an instance where it's been used,
- 21 to prosecute conduct of the type that you're
- 22 hypothesizing, Justice Kavanaugh.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Feigin, but it
- has been used, according to the Amnesty
- 25 International brief, and DHS admitted that there

- 1 was a watch list at the border in which these
- 2 charitable organizations, people who were giving
- 3 legal advice at the border, all sorts of
- 4 individuals were being watched because they
- 5 potentially violated this encouragement
- 6 provision and inducement provision.
- 7 So you're saying there's been no
- 8 absolute -- there's been no prosecution except
- 9 Henderson, which was a -- a woman who hired a
- 10 housekeeper who told her the absolute truth: If
- 11 you go back, you -- you're not -- if you go --
- if you return to your country, you may not get
- 13 back. Absolutely true statement, and she was
- 14 prosecuted for that true statement as an
- 15 encouragement and inducement for the housekeeper
- 16 to stay here.
- But, if you say this has no chilling
- 18 effect, is that accurate?
- 19 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, let me
- 20 take those two examples in turn.
- 21 First of all, the Amnesty
- 22 International letter, if you look at it, the DHS
- 23 conduct in that case was focused on
- 24 investigating instances of violence against
- 25 border patrol agents and suspicions that people

- were being counseled to lie to immigration
- 2 officials. I don't think either of those things
- 3 is protected by the First Amendment.
- 4 As to the Henderson case, I think
- 5 there are more facts and context in that case.
- 6 That was the prosecution -- and I -- I -- I will
- 7 acknowledge that that case is very close to the
- 8 line of what we think the statute could
- 9 permissibly cover.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could I ask one
- 11 question? If this lawyer had sincerely
- believed, because, in fact, it was true or close
- 13 to the truth, if she just got it wrong, that
- there was a lawful program that these
- individuals could have accessed to keep them
- here, would you have been able to prosecute her?
- 17 MR. FEIGIN: No, Your Honor, we
- 18 couldn't have. And I think that goes back to
- 19 what I was saying to Justice --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: May I just
- 21 interrupt you one second?
- MR. FEIGIN: Sure.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You could -- you
- 24 did prosecute her for fraud, for fraudulently
- 25 telling her clients that they were eligible for

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1 this, correct?
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- 2 MR. FEIGIN: Your Honor, to be -- to
- 3 be clear, the defendant in Henderson was not a
- 4 lawyer and not someone counseling clients.
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm not talking
- 6 about him. I'm talking about this case.
- 7 MR. FEIGIN: Oh, we prosecuted -- oh,
- 8 I'm sorry. In this particular case?
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Yes.
- MR. FEIGIN: Yes, we -- we -- she was
- 11 not acting as a lawyer, although she is a
- 12 lawyer. We prosecuted her for lying to her
- 13 clients, and the jury found that she knew that
- she was lying to her clients. She lied to her
- 15 clients that by applying for a particular
- 16 government program, she was putting them on a
- 17 path to lawful permanent residence.
- 18 She charged each of her clients about
- 19 \$6,000 for that. She kept sending them letters
- 20 to tell them that --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So please tell me
- 22 what the different penalty is for those fraud
- 23 convictions as opposed to a conviction under
- 24 this statute.
- MR. FEIGIN: You -- you -- do you mean

1 a conviction under the mail fraud statute, Your

- 2 Honor?
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Under the mail
- 4 fraud statute versus a conviction under this
- 5 immigration statute. Is there a difference in
- 6 the penalties?
- 7 MR. FEIGIN: So the mail fraud
- 8 statute, I believe, has a statutory range of
- 9 zero to 20 years of imprisonment, and under this
- 10 statute, it was zero to 10, I believe, because
- of the financial gain element.
- 12 I would emphasize that the fact that
- this particular conduct may be covered by two
- 14 different provisions is, first of all,
- 15 happenstance. She could have easily given the
- 16 clients the same advice verbally and then it
- 17 wouldn't be covered by mail fraud.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But let's go back
- 19 to my original question, which let's say this
- 20 program was a path, but they were still here
- 21 unlawfully.
- 22 Can you read the words of the statute
- 23 to me that tell me that she wouldn't be
- 24 prosecuted for encouraging or inducing them to
- 25 stay while they went for the lawful path?

1	MR. FEIGIN: So, Your Honor, we don't
2	think it is encouragement or inducement knowing
3	or in reckless disregard of the alien's unlawful
4	status to either advise them of the existence of
5	or help someone to apply for a lawful government
6	program.
7	And let me explain why. The first
8	of all, an issue like this came up in United
9	States against Williams in which it was the
10	argument was put forth to the court that a
11	statute that criminalized "presenting child
12	pornography" might in theory be applied to
13	handing child pornography over to the police.
14	And the court was skeptical of such a novel and
15	"self-defeating interpretation" of the statute.
16	I think that reflects a broader
17	principle that a statute like this should not
18	lightly be interpreted to apply to conduct that
19	simply participates in a government program.
20	That's particularly true because this statute is
21	part of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
22	JUSTICE BREYER: Isn't
23	MR. FEIGIN: The Immigration and
24	Nationality Act I'm sorry, Justice Breyer.
25	JUSTICE BREYER: You said that point,

1 which is a good point. I want to be sure I get 2 an answer to this question, though, slightly. 3 You've read the briefs, obviously, and they have a long, long list of horribles, of 4 5 which this is just a few, you know, that you've heard this morning. But Professor Volokh's 6 7 brief gets rid of most of these horribles in a 8 simple way. He lists the conditions under which 9 the Court traditionally has said a solicitation 10 of a crime statute is constitutional, but the first condition and most important is that what 11 12 you are soliciting is a crime. 13 And it's easy to read this, when they 14 use the word "law," you mean read it violation of criminal law. Okay? And that would get rid 15 16 of most of them and -- and I think maybe all of 17 them, I don't know, but I can -- I know that 18 sometimes an alien who enters the United States 19 is committing a crime. All right? 2.0 But I can't think of any instance in 21 which residing in the United States is a crime. 22 But, if you could think of one, and you might not like this, but, I mean, I could see saying, 23 well, this is restricted to the prosecution of 24

that one, but, if there's zero, I don't see how

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1 we narrow it to -- to solicitation. Do you
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- 2 follow that?
- 3 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, it is a
- 4 crime to be found in the United States following
- 5 removal, for example. So someone who's residing
- 6 in the United States after having previously
- 7 been removed who is not entitled to be here
- 8 would be violating the statute.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So, suppose,
- 10 what do you think of that? Are you willing to
- 11 accept that or not?
- MR. FEIGIN: Well --
- 13 JUSTICE BREYER: What we do is we take
- 14 Professor Volokh's brief and we say that the
- 15 statute under constitutional pressure is limited
- to instances with all the qualifications you've
- given, there are several there, but the main one
- is it is -- it is limited to solicitation of a
- 19 crime.
- 20 So it is only in the instance that
- 21 there is a repeat, and the person has to know it
- and the person who's doing it, a repeat of
- 23 coming several times or twice to the United
- 24 States and then, what you just said, and
- 25 entering several times, you know, and we put

- 1 that into it, and does that -- does the
- 2 government accept that?
- 3 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, we
- 4 would certainly --
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: It would be an
- 6 alternative in my mind possibly that all the
- 7 horribles apply and forget the statute part of
- 8 it.
- 9 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, we
- 10 would certainly prefer that to the alternative
- of the Ninth Circuit's kind of novel overbreadth
- 12 invalidation, but I don't think that's -- I
- don't think that remedy is necessary. And let
- me make two points, one about your parade of
- 15 horribles and then another one about First
- 16 Amendment law.
- 17 As to the parade of horribles, I think
- 18 what's actually ginned up the parade of
- 19 horribles here is the Ninth Circuit's novel
- 20 interpretation of the statute. No one had
- 21 interpreted it that way before. And if you look
- 22 at the amicus briefs, the activities that they
- are complaining about being chilled are ones in
- 24 which they openly, publicly, historically, and
- 25 currently continue to engage.

- 1 As a matter of First Amendment law, on
- the other hand, I don't think there's any reason
- 3 to restrict this to criminal activity. If you
- 4 look at the underlying law review article that
- 5 Professor Volokh cites in his brief, he makes
- 6 quite clear -- I think this is on the first page
- 7 of his article -- that this Court's description
- 8 of the unprotected category of statute -- sorry,
- 9 the unprotected speech category of speech that
- 10 is intended to induce and commence illegal
- 11 activity, which is how Williams describes it,
- 12 applies to activity that's either civilly or
- 13 criminally illegal.
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: But what -- what this
- 15 --
- JUSTICE BREYER: He doesn't say that.
- 17 He -- he -- he really -- I mean, we couldn't
- even find one, a case, where -- where of course
- 19 that makes a huge difference. We can't find a
- 20 case where solicitation of X is held to be
- 21 lawful rather than unconstitutional, where X is
- 22 not a crime.
- MR. FEIGIN: Well, let -- let me give
- you a few examples, Your Honor. So this Court
- 25 has recently used the example of a business that

- 1 has out in front of it a White Applicants Only
- 2 sign, which is facilitating or soliciting the
- 3 violation of a civil prohibition against racial
- 4 discrimination in hiring.
- 5 There are also the cases cited in our
- 6 briefs, the Gazon case and the Pittsburgh Press
- 7 case, both of which uphold civil --
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. Okay. If you
- 9 take that approach, I see the approach, then all
- 10 the questions that have been asked become
- 11 relevant. And, indeed, it is -- it is the
- 12 landlady who says to the person, you always have
- 13 a place here, knowing that that person is
- illegally in the United States.
- 15 Or, you know, we can list
- 16 universities, church groups, I mean, you name
- it, sanctuary cities, where they're trying to
- 18 perhaps, whatever they're trying to do, but it
- 19 wouldn't be tough for -- turn it over to the
- 20 prosecutors, and they can use it as threats, you
- 21 turn it -- I mean, all these things that are in
- 22 the briefs as horribles, okay, your
- 23 interpretation would introduce them in reality
- 24 because you've had to make a lot of
- 25 distinctions, and if I write all these

- distinctions into an opinion, I won't be certain
- 2 I haven't left out some.
- 3 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, I think
- 4 there's a reason that we haven't seen that in
- 5 the many decades, indeed, about 150 years that a
- 6 statute like this has been on the books.
- 7 And the reason why they can't document
- 8 any instances of it and the reason why their
- 9 amici are all advocacy groups that engage daily
- in the very activities they claim are chilled.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: What exactly --
- 12 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Mister --
- 13 JUSTICE ALITO: -- do you think
- 14 "encourage" means? Are -- are there -- is it
- 15 your position that speech alone can never
- 16 constitute a violation of this statute, that
- there always has to be conduct in addition to
- 18 the speech?
- 19 MR. FEIGIN: No, Your Honor. There
- 20 are, under -- we think "encourage" has a meaning
- 21 that's drawn from traditional criminal
- 22 complicity law. "Encourage" is a very common
- word that is used in criminal complicity
- 24 statutes.
- JUSTICE ALITO: And what does it mean,

- 1 specifically what does it mean in this statute? MR. FEIGIN: So, in this statute, we 2 3 think it -- it's not entirely clear whether "encourage" is the one that covers solicitation 4 5 or it's the one that covers complicity. So I would actually, if I could, prefer to take the 6 7 two --8 JUSTICE ALITO: Take them together. 9 MR. FEIGIN: -- as kind of a package 10 deal. 11 JUSTICE ALITO: Fine. What -- what 12 does it mean? MR. FEIGIN: We think that it means 13 14 that you have to substantially participate in 15 the activity as something that the defendant 16 wishes to bring about or to succeed. JUSTICE ALITO: Well, that's aiding 17 18 and abetting. 19 MR. FEIGIN: It's -- it's different
- mr. reigin. it's -- it's different
- from aiding and abetting in, I think, three
- 21 distinct ways. As the current LaFave treatise
- 22 that's cited in our brief makes clear -- this is
- on page 457 -- the specific words that a
- 24 criminal complicity statute uses can have some
- 25 effect on how it's interpreted, the particular

- 1 subset of conduct that it covers.
- 2 And I think here Congress's focus on
- 3 the words "encourage" and "induce" mean three
- 4 things. First of all, it has to be something
- 5 that the defendant actually wants to bring about
- 6 or wants to succeed. I don't think you can be
- 7 indifferent about encouraging or inducing.
- 8 Second, it has to be something that
- 9 the alien is aware of. Under normal aiding and
- 10 abetting law, you could aid and abet -- if it
- 11 uses the words
- "aid and abet," you can aid and abet without the
- 13 principal knowing about it. If a murderer is
- 14 about to go shoot somebody and I unload the
- victim's gun without -- before the murderer gets
- there and the murderer never knows I did it, I'm
- 17 still an aider and an abetter.
- 18 And then the third thing is we think
- 19 it requires some substantial amount of
- 20 participation. And the reason for that is that
- 21 you can't really encourage -- we've been very
- 22 consistent about this in the proceedings below
- too, that you can't really encourage or induce
- 24 someone in -- in a de minimis way. It has to be
- 25 something that really does make the activity

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1 more likely to succeed or more likely to occur.
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- 2 JUSTICE ALITO: So, if the -- if the
- defendant just says, well, I encourage you to
- 4 stay here, that might not be enough, but, if the
- 5 defendant says it 10 times in a forceful voice,
- 6 that would be a violation?
- 7 MR. FEIGIN: I don't think that kind
- 8 of more abstract attenuated exhortation is
- 9 really going to satisfy this particular statute.
- 10 One additional reason why -- one
- 11 additional reason why we think some substantial
- 12 participation is required is because this is
- 13 coming in clause iv of a five-clause statute.
- 14 And if you look at clauses i through iii, which
- 15 cover the other kinds of substantive conduct
- 16 here, all of them require some sort of
- 17 substantial participation --
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: But what do you mean
- 19 by "substantial participation"? Because I
- 20 didn't really take that from your brief, so I'm
- 21 a little bit confused as to where that's coming
- 22 from.
- 23 And, again, what Justice Alito said, I
- 24 mean, if somebody says I really think you should
- 25 stay here, here are the 10 reasons why, and

- 1 repeats that and repeats that, and it's -- it's
- very definitely encouraging and inducing a
- 3 person to stay in this country, does that count
- 4 as substantial participation, or is there some
- 5 non-speech conduct that has to be added to the
- 6 mix?
- 7 MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, I think
- 8 there are occasions in the criminal law where
- 9 words can constitute aiding and abetting, and I
- 10 think that the same is true under this statute.
- If the Court were to have a problem
- with that, it could either be addressed through
- as-applied challenges, as the Chief Justice has
- mentioned, or, again, we would prefer, to the
- Ninth Circuit's remedy, something that says that
- it has to be accompanied -- an interpretation
- 17 that says that it has to be accompanied by some
- 18 conduct. But I don't --
- 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Mr. Feigin --
- MR. FEIGIN: Yes.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- Mr. Feigin, I --
- 22 I -- I just want to give you a shot before your
- 23 time is up, and -- and I -- I -- I take your
- 24 point there, such as it is, but two -- two
- things. Normally, in the criminal law when we

- 1 -- in secondary liability, to avoid the First
- 2 Amendment, we, as Justice Breyer suggested,
- don't allow punishment for speech greater than
- 4 the underlying conduct itself. That would seem
- 5 to be a basic First Amendment value.
- 6 So what do we do about the fact that
- 7 most applications, maybe not all, but most
- 8 applications here of the underlying conduct
- 9 would be civilly punished? And here you wish to
- 10 criminally punish the speech, number one.
- 11 And, number two, normally we require
- the aider and abetter or secondary liable person
- to have a purpose shared with the defendant, the
- same purpose. And, here, the government, as I
- understand it, argued that there's no mens rea
- 16 required to prove this violation or a very
- 17 minimal one.
- MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, below
- 19 we resisted a mens rea of willfully, which would
- 20 require some specific --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Yeah, purpose.
- MR. FEIGIN: No, some specific --
- 23 having specifically in mind the -- a specific
- 24 purpose to violate the law.
- 25 JUSTICE GORSUCH: The violation of

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1 law, yeah. Purpose.
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- 2 MR. FEIGIN: We do think this requires
- 3 the same mens rea that this Court described in
- 4 Rosemond, where the Court said that
- 5 participation in a crime with knowledge of the
- 6 attendant circumstances, although this would
- 7 extend to reckless disregard of the attendant
- 8 circumstances, would satisfy the normal --
- 9 JUSTICE GORSUCH: And that's what I
- 10 guess I'm --
- 11 MR. FEIGIN: -- criminal complicity --
- 12 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- I'm getting at,
- is that if you -- if recklessness is good
- enough, so I could be in my speech -- and this
- gets even beyond the specific versus how -- the
- 16 conduct and how specific the exhortation has to
- 17 be, but I could be reckless in my speech in
- 18 encouraging somebody and -- and wind up a
- 19 federal criminal even though the underlying
- 20 violation is merely civil. Is -- is that the
- 21 gist of the government's position here?
- MR. FEIGIN: No, Your Honor. The --
- 23 the reckless disregard has to be in relation to
- 24 the alien's status --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: No, I'm recklessly

1 2 MR. FEIGIN: -- about the law. 3 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- I'm recklessly indifferent to my granddaughter's status and I'm 4 5 recklessly encouraging, exhorting her, in 6 whatever level of specificity you require, but I 7 have no intention of -- of violating the -- the 8 immigration laws. And the underlying conduct that -- for which she can be punished is merely 10 civil. 11 MR. FEIGIN: So --12 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Then what? MR. FEIGIN: -- Your Honor, two -- two 13 14 parts of that. First of all, reckless -- we 15 don't think there's such a thing as reckless 16 encouragement or inducement. As I was 17 explaining in my colloquy with Justice Alito, we 18 think the words "encouragement" and "inducement" 19 in themselves are -- carry a meaning that you 2.0 have to want the unlawful venture to occur or to 21 succeed. As to the --22 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I quess what I'm --

25 government think that -- that the common law

23

24

I'm wondering here, Mr. Feigin, at the end of it

all and just to cut to the chase is, does the

1 principles of secondary liability that normally 2 try and prevent the dragnet effect of secondary 3 liability from extending too far inform the First Amendment analysis here, or would you just 4 5 have us blow past all of those guideposts? MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, we do 6 7 think the statute should be interpreted in 8 conformity with the normal criminal law 9 principles of accomplice liability and 10 solicitation that the Court has long recognized 11 apply to these as a matter --12 JUSTICE KAGAN: But the problem is --13 and this is --14 JUSTICE BREYER: Do you agree with 15 Professor Volokh or do you not? 16 MR. FEIGIN: Your Honor, I do not 17 agree, or we do not agree, with Professor 18 Volokh's suggestion in his brief that this needs to be limited to criminal activity. Again, if 19 20 you -- if you look at the article that he cites 21 in his brief, it has some of the same examples 22 that I was just using --23 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Feigin --MR. FEIGIN: -- with the Court of --24

JUSTICE ALITO: I don't know where --

- 1 I don't know where Professor Volokh got this
- 2 idea, but there are situations in which a person
- 3 -- in which the -- the commission of the -- of
- 4 the offense that is encouraged is not made
- 5 criminal because of the vulnerable position of
- 6 the person who is engaging in that act, but it
- 7 doesn't necessarily follow that encouraging that
- 8 person to do the thing cannot be made criminal.
- 9 MR. FEIGIN: I think that's exactly
- 10 right. If I could just quickly answer and then
- 11 reserve the balance --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Very briefly.
- MR. FEIGIN: Yeah. I -- for example,
- 14 you could decide to make prostitution a civil
- offense and still criminally punish recruiting
- 16 prostitutes.
- 17 Thank you.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 19 counsel.
- Mr. Fleming.
- 21 ORAL ARGUMENT OF MARK C. FLEMING
- ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- MR. FLEMING: Mr. Chief Justice, and
- 24 may it please the Court:
- I'd begin with two points. First,

- 1 Congress means what it says. This provision
- 2 doesn't mention solicitation. It doesn't
- 3 mention aiding and abetting. Congress knows how
- 4 to use those words when it wants to. The words
- 5 it did use are much broader. "Encourage" or
- 6 "induce," used together, cover every form of
- 7 influence and persuasion, as this Court said in
- 8 the Electrical Workers case.
- 9 In this statute, falsity is not an
- 10 element, nor is truth a defense. Even accurate
- advice encouraging someone to stay is banned.
- 12 And as a result, this law makes a felon of a
- 13 teacher who says to an undocumented student that
- she should stay and pursue her education, it
- 15 makes a felon of a pastor who says to
- 16 undocumented worshippers that they can stay and
- 17 freely exercise their religion, it makes a felon
- of a doctor who encourages an undocumented
- 19 patient to stay here for medical treatment, and
- 20 as the government has still never denied, it
- 21 makes a felon of a lawyer who advises an
- 22 undocumented client that her best route to
- lawful status is to remain physically present in
- 24 the United States. So, if the statute is read
- as written, which we think it should be, it is

- 1 substantially overbroad.
- 2 The second point, however -- and I
- 3 think this was pointed up effectively in Justice
- 4 Gorsuch's question -- is that even were this
- 5 Court to rewrite this law as a solicitation
- 6 provision -- and we don't think it can -- it
- 7 would still be overbroad. And that is because
- 8 there is no historical tradition, going back to
- 9 1791 or since, supporting a categorical
- 10 exclusion from the First Amendment for
- 11 solicitation of non-criminal conduct.
- 12 All of the government's common law
- examples, going back to Sir Edward Coke and Sir
- 14 Matthew Hale, all involve solicitation of crime,
- 15 per Justice Breyer's question. Professor Volokh
- 16 explains this, and he explains why that's the
- 17 case, because solicitation offenses fall within
- 18 the traditional exception of speech integral to
- 19 a crime.
- There is no dispute, however, that
- 21 nothing my client did encouraged or even
- 22 solicited anyone to commit a crime. So, Justice
- 23 Breyer, were the Court to read the statute in
- 24 the way that Your Honor suggested -- although I
- 25 don't think that's a fair reading of what

- 1 Congress did -- but, if the Court were to
- 2 rewrite it that way, the judgment of acquittal
- 3 would still have to be affirmed because there is
- 4 no suggestion that any of my client's -- the
- 5 people that she encouraged were ever encouraged
- 6 to commit a crime or did commit a crime.
- 7 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, on -- on this
- 8 point --
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Feigin, was
- 10 there anything in this statute -- this is little
- iv, and the earlier parts of the statute, i, ii,
- 12 and iii. Is there anything that she could have
- been convicted of when she was taking people's
- money and doing nothing for them?
- MR. FLEMING: So, to answer the
- 16 question, Justice Ginsburg, and then I'll
- 17 address the premise. But, to answer the
- 18 question, no. Provisions i, ii, and iii of
- 19 1324(a)(1) -- (a)(1)(A) do not prohibit my
- 20 client's conduct.
- 21 However, the falsity aspect built into
- your question was the basis of the government's
- 23 mail fraud prosecution. And one thing I'd like
- 24 to correct in what Mr. Feigin said is a mail
- fraud prosecution doesn't require that a mailing

- 1 be fraudulent. It just requires a fraudulent
- 2 scheme where there is a use of the mail that is
- 3 incident to the scheme.
- 4 And that's how this case was charged.
- 5 She wasn't accused of putting something in the
- 6 mail that was fraudulent. The
- 7 misrepresentations that were accused were oral
- 8 misrepresentations.
- 9 So whether the fraud is supposedly
- 10 written or oral, as long as there is a mailing,
- 11 which, in connection with immigration, there
- will almost always be because applications are
- 13 filed with the government, either by mail or
- 14 there will be a use of the wires if someone uses
- 15 a telephone or the Internet, any actual
- 16 fraudulent scheme can be readily prosecuted and
- is readily prosecuted by the Federal Government.
- 18 JUSTICE GINSBURG: There was one count
- 19 -- there were five counts. Two were knocked out
- 20 by the Ninth Circuit judgment. So the two --
- 21 the three remaining counts, two were mail fraud.
- 22 What was the other one?
- MR. FLEMING: There were -- so there
- 24 were three people who were -- three non-citizens
- 25 who were offered as potential victims. One did

- 1 not testify at trial. And so, as to that one
- 2 person, both the mail fraud and the immigration
- 3 encouragement count were thrown out. She was
- 4 convicted of two counts of mail fraud and two
- 5 counts of encouragement for the other two.
- 6 There are also two tax-related counts to which
- 7 she pled.
- 8 JUSTICE ALITO: On Professor Volokh's
- 9 point, it's an interesting point. I want to
- 10 give you this example and get your reaction to
- 11 it.
- 12 There's a teenager who's -- who has
- been very seriously bullied and is very
- depressed and is thinking of committing suicide.
- 15 The teenager has a gun in his hand. He calls up
- the one person he thinks is his friend and he
- says, I'm thinking of killing myself. And the
- 18 person on the other end of the line says, you've
- 19 said this before, I'm tired of hearing this from
- you, you never follow through, you're a coward,
- 21 why don't you just do it, I encourage you to
- 22 pull the trigger.
- Now is that protected by the First
- 24 Amendment? Is that speech protected by the
- 25 First Amendment? Attempting to commit suicide

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1 is not a crime.
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- 2 MR. FLEMING: So I -- I don't think
- 3 that it would be protected, Justice Alito.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Why?
- 5 MR. FLEMING: I think that --
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: What is -- why -- why
- 7 would that be? So doesn't that defeat the
- 8 argument that you can never -- someone can never
- 9 be convicted of speech that encourages an
- 10 activity that is not criminal?
- 11 MR. FLEMING: No, I think -- I think
- 12 incitement to suicide would fall within the
- 13 Brandenburg exception. You're talking about
- inciting imminent harm and imminent lawlessness.
- 15 Also, let's remember, at Common Law, suicide was
- 16 a crime. And so the framers may well have
- 17 considered that speech soliciting or aiding and
- abetting suicide was, in fact, not something
- 19 that was being protected --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, it's not --
- 21 MR. FLEMING: -- by the First
- 22 Amendment.
- JUSTICE ALITO: -- it's not a crime
- today.
- MR. FLEMING: No, not today.

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JUSTICE ALITO: And why would this --

why does this not qualify under Brandenburg?

MR. FLEMING: Why does it not qualify?
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- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Why would encouraging
- 5 someone to remain in the country illegally not
- 6 qualify under Brandenburg?
- 7 MR. FLEMING: I -- first of all, I
- 8 don't think that's an argument the government is
- 9 making, and I think for good reason.
- 10 Brandenburg generally applies -- only allows
- 11 regulation of incitement to immediate lawless
- 12 activity and arguably violent lawless activity
- 13 --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, okay, if it's
- 15 limited to --
- 16 MR. FLEMING: -- which in this
- instance is not going to cause harm.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: -- if it's limited to
- 19 violent activity, that would be -- that would be
- 20 a limitation. But, certainly, the unlawfulness
- 21 here is imminent. In fact, the unlawfulness
- 22 exists prior to the speech and exists a
- 23 nanosecond after the speech ended, so it is
- 24 imminent.
- MR. FLEMING: I -- and I think that's

- 1 a -- that's another distinction from the suicide
- 2 case that I was going to get to, is most state
- 3 laws that prohibit the solicitation of suicide
- 4 have a causation requirement. So there has to
- 5 actually be some connection between the speech
- 6 and what's going to happen.
- Here, if you have someone who's
- 8 already here, this statute has no causation
- 9 requirement. It also has no mens rea
- 10 requirement. I was astonished that Mr. Feigin
- 11 stood up and said that they're willing to import
- one now, that there have to be some requirement
- 13 that the defendant share the goal of this
- 14 actually happening --
- 15 JUSTICE ALITO: Isn't it --
- 16 MR. FLEMING: -- because that's not
- 17 how this jury was instructed.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: -- isn't it odd to
- 19 think of somebody encouraging somebody to do
- 20 something if the person who's doing the
- 21 encouraging does not intend for the person to do
- that thing? Isn't that built into the concept
- of encouragement?
- MR. FLEMING: If it were, Justice
- 25 Alito, then the jury should have been

- 1 accordingly instructed. But the government
- 2 consistently rejected any kind of mens rea
- 3 instruction in this case, other than the one
- 4 expressly called out in the statute, which is
- 5 that the defendant know or recklessly disregard
- 6 the immigration status of the individual.
- 7 JUSTICE ALITO: Well --
- 8 MR. FLEMING: But on page 50 --
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: -- and that might be a
- 10 reason for reversing the conviction for improper
- 11 instructions to the jury, but I don't know that
- it's a ground for holding that the statute is
- 13 unconstitutional.
- MR. FLEMING: Well, I -- I would say
- 15 at the very least, if the Court were to rewrite
- 16 the statute either in the way the government put
- forward in its brief or in the way that Mr.
- 18 Feigin is now suggesting for the first time now,
- 19 there would at the very least need to be a
- 20 remand for a new trial under the new statute
- 21 asserted by the government.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Before you leave
- this, I don't know if this can be done, honestly
- don't, but, I mean, in thinking of the -- of the
- 25 Volokh brief and the rewriting, you -- you --

- 1 all you -- one thing you do is it says violation
- 2 of law. You would say violation of criminal
- 3 law. All right? You'd to have do that.
- 4 MR. FLEMING: You would.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: And you imply
- 6 criminal law in order to avoid the
- 7 constitutional thing. Then you have the other
- 8 -- the other restrictions, such as Mr. Feigin
- 9 gave and such as Volokh gives and so forth, and
- say the reason we rewrite it this way, because
- 11 it may be that sometimes Justice Alito's
- 12 examples are all right, it may well be, I don't
- 13 know all -- all the possibilities there, but the
- 14 reason we write it this way is we assume that
- 15 what Congress would have preferred to the
- 16 unconstitutionality of the statute is the common
- 17 definition, the common definition and use of the
- 18 word "solicitation."
- 19 See, in other words, we take the heart
- of solicitation, read that into Congress's mind,
- 21 and put in the word "criminal." Now how far --
- I mean, you might not have thought of this and I
- don't know, but I am curious to know what your
- 24 reaction to it is.
- MR. FLEMING: So my reaction, Justice

- 1 Breyer, is, first of all, if Your Honor were to
- 2 do that, my client gets acquitted. Judgment
- 3 affirmed. I want to be very clear about that.
- 4 As a matter of statutory
- 5 interpretation, I'm not sure that that's -- I
- 6 think that's a bridge too far. It would be
- 7 permissible if Congress had written solicit, but
- 8 it didn't. It wrote encourage or induce.
- 9 And Congress knows how to say solicit
- when it wants to. It says it in 18 U.S.C. 373,
- 11 and, as this Court said in Clark versus
- 12 Martinez, constitutional avoidance only kicks in
- 13 after all the ordinary textual analysis of the
- 14 statute as a whole has been exhausted.
- 15 And in this circumstance, I think
- 16 every textual indicator whatsoever shows that
- 17 Congress meant to do what it said, which was to
- 18 ban encouragement, which is speech. It isn't a
- 19 narrow solicitation provision. It isn't an
- 20 aiding and abetting provision.
- 21 We know that not just because that's
- 22 what the words say but because Congress wrote an
- 23 aiding and abetting provision just two
- 24 subparagraphs later using those words
- 25 specifically.

1	We know that the aiding and abetting
2	provision, that one two subparagraphs down,
3	applies to subsection (4), which would mean, if
4	rewritten to mean solicitation, you could be
5	convicted of aiding and abetting solicitation or
6	aiding and abetting aiding and abetting, which
7	is at the very least counterintuitive, if not
8	absurd.
9	And we also know that if you limit it
LO	to a conduct-based provision, it is now
L1	completely redundant of the three provisions
L2	that come immediately before.
L3	The government has not pointed to any
L4	actual conduct that it would be able to
L5	prosecute under a narrowed encouragement
L6	provision that it can't already prosecute under
L7	other provisions. Similarly, it has not
L8	explained what work this encouragement provision
L9	would do if narrowed that way because every
20	example it has of actual wrongdoing that it
21	would want to be able to punish, it can punish
22	under Sections 1 through 3 or under the document
23	fraud statute, Section 1546, or as in this case
24	under mail fraud.
25	JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel

1	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: If the statute,
2	just to be clear, if the statute said aid, abet
3	or solicit, that would be constitutional?
4	MR. FLEMING: It would not, Justice
5	Kavanaugh, because of the civil/criminal issue
6	we've been discussing. It would say aid, abet
7	or solicit conduct that in itself is not
8	criminal. Let's make no mistake about what the
9	government
LO	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: If we didn't if
L1	we didn't agree with you on that point, would
L2	and it said aid, abet or solicit, would it then
L3	be constitutional?
L4	MR. FLEMING: I I still don't think
L5	it would be because
L6	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Why not?
L7	MR. FLEMING: Well, because you are
L8	talking about a statute that singles out one
L9	particular category of civil violations for
20	for criminal solicitation liability. Why this
21	one in particular and not any other civil
22	violations, many of which could be are are
23	subject to solicitation or encouragement without
24	any criminal consequence. Many actual federal
25	crimes, there's no general federal solicitation

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1 statute. There's only 373, which deals with
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- 2 crimes of violence.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Fleming --
- 4 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel -- sorry.
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- I -- I go
- 6 back to an example that was given earlier by
- 7 Justice Breyer, but there is a statute which has
- 8 to do with employers hiring illegal aliens. And
- 9 there is no statute that makes it illegal for
- 10 the employee to -- for an alien to be employed.
- 11 So what do you do with that example?
- 12 There's a statute that makes it illegal not to
- use the federal, whatever, system, verification
- 14 system, but there's no actual law that makes it
- 15 illegal for an alien to work in the United
- 16 States.
- 17 MR. FLEMING: So the --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: They can't -- you
- 19 know, they have to provide a Social Security
- 20 card and all of this other stuff, and those acts
- 21 are going to make them criminally liable, but
- 22 certainly not the act of being employed.
- 23 MR. FLEMING: I -- I think those fall
- 24 under the -- the also recognized prohibition on
- offers to engage in transactions that are

1	themselves banned. Right? I mean, hiring
2	someone is not protected speech. So Congress
3	can obviously ban hiring someone who is not
4	lawfully authorized to be in this country.
5	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Is that your
6	answer to the prostitution case? Why the
7	MR. FLEMING: I mean, in in some
8	ways, yes, I mean, I think because you can
9	decriminalize prostitution, but you can still
10	criminalize paying someone to engage in in
11	in sex. That's not speech; that's
12	JUSTICE ALITO: There are
13	MR. FLEMING: conduct.
14	JUSTICE ALITO: there are a lot of
15	examples of instances where states have made
16	things illegal make it makes it illegal to
17	encourage somebody to do something that is not
18	itself illegal involving minors, encouraging a
19	minor to purchase alcohol to to to
20	purchase alcohol or to consume alcohol, or
21	encourage a person of diminished capacity to
22	engage in some kind of dangerous activity.
23	I mean, you're going to do a lot of
24	damage if you accept this distinction that you
25	can never criminalize encouraging a vulnerable

- 1 person to do something that is not itself
- 2 illegal on the part of the -- criminal on the
- 3 part of the person who's encouraged.
- 4 MR. FLEMING: So I don't know of any
- 5 statute that sweeps as broadly as this one. The
- 6 -- the -- the liquor laws that the government
- 7 cites actually are not framed in terms of aiding
- 8 and abetting the minor's conduct. There's a
- 9 separate prohibition on furnishing alcohol to a
- 10 minor. That is an act. That is conduct. That
- is not speech. Of course, a state can make that
- 12 illegal.
- 13 It can also make illegal aiding and
- 14 abetting the furnishing of the conduct -- of the
- 15 alcohol. So a 23-year-old buys alcohol for a
- 16 minor, the liquor store attendant who sells the
- 17 alcohol knowing that it's going to the minor is
- 18 aiding and abetting that conduct. But no one --
- 19 no statute that I know of is framed in terms of
- 20 aiding and abetting the non-criminal conduct of
- 21 the minor.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, let me ask you
- 23 --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But you have
- 25 to --

1	JUSTICE ALITO: one more one
2	more question that about something that seems
3	unusual about your overbreadth argument.
4	Usually, in a free speech overbreadth case, the
5	defendant has engaged in speech, and the
6	defendant says even if my speech is not
7	protected, I can assert free speech claims of
8	other people.
9	But, here, your client was not
LO	prosecuted for engaging in speech. She was
L1	prosecuted for encouragement through conduct.
L2	And so you have somebody who didn't engage in
L3	speech at all making free speech case free
L4	speech claims that could be asserted by other
L5	people.
L6	Now free speech overbreadth is a
L7	is a strong doctrine, but are there other are
L8	there other cases where this has happened? And
L9	if not, why should we extend it into this new
20	area?
21	MR. FLEMING: I think the best example
22	is Coates versus Cincinnati. That that was
23	an an overbreadth challenge. That was the

one where the -- where the ordinance prohibited

being on the streets of Cincinnati engaging in

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- 1 -- in -- in annoying conduct. And it was not
- 2 clear what Mr. Coates had actually done. The
- 3 record before the court didn't even show what it
- 4 was.
- 5 And this Court recognized that the
- 6 ordinance could have prohibited all manner of
- 7 prohibitable conduct, like blocking traffic or
- 8 littering the streets, but it nonetheless found
- 9 the ordinance to be unconstitutionally overbroad
- 10 because it was directed to a substantial amount
- of protected speech.
- 12 And this is the same case. We do not
- 13 need to show that the conduct that
- 14 Ms. Sineneng-Smith engaged in was protected
- 15 speech if the statute, as it plainly does,
- sweeps within its ambit a substantial amount of
- 17 -- of protected speech when compared to the --
- 18 the legitimate sweep of the statute.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Fleming, what do
- 20 we --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Can -- can --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: -- what do we do about
- the fact that there haven't been prosecutions
- 24 brought of the kind that you talk about? I
- mean, there's obviously no requirement that that

be the case, but there is a view that there has

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- 2 to be a realistic risk of a statute that's 3 overbroad being applied to protected activity. So where does the realistic risk come 5 from in the absence of actual prosecutions that you can point to and say, ah, that went wrong? 6 7 MR. FLEMING: I'd like to point to the 8 Henderson case and I'd like to clarify a 9 statement that -- that Mr. Feigin made about it. 10 One of -- this is the case in Boston, where Ms. Henderson was prosecuted, and one of the 11 12 theories, an independent theory of liability, 13 was that she gave advice to her undocumented 14 housekeeper: If you stay here, they won't let 15 you back. And the district court's opinion on
- 18 hiring the person; it was also the advice that

page 200 makes very clear that is an alternative

theory of criminal liability. It's not just

- 19 was given. And that's why the district judge
- 20 engaged in the colloquy with the hypothetical
- 21 about the lawyer, is because it was a
- 22 prosecution of advice.

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- JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay, I'll take the
- 24 point, but broaden it out a little bit in terms
- of your answers. You just said, okay, there's

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1 not zero; there's one.
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- 2 MR. FLEMING: There's at least one
- 3 that we -- we know of.
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay.
- 5 MR. FLEMING: Yes, that's right. And
- 6 in -- and in terms of the others, I mean, I
- 7 think Your Honor said this, but I'll -- I'll
- 8 reinforce it to the extent I might, which is I
- 9 don't think this Court has ever required a
- 10 certain number of actual prosecutions. The
- overbreadth doctrine there is -- the overbreadth
- doctrine is triggered by the substantial sweep
- of the statute carrying within its ambit a ban
- on protected speech. The fact that the
- 15 government is careful enough usually not to
- 16 charge it in those cases does not take away the
- 17 fact that it risks chilling the speech
- 18 substantially.
- 19 Now Mr. Feigin makes the point in his
- 20 brief and again this morning that, well, lots of
- 21 people are actually making this speech already
- 22 within the ban. That's not relevant either.
- When this Court decided the Stevens
- 24 case, it pointed to hundreds of hunting websites
- and hunting magazines that contained depictions

- of animal cruelty that fell within the ban.
- 2 That was not a weakness of the challenge. That
- 3 was a strength of the challenge because it
- 4 showed that the speech was not fanciful or
- 5 hypothetical but actually was happening.
- 6 I point out this statute historically
- 7 was not used very much, but the -- the
- 8 government has recently made it a focus of
- 9 enforcement. The religious organizations'
- amicus makes this point on page 30. And it's
- also something that, as Justice Sotomayor's
- 12 question pointed up, they are using as the basis
- 13 for investigation of U.S. citizens for their
- 14 prayer, for their speech, and for their legal
- 15 advice.
- And so, even though in the past there
- may not have been that many uses of this
- 18 statute, one can expect that if this Court
- 19 upholds the statute, it will continue to be
- 20 threatened and used. And whether it's
- 21 ultimately used does not matter because the
- 22 First Amendment does not require us to rely on
- 23 the grace of the executive branch.
- JUSTICE BREYER: What do you --
- MR. FLEMING: It protects us from

- 1 these situations.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Go back for one
- 3 second, because I -- I'm taking in your answer
- 4 to what I asked before. But imagine this: One,
- 5 says the opinion, this -- the -- the government
- 6 wants this to be interpreted as a solicitation
- 7 statute. So be it. We insert the word.
- Now, two, solicitation has some rules
- 9 around it. One is what Justice Gorsuch said.
- 10 You don't punish as a criminal that which isn't.
- 11 But there might be exceptions to that. General
- rule, general rule, with possible exceptions.
- 13 Two, it has to be imminent. That's Brandenburg.
- 14 Three, it has to be very specific. And there
- 15 could be some others.
- Now it does require us to add one
- 17 sentence.
- 18 MR. FLEMING: Right.
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: We interpret it as
- 20 Congress picking up, in the government's view,
- 21 solicitation, the common definition of
- 22 solicitation, not including the exceptions, et
- cetera, because this is a common kind of thing,
- you see, something like that.
- That's it. That's the question,

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1 because that's what's floating around in my
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- 2 mind.
- MR. FLEMING: I think, Your Honor, if
- 4 you write that opinion, you'd have to add one
- 5 more sentence --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: Yeah.
- 7 MR. FLEMING: -- which is the judgment
- 8 below is affirmed. But, if you add that
- 9 sentence, we would be fine with it --
- 10 (Laughter.)
- 11 MR. FLEMING: -- with one exception or
- one question, which is the notion that there
- 13 might be exceptions to the rule that
- 14 solicitation has to be limited to a solicitation
- of criminal conduct with specific intent on the
- 16 part of the defendant that the criminal conduct
- 17 be committed. If that --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Would we --
- 19 would we --
- MR. FLEMING: I'm sorry.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Would we have
- 22 to get that passed by the Senate and House --
- 23 (Laughter.)
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- and then
- 25 signed by the President before we could put

- 1 that -- that many changes to the statute?
- 2 MR. FLEMING: Absolutely, Mr. Chief
- 3 Justice. And the fact that you would need to do
- 4 that in order for it to be constitutional is a
- 5 good indication that Congress did not mean for
- 6 the statute to be read that way, which is why we
- 7 think the easier opinion to write is an opinion
- 8 that says we look at the text, we look at the
- 9 context, and there's nothing in this subsection
- 10 (iv) that suggests that Congress meant the kind
- of limited statute that Justice Breyer is
- 12 proposing.
- 13 JUSTICE KAGAN: Would you talk a
- 14 little bit about that generally? Because, you
- know, we obviously like to save statutes rather
- 16 than to kill statutes. So what can we do,
- 17 consistent with our own role and consistent with
- 18 our understanding that Congress's role is
- 19 different? But when is it possible for us to
- 20 narrow statutes without being subject to the
- 21 critique that where we're rewriting them? And
- is it possible in this case?
- MR. FLEMING: I -- I don't think it's
- 24 possible in this case because all of the textual
- 25 indicators point in terms -- in the direction of

- 1 the interpretation that I've been advocating and
- 2 that the court below took.
- I think, as a general matter, this
- 4 Court interprets statutes; it doesn't rewrite
- 5 them. And if there is an interpretation of the
- 6 statute as a whole -- I don't just mean a single
- 7 word -- I mean, certainly "encourage" can mean
- 8 lots of different things, but it is very broad
- 9 and capacious. And unless there is a suggestion
- 10 that Congress meant to adopt a narrower
- 11 interpretation -- here, there is no textual
- 12 indication of that -- I don't think that's
- 13 permissible. I was --
- 14 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: But then we would
- 15 never -- then we would never do a narrowing
- 16 construction because you would always say, well,
- just go with what the words of the statute mean.
- 18 MR. FLEMING: No. I think there are
- 19 -- there are times --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: When can you do --
- 21 to pick up on Justice Kagan's point, when can
- 22 you do a narrowing construction? You have a
- 23 broad term, if read literally would be broad.
- When can you narrow?
- MR. FLEMING: I think, as this Court

- 1 said in Clark versus Martinez, what the Court
- 2 does is it applies all the standard rules of
- 3 textual analysis of statutes, not just
- 4 interpreting a particular word but looking at
- 5 how it's used in context, looking at the common
- 6 law background against which Congress
- 7 legislates, looking at the overall structure of
- 8 the statute, looking at legislative history
- 9 sometimes.
- When all of that has been exhausted,
- if the Court still thinks that the statute is
- 12 ambiguous and reasonably susceptible to two
- different meanings, then constitutional
- 14 avoidance has some force, and you pick the one
- that is going to avoid the constitutional
- 16 avoidance.
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Well, when you do
- 18 all that, you usually have a best interpretation
- 19 so you don't get to the constitutional
- 20 avoidance. That's the -- that's the problem.
- 21 MR. FLEMING: Often, I --
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: I think the
- 23 problem is can you read the statute to be not
- 24 the best interpretation but a -- but a second
- 25 best so as to save the statute, as Justice Kagan

1 says, and -- and not opine too forcefully on the First Amendment limits when you don't have to, 2 3 to avoid some of Justice Alito's hypotheticals? MR. FLEMING: Often, one can do that. 5 This is not a case in which I think you can, but I'm -- I'm not here to suggest that 6 7 constitutional avoidance never works. It does. But the first thing one has to do --8 9 and the Court has been clear about this -- is 10 read the statute and apply the standard tools. 11 And I think, when you do this here, there isn't 12 -- there isn't much objection to this on the 13 other side, that -- that when you -- when you 14 read the words, when you look at the fact that 15 Congress uses aiding and abetting and soliciting 16 in other provisions, when it means to reference 17 those doctrines, when you look at the fact that 18 the -- the -- the statute under the government's 19 reading would be completely duplicative and 20 redundant of everything else that comes before and swallow it all up, like the Court said in 21 22 Yates, that is not a plausible reading. And the 23 government has given no persuasive account of 24 what work this provision would be doing if read

their way.

1	When you're left with that, you're
2	saying what are we doing if we turn this
3	encouraging and inducing statute into a
4	solicitation statute, other than rewriting and
5	putting in a statute that Congress could have
6	passed if it wished.
7	I'll point out the second problem with
8	constitutional avoidance is the discussion that
9	we've been having this morning, which is it
10	doesn't actually avoid the problem because, if
11	all you're doing is change the verb from
12	encourage and induce to solicit, you are simply
13	creating a brand-new First Amendment exclusion
14	by creating a statute that prohibits encouraging
15	or soliciting non-criminal conduct, which we've
16	never seen a single statute like that before
17	JUSTICE ALITO: Mister
18	MR. FLEMING: as the point that
19	JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Go ahead.
20	JUSTICE ALITO: Well, Mr. Fleming,
21	could I take you back to the question I asked
22	before, when you gave me the answer that Coates
23	is a case that falls within the category that I
24	mentioned, and you said we didn't know what
25	Coates was doing, but, actually, the opinion

- 1 says Coates was a student involved in a
- 2 demonstration and the other appellants were
- 3 pickets involved in a labor dispute.
- 4 That is expressive conduct at the very
- 5 least. So I -- I ask you again, do you have a
- 6 case in which a person who did not engage in
- 7 speech is able to make a free speech overbreadth
- 8 argument?
- 9 MR. FLEMING: I -- I -- I mean, Coates
- 10 may have been involved, but I'm not sure what
- 11 the Court knew in that event. I think there's a
- 12 footnote in the opinion that says it's not clear
- 13 exactly what he was doing. He was part of the
- 14 group. So I think that's the best example.
- 15 That said, the -- one of the
- 16 cornerstones of the overbreadth doctrine is that
- as long as you are charged under the provision,
- 18 which my client clearly was, and she herself, by
- 19 the way -- the indicted conduct was the sending
- of a retainer in which she agreed to file
- 21 non-fraudulent applications with the government.
- There's no suggestion that anything
- 23 she did was actually fraudulent in terms of what
- 24 she was indicted for for these counts. The mail
- 25 fraud counts had to do with oral statements made

- 1 earlier.
- 2 So there was, in fact, an as-applied
- 3 free speech argument made. It wasn't decided by
- 4 the Ninth Circuit. It's not covered by the
- 5 question presented. But she did engage in
- 6 speech. That's our position.
- 7 But it doesn't matter for purposes of
- 8 the question before the Court because this is an
- 9 overbreadth challenge against the sweep of this
- 10 statute far beyond any legitimate conduct that
- 11 the government would need to prohibit because
- 12 there are many other statutes that prohibit
- 13 actual conduct-based wrongdoing.
- 14 Unless -- if I may, I'd just like to
- point out this is a very unusual statute.
- 16 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: If Congress wrote
- 17 a statute that said it is a crime to aid, abet,
- 18 or solicit certain serious civil offenses, A, B,
- 19 C, is that law on its face permissible?
- 20 MR. FLEMING: I would say not without
- 21 some proof, because, if we take Stevens
- 22 seriously, as I think we have to, there would
- 23 have to be some kind of evidence that the
- 24 framers, at the time that they wrote the First
- 25 Amendment, expected that category of speech to

- 1 be excluded from its ambit.
- 2 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: If Congress had
- 3 rewrote it to say it is a crime to aid or abet
- 4 or solicit certain offenses and then lists --
- 5 and makes them crimes, you're okay with that,
- 6 obviously?
- 7 MR. FLEMING: I mean, that raises --
- 8 that's a harder case. Thankfully, we don't have
- 9 to deal with that here. That raises, I think,
- 10 the difficult question, which Mr. Feigin I think
- 11 very wisely stayed away from, which is it's hard
- to tell sometimes the line between protected
- 13 speech and unprotected solicitation.
- 14 Remember, in Williams, this Court said
- it's perfectly okay to say to someone, I -- I
- 16 encourage you to obtain child pornography.
- 17 That's protected. So is it enough? I mean,
- 18 solicitation of violent offenses, we know that
- 19 that -- that can be prohibited. Solicitation of
- 20 minor offenses, I think that's a difficult
- 21 question. This Court doesn't have a lot of
- 22 solicitation cases on the books. Maybe one day
- 23 Your Honors will have to decide it, but that is
- 24 not today.
- So I would just like to be very clear.

- 1 This is a statute that uses very broad words.
- 2 It uses them in the context in which all they
- 3 can do is ban free speech. The result is that
- 4 vast amounts of truthful and accurate and
- 5 heartfelt speech that's in no way related and
- 6 much less integral to any actual crime is
- 7 subject to five years in federal prison.
- 8 I would submit that the First
- 9 Amendment is wisely designed to protect us from
- 10 just this kind of a law, and we would
- 11 respectfully request that the judgment be
- 12 affirmed.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 counsel.
- Four minutes, Mr. Feigin.
- 16 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF ERIC FEIGIN
- ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- 18 MR. FEIGIN: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 19 Justice.
- 20 I take Respondent's principal
- 21 submission today to be that you simply can't
- read these words to mean anything other than the
- incredibly broad reading that Respondent in the
- 24 Ninth Circuit attribute to them and that's why
- you can't do constitutional avoidance, but

- 1 that's simply not true.
- 2 As Respondent acknowledges on pages 20
- 3 to 21 of her brief, these words can, in the
- 4 context of a criminal complicity provision, at
- 5 least under the canon of noscitur sociis, have
- 6 the meaning that we are attributing to them
- 7 today. And if they can have that meaning in
- 8 that context, they can have that meaning in this
- 9 context.
- These are not unusual or strange words
- 11 to use in this context to mean what we are
- 12 saying that they mean. As we point out in our
- brief, they are commonly used in state statutes,
- 14 the Model Penal Code, the LaFave treatise, even
- 15 decisions of this Court have used them in that
- 16 way.
- 17 Used in that way, they fill a gap in
- 18 this statute that includes conduct, for example,
- 19 under clause 1, the alien -- someone needs to
- 20 actually bring the alien into the United States,
- so even aiding and abetting, bringing into the
- 22 United States, wouldn't cover certain kinds of
- 23 help for aliens who come into the United States
- 24 by themselves.
- 25 Congress was using these words in

- 1 their normal criminal law meaning because let's
- 2 not forget, this statute, as I was discussing
- 3 earlier with Justice Breyer, covers the
- 4 facilitation, solicitation of a lot of actual
- 5 criminal conduct, coming to and entering the
- 6 United States unlawfully.
- 7 To the extent that it also covers
- 8 certain civil violations, for reasons I've
- 9 discussed, I think this Court has recognized in
- 10 previous cases like Pittsburgh Press and Gazzam
- and in the white-applicants-only example that
- 12 Congress or another legislature can civilly
- 13 proscribe speech that facilitates activities
- 14 that are civilly prohibited.
- 15 And if Congress -- and if that were
- 16 really protected speech, Congress or another
- 17 legislature couldn't even civilly proscribe it.
- 18 The reason why it can be civilly
- 19 proscribed is because it is unprotected speech.
- 20 And if it's unprotected speech, then it can be
- 21 subject to a criminal prohibition as well.
- 22 This -- to the extent that this
- 23 statute may reach some protected speech, it can
- 24 be handled as applied. There is no reason to
- 25 read this statute as broadly as Respondent is

- 1 contending that it needs to be read here and
- 2 that the Ninth Circuit read it for the very
- 3 first time --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Feigin --
- 5 MR. FEIGIN: -- in this case.
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- what in reading
- 7 this statute would give an average person notice
- 8 of all of the limitations you're suggesting to
- 9 us? Because I read "encourage or induce an
- alien to come, enter, or reside in the U.S.,
- 11 knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact
- that such coming to, entry, or residence is or
- will be in violation of law, " seems to me that
- 14 all of the examples that were raised earlier,
- the hospital that's treating a child with -- an
- 16 illegally present child with a disease, the
- 17 church who provides worship to illegal aliens,
- 18 all of the other examples that were given on
- 19 their face to the common reader of those words
- 20 would be a violation of the statute.
- MR. FEIGIN: Well, Your Honor, I don't
- 22 think that is the standard -- I don't think
- 23 that's the standard this Court applies that
- 24 someone is ignorant of what those words mean in
- 25 the context of the criminal law.

1	Again, these are not these are not
2	words that are unique to this statute. If you
3	look at the LaFave treatise, Section 13.2, the
4	word "encouraging" is used as the title of
5	section headings to describe accomplice
6	liability. This Court used the word
7	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But accomplice
8	liability
9	MR. FEIGIN: "induce" in Williams.
LO	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: has all sorts
L1	of meaning that you're not endorsing. You're
L2	saying this is not aiding and abetting. You're
L3	saying it's not solicitation. It's something
L4	else
L5	MR. FEIGIN: No, Your Honor
L6	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: altogether?
L7	MR. FEIGIN: we are using the
L8	principles of complicity and solicitation in a
L9	statute that is directed at large amounts of
20	criminal activity to inform what these words
21	mean here.
22	I I suppose it is possible that
23	someone who does not have any knowledge of how
24	those words are used in the context of
25	facilitation or solicitation statutes might look

Т	at it and might have the reaction that they
2	should be given a different meaning, but I don't
3	think that's the standard this Court should
4	apply. Thank you.
5	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
6	counsel. The case is submitted.
7	(Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m., the case
8	was submitted.)
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