



Beaird v. United States, No. 25-5343: Argued October 13. How Much Weight Must Judges Give the Sentencing Commission's Commentary?

Public paper · October 13, 2026 · Supreme Court desk · Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby

The Supreme Court hears *Beaird v. United States* on October 13, 2026. The question is whether a 1993 case, *Stinson v. United States*, still sets how much deference courts must give the commentary to the federal Sentencing Guidelines. Here are the parties, the exact question, the briefs and the terms, explained.

The Court heard argument in No. 25-5343, *Beaird v. United States* on Tuesday, October 13, 2026 (Argument Calendar, October 2026 session; docket No. 25-5343).

This paper uses only the Court's dockets, orders and the official filings and opinions named under Sources. Each fact is cited. Legal terms are explained in plain words at the bottom of the page.

Who the parties are

- Petitioner: Kendrick Jarrell Beaird (docket No. 25-5343).
- Respondent: the United States. Its merits brief is listed as "Brief of respondent United States Supporting Vacatur" (docket No. 25-5343).
- Court-appointed amicus: Anthony J. Dick of Washington, D.C., invited by the Court on May 6, 2026 to argue that *Stinson* still states the correct rule (Questions Presented, No. 25-5343).

What happened in the lower courts

- The case comes from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, No. 24-10764, decision reported at 2025 WL 1410410. The record came from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas (Questions Presented, No. 25-5343; docket No. 25-5343).

- Beard's petition raised three questions, including a Second Amendment challenge to 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1). The Court granted review on April 20, 2026 "limited to" the Stinson question (Questions Presented, No. 25-5343).

The question the Court is deciding

"Whether Stinson v. United States, 508 U. S. 36 (1993), still correctly states the rule for the deference that courts must give the commentary to the Sentencing Guidelines." (Questions Presented, No. 25-5343, order granting certiorari.)

Case timeline

- Apr. 20, 2026: Certiorari granted, limited to the Stinson question.

- May 6, 2026: Court invites Anthony J. Dick as amicus.

- Summer 2026: Merits briefs and amicus briefs filed, including from NACDL, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, West Virginia, Cato Institute, FADM, the National Association of Federal Defenders, the New Civil Liberties Alliance and The Buckeye Institute (docket No. 25-5343).

- Oct. 13, 2026: Oral argument.

What's at stake (in the official documents' own words)

- The Court will decide how much weight judges must give the commentary to the Sentencing Guidelines when they sentence people convicted of federal crimes (Questions Presented, No. 25-5343). Notice Nearby found no official statement of the effects beyond that question.

What happens next, and when

The Court will issue a written opinion later in the October 2026 Term. No date is announced in advance (Argument Calendar).

What these terms mean

- Certiorari (writ of certiorari) (say it: *ser-shee-uh-RAIR-ee*). Means: An order from the Supreme Court telling a lower court to send up the records of a case the Justices have agreed to hear. Origin and history: The Certiorari Act of 1925 gave the Supreme Court the choice of whether to hear most appeals. Today it agrees to hear about 100 to 150 of the more than 7,000 cases it is asked to review each year. *Source: Meaning: uscourts.gov Glossary of Legal Terms, "Writ of certiorari." History: uscourts.gov, "About the Supreme Court" (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts).*

- Cert granted (say it: *SURT GRAN-tid*). Means: The Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case. It is not a ruling on who wins. Origin and history: "Cert" is short for certiorari. When a party asks the Court to review its case, it files a petition for a writ of certiorari. *Source: uscourts.gov, "About the Supreme Court"; Supreme Court Order List, Oct. 13, 2026 ("The petitions for writs of certiorari are granted").*

- Amicus curiae (say it: *uh-MEE-kus KYOOR-ee-eye*). Means: A brief filed by a person or group that is not a party to the case but has an interest in it, offering its own arguments. Origin and history: Latin for "friend of the

court." *Source: uscourts.gov Glossary, "Amicus curiae"; uscourts.gov, "Supreme Court Procedures."*

- In forma pauperis (say it: *in FOR-muh PAW-per-iss*). Means: Permission to file a case without paying the court's fees, because the person cannot afford them. Origin and history: Latin for "in the manner of a pauper."

Source: uscourts.gov Glossary of Legal Terms, "In forma pauperis."

- Docket (say it: *DOK-it*). Means: The court's running log of a case, with a short dated entry for every filing and order. Origin and history: Each Supreme Court case gets a docket number, such as No. 25-1103. *Source: uscourts.gov Glossary of Legal Terms, "Docket."*

- Vacated and remanded (say it: *VAY-kay-tid and ree-MAN-did*). Means: "Vacated" means the lower court's judgment is canceled and no longer in force. "Remanded" means the case goes back to the lower court for further proceedings. Origin and history: A remand is the act of an appellate court sending a case back to a lower court for further proceedings. *Source: uscourts.gov Glossary, "Remand"; Supreme Court Order List, Oct. 13, 2026 ("The judgment is vacated, and the case is remanded").*

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Read next

- [U.S. DOGE Service v. U.S. District Court for D.C.](/papers/scotus-case-us-doge-service-v-district-court-25-1103)
- [Blanche v. Ozurumba](/papers/scotus-case-blanche-v-ozurumba-25-1343)
- [Berry v. United States](/papers/scotus-case-berry-v-united-states-25-7026)
- [FCC v. Brown](/papers/scotus-case-fcc-v-brown-26a476-political-ad-rates)
- [Salazar v. Paramount Global](/papers/scotus-case-salazar-v-paramount-global-25-459-video-privacy)
- [Howard v. Texas / In re Howard](/papers/scotus-case-jamaal-howard-texas-26-5759-26-5773-26-5754)
- [Roofing Designs v. Royal American](/papers/scotus-case-roofing-designs-v-royal-american-25-1367-gvr)
- [Silva Ochoa v. United States](/papers/scotus-case-silva-ochoa-v-united-states-25-7569-gvr)
- [Monsanto v. Dennis](/papers/scotus-case-monsanto-v-dennis-26-139-roundup-gvr)
- [Hobson v. United States](/papers/scotus-case-hobson-v-united-states-26-5216-gvr)
- [Order list, Oct. 13, 2026](/papers/scotus-order-list-oct-13-2026-three-cases-granted)
- [Chief Justice stays the Fourth Circuit in FCC v. Brown](/papers/scotus-chief-justice-stays-fourth-circuit-fcc-v-brown-26a476)
- [Arguments this week and the November calendar](/papers/scotus-arguments-oct-13-14-beard-salazar-november-calendar)
- [Howard stay denials, Oct. 7](/papers/scotus-denies-stay-jamaal-howard-texas-oct-7)

Sources

- Supreme Court docket No. 25-5343, read Oct. 13, 2026.
- Questions Presented, No. 25-5343.

- Argument Calendar, Session Beginning Oct. 5, 2026 (amended Sept. 14, 2026).

Notes

- Image: Interior of the U.S. Supreme Court, Washington, D.C. (file photo). Photo: Carol M. Highsmith, Library of Congress (public domain).
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