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Case Analysis

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United States v. Lopez

Case Analysis Relevant Facts: A student in 12th grade, named Alfonzo Lopez, took a weapon inside his high school in San Antonio, Texas on March 10, 1992. According to Texas law, he was forbidden to be in possession of a firearm on school premises. Therefore, he was charged by the state for violating this law. However, on the following day, the charges were dismissed because, as per federal agents, he violated the Gun-Free School Zones Act of 1990. Instead, he was charged for violating a federal criminal statute. The Gun-Free School Zones Act of 1990 states that no individual should knowingly possess a firearm in a school zone. Following a bench trial, the court found Lopez guilty and sentenced him to six months jail time plus a supervised release for two years.

Legal Issue: Whether the 1990 Gun-Free School Zones Act that forbids individuals who know about a school zone to carry firearms there is unconstitutional because "it exceeds the power of Congress to legislate under the Commerce Clause" (Oyez, n.d.).

Opinion of the Court: The court held that the power of Congress was limited to regulating the possession of firearms in a school zone under the Commerce Clause.

Reasons for the Court Opinion: Because the carrying of firearms in a school zone will not affect interstate commerce even if it were repeated elsewhere. The court, further, states that the Gun-free law is a criminal statute that has no economic bearing whatsoever and, therefore. "has nothing to do with commerce" (Wikipedia, n.d.).

References

United States v. Lopez. (2015, August). Wikipedia. Retrieved on September 19, 2021, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_v._Lopez

United States v. Lopez. (n.d.). Oyez. Retrieved September 19, 2021, from https://www.oyez.org/cases/1994/93-1260

Grade (A)/Comments: Your case analysis was very well done. The Reasons section (#4) was excellent. Very well stated. Keep up your very good work Nicole