SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	UNITED STATES
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DAVID PATCHAK,)
Petitioner,)
v.) No. 16-498
RYAN ZINKE, SECRETARY OF THE)
INTERIOR, ET AL.,)
Respondents.)
	_

Pages: 1 through 74

Place: Washington, D.C.

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8	Respondents.)
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10		
11	Washington, D.C.	
12	Tuesday, November 7	, 2017
13	The above-entitled m	atter came on for ora
14	argument before the Supreme Cour	t of the United States
15	at 10:03 a.m.	
16		
17	APPEARANCES:	
18	SCOTT E. GANT, Washington, D.C.;	on
19	behalf of the Petitioner	
20	ANN O'CONNELL, Assistant to the	Solicitor General,
21	Department of Justice, Washi	ngton, D.C.; on
22	behalf of the Federal Respon	dents
23	PRATIK A. SHAH, Washington, D.C.	; on
24	behalf of the Match-E-Be-Nas	h-She-Wish Band
25	of Pottawatomi Indians Respo	indent

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:03 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear
4	argument this morning in Case 16-498, Patchak
5	versus Zinke.
6	Mr. Gant.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF SCOTT E. GANT
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
9	MR. GANT: Mr. Chief Justice, and may
10	it please the Court:
11	Section 2(b) of the Gun Lake Act is
12	unconstitutional because it is incompatible
13	with several well-established strands of this
14	Court's separation-of-powers jurisprudence as
15	well as with Article III itself. With Section
16	2(b), Congress directed the federal courts to
17	dismiss a pending case otherwise properly
18	before the courts.
19	As a consequence of that directive to
20	dismiss with respect to Mr. Patchak's case, the
21	courts were prevented from performing their
22	constitutionally assigned responsibilities to
23	decide cases before them and to say what the
24	law is in the context of deciding those cases.
25	Section 2(b) is precisely the kind of

- 1 legislative review of judicial decisions that
- 2 the framers rejected when they designed the
- 3 Constitution. And all of --
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Gant, when -- when
- 5 you say "directed that a case shall be
- 6 dismissed," are you referring only to the last
- 7 few words of this statute or are you referring
- 8 more broadly?
- 9 MR. GANT: I'm referring to the -- to
- 10 the last -- the words that refer to dismissal
- 11 itself.
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: Right. "And shall be
- 13 promptly dismissed."
- MR. GANT: Yes. And then --
- 15 JUSTICE KAGAN: Are you suggesting
- 16 that if those five words were not in the
- 17 statute, that the case would come out
- 18 differently?
- 19 MR. GANT: I -- I am not suggesting
- 20 that. I think it would still have come out
- 21 differently; for example, if you dropped the
- reference to dismissal but left "maintain," the
- 23 result would be the same. The same would be
- true if there had been a removal of judicial
- 25 review.

1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In other words, if 2 two -- if the -- if the statute had contained just 2(a) but not 2(b), same result? 3 MR. GANT: No. That -- I understand 4 that to be a different question from Justice 5 6 Kagan's. If 2(a) were -- were the only part of the statute, we had no 2(b) -- 2(c) is not at 7 issue here. So, if we had 2(a) only, we 8 9 wouldn't be here arguing that there was a separation-of-powers violation. 10 11 Part of the problem here --12 JUSTICE KAGAN: But -- but if you had 13 2(b), finished, just shall not be filed or 14 maintained in a federal court, full stop, you're saying that would be the same statute as 15 16 the one we actually have? 17 MR. GANT: It -- it would still be unconstitutional. 18 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: Yeah. 20 MR. GANT: Now, the -- the omission of the "shall be dismissed" language is not 21 without significance. And if I may, I'd like 22 to explain. 23 24 The direction to dismiss is a quintessential judicial function. It's not 25

surprising that Black's dictionary, in defining 1 2 dismissal, refers to it as especially a judge's 3 decision to stop the case. That's --4 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, what do you 6 do with the McCardle case? MR. GANT: McCardle was -- the fact 7 that a statute strips jurisdiction from a court 8 9 doesn't mean that it's immunized from review under separation of powers. So the -- the 10 touchstone has to be and the relevant strands 11 of the separation-of-powers jurisprudence at 12 13 issue here are really two parts. 14 One is, has Congress exercised the judicial power and/or has Congress prevented 15 16 the courts from fulfilling its constitutionally 17 assigned responsibilities? I submit that both have occurred here as a result of what is in 18 19 the actual 2(b), but the same result would arise if you omitted just the words "shall be 20 dismissed." 2.1 22 JUSTICE GORSUCH: But, Mr. --23 JUSTICE ALITO: If this is a -- just a jurisdiction-stripping statute, could you just 24 say as succinctly as possible what the rule is 25

- 1 that you would like us to adopt? What is the
- 2 -- the separation-of-powers rule that you would
- 3 like us to adopt with respect to a purely
- 4 jurisdiction-stripping statute?
- 5 MR. GANT: Well, I -- I want to be
- 6 directly responsive to your question, but I
- 7 also want to say, and I've made this
- 8 observation in the briefs, I think the better
- 9 view is that it is not jurisdictional. I'm
- 10 happy to elaborate on that later. But if we
- 11 assume that it's a jurisdiction-stripping
- 12 statute --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, on that,
- 14 suppose, following up on the initial questions,
- if all that 2(b) said was that an action
- 16 relating to this land shall not be maintained
- in a federal court, would you say that is not a
- 18 jurisdiction-stripping statute?
- 19 MR. GANT: That --- that certainly
- 20 looks more like a jurisdiction-stripping
- 21 statute. The reason that I say that the better
- view is it's not jurisdictional is -- is at
- 23 least twofold.
- 24 One is -- and I -- I have been accused
- 25 by some colleagues of taking Arbaugh too

- 1 seriously, but this Court went out of its way
- 2 in Arbaugh to announce to the world and to
- 3 Congress in particular that it wanted a new
- 4 rule, that if a court wanted a statute to be
- 5 viewed as jurisdictional, you needed to clearly
- 6 say so.
- 7 This statute doesn't say anywhere in
- 8 its text, in its headings, that it's
- 9 jurisdictional. In fact, 2(b), the section
- 10 we're discussing that -- that arguably strips
- jurisdiction from the courts, uses the phrase
- 12 "no claims."
- 13 My research may have been faulty, but
- 14 I couldn't find a single case using that
- 15 language in framing a jurisdictional statute.
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, if one of the
- 17 things that 2(b) does is to strip jurisdiction,
- and if "shall not" -- "shall not be maintained"
- is a jurisdiction-stripping provision, then I
- don't see how you can win unless you have a
- 21 rule that applies to a jurisdiction-stripping
- 22 statute. Maybe there are other things in this
- 23 statute that are vulnerable, so they could be
- 24 severed.
- So, to go back to the question I

- 1 asked, if this is a statute that takes away 2 federal court jurisdiction, what is your 3 separation-of-powers rule? 4 MR. GANT: The rule -- the rule, I 5 submit, the Court should adopt is if a statute 6 is deemed as properly -- is properly construed as a jurisdiction-stripping statute, it is 7 still subject to separation-of-powers analysis. 8 9 That -- that much is clear from Klein. However, whatever else about the case might be 10 puzzling, Klein clearly establishes that the 11 12 mere fact that Congress affixes the label "jurisdiction" to a statute doesn't immunize 13 14 it.
- So then we return to our touchstone
 principles here. Has, through this
 jurisdiction statute, Congress exercised the
 judicial power and/or has it prevented the
 courts from fulfilling their constitutionally
 assigned responsibilities?
- JUSTICE ALITO: Yeah, but when -- as succinctly as you can, Congress violates the separation of powers when it deprives the federal courts of jurisdiction in this circumstance. And what is the circumstance?

- 1 MR. GANT: The circumstance is when it
- 2 is directly, overtly deciding a case or
- 3 effectively deciding a case, rather than making
- 4 new law and leaving it to the courts to apply
- 5 the new law.
- 6 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, let's --
- 7 let's take -- which is not fictional, suppose
- 8 Congress enacts a statute that says a federal
- 9 court shall not have jurisdiction over cases
- 10 involving prayer in school. Constitutional?
- 11 MR. GANT: I think that raises serious
- 12 but -- but somewhat different questions. Part
- of what's offensive here to the separation of
- 14 powers principles is that Congress is directing
- 15 the outcome in a case. It could be a set of
- 16 cases.
- 17 And I submit, by the way, that look --
- 18 looking to Bank Markazi, if there had been
- 19 1,000 cases just like Patchak's, I think the
- outcome would be the same. So the fact that it
- 21 is one case is, I think, probative of assessing
- 22 whether or not the Congress is actually
- 23 deciding a case, rather than actually making
- the law to be applied by the courts.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, if that's so, I

- 1 mean, I thought that you were suggesting a rule
- that said, well, when you direct one case,
- 3 that's unconstitutional, but now you've just
- 4 said you're not saying that.
- 5 So, again, coming back to Justice
- 6 Alito's question, I mean, we know that Congress
- 7 can alter the jurisdiction of the federal
- 8 courts. And we know that Congress can alter
- 9 that jurisdiction and apply it to pending
- 10 cases. We've said that over and over again.
- 11 So what makes -- what would make this
- 12 unconstitutional if we assumed that this is a
- 13 jurisdiction-stripping statute?
- MR. GANT: Because what Congress has
- done is affect directly here, but it could be
- indirectly, dictated the outcome of the case
- 17 without changing the law.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: So, Mr. Gant, it's
- 19 that last clause.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, the law is the
- 21 jurisdictional law. That's what Congress is
- 22 changing. Congress is changing jurisdiction.
- 23 In so doing, Congress is changing the law. We
- haven't said Congress has to change, you know,
- 25 substantive law.

1 Here Congress is changing jurisdictional law. It's saying, you know, 2 yesterday you had jurisdiction over a certain 3 category of cases. Today you don't. 4 5 Now, why is that unconstitutional or 6 when is that unconstitutional? MR. GANT: That is unconstitutional when in the -- under the guise of -- of 8 9 changing the rules with respect to jurisdiction, the court is effectively deciding 10 the case and then not letting the courts apply 11 12 the new law either. So both things have occurred here. 13 So, in Bank Markazi and in Robertson, the 14 reason why those survive separation of powers 15 16 scrutiny was because they changed the law and 17 they left it to the courts to apply to new 18 cases. You have the exact opposite here. 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: So, Mr. Gant, if I understand it, the answer to the question, I 20 think, is that last clause, the dismiss, 21 ordering the courts to dismiss the claim, that 22 up to that point, shall not be filed or 23 maintained, if that's jurisdictional, as I 24 understand, you and your amici are okay with 25

- 1 that. It's the directing the dismissal.
- But if that's the only beef we have,
- 3 is that really a beef at all because that's a
- 4 natural consequence of a jurisdiction-stripping
- 5 statute as McCardle itself, as Justice Ginsburg
- 6 pointed out, right, so there's nothing left. I
- 7 think it's almost a virtual quote from
- 8 McCardle, right, there's nothing left to be
- 9 done but dismiss. So where is the real beef
- 10 here?
- MR. GANT: Justice Gorsuch, I think
- 12 what the -- collectively, what the courts'
- 13 cases instruct us is that we shouldn't stop the
- inquiry at the label.
- 15 We know that from Klein. We know that
- 16 from other cases. So this case isn't framed as
- 17 jurisdictional, but if -- if we assume that the
- 18 --
- 19 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Assuming it's
- jurisdictional and all you're left with is this
- 21 complaint about the last clause, why should we
- 22 care?
- 23 MR. GANT: We should care because then
- 24 what Congress is doing is it's -- it's giving
- 25 carte blanche to dictate the outcome of cases

- 1 just by affixing the label jurisdictional.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: And I thought you,
- in your response to Justice Kagan, you said it
- 4 wouldn't make any difference if those last
- 5 words were omitted, "shall be dismissed." You
- 6 would have the same objection.
- 7 MR. GANT: I would have the same
- 8 objection -- let me be clear there. With
- 9 respect to pending cases, so the two words that
- 10 are operative here with respect to pending
- 11 cases are "shall not be maintained" and "shall
- 12 be dismissed." I'm not talking about the
- 13 filed.
- So, with respect to prospective cases,
- we're not arguing that Section 2(b) would be
- 16 unconstitutional because it wouldn't implicate
- 17 the -- the strands of the separation of powers
- 18 jurisprudence that I was discussing.
- 19 So it's with respect to pending cases
- 20 where both the shall not be -- may not be
- 21 maintained and shall be dismissed are both --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I don't think that's
- 23 the question, Mr. Gant. I think the question
- is, and this was what I started with, would you
- 25 be making the same constitutional argument if

- 1 the last five words were not there? And I took
- 2 you to say, yes, you would be making the same
- 3 constitutional argument, and in so doing, you
- 4 separated yourself from your amici because I
- 5 understand your amici, as Justice Gorsuch does,
- 6 as saying that everything hangs on that last
- 7 five words.
- 8 And you're suggesting that not
- 9 everything hangs on that last five words, that
- 10 you would have the exact same constitutional
- objections if those five words weren't in the
- 12 picture. Do I have you right?
- MR. GANT: Yes. I think the fact that
- it includes the dismissal term is -- makes it
- particularly pernicious, so I would say that's
- 16 additional, pushing it even further beyond.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: It's like bad
- 18 atmospherics?
- 19 MR. GANT: Well, but it -- but it's
- 20 not just atmospherics. As I -- as I suggested
- 21 earlier, I think there's an argument to be made
- that a direction from Congress to the courts to
- 23 dismiss a case is telling the courts how to
- 24 perform their duties in an impermissible way.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counselor --

1	JUSTICE KAGAN: But then you do get,
2	again, and I think that this is the underlying
3	premise of Justice Gorsuch's question, so take
4	out the last five words, and you were trying to
5	explain why what then just seems a
6	jurisdiction-stripping statute is
7	unconstitutional, in that against the
8	backdrop of a very consistent precedent that we
9	have that says that Congress can take away the
LO	jurisdiction of the federal courts and can do
L1	so in a way that affects pending cases.
L2	And and so why and when is that
L3	unconstitutional?
L4	MR. GANT: Because you have to pierce
L5	the label of jurisdiction and return to the
L6	basic principles, which are is Congress
L7	exercising judicial functions or is it
L8	preventing the judiciary from carrying out its
L9	actions.
20	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It seems that
21	we we've been replicating what among lawyers
22	anyway is a famous dialogue between Professors
23	Wechsler and Hart about whether Congress can
24	achieve unconstitutional objectives by
25	preventing federal courts from adjudicating

- 1 claims that those provisions are
- 2 unconstitutional.
- 3 You know, during the civil rights era,
- 4 there were a lot of proposals in Congress that
- 5 said the federal courts have no jurisdiction
- 6 over any case in which busing is sought as a
- 7 remedy. And those types of proposals are
- 8 consistently submitted whenever Congress
- 9 attempts to achieve an unconstitutional result
- 10 by depriving the federal courts of
- 11 jurisdiction.
- So I would have thought your answer is
- 13 -- is -- I would have thought you would have
- 14 taken the position that I understand to be
- ascribed to Professor Hart in the dialogue,
- 16 which is that that is an indirect way of
- 17 achieving an unconstitutional result and is
- 18 subject to the same objection.
- 19 MR. GANT: That is my position. And I
- 20 --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counselor, can I
- 22 -- I want to switch from personal jurisdiction
- 23 to sovereign immunity, in part for the reasons
- 24 that the Chief is -- Chief Justice is talking
- 25 about. Okay?

- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: In Patchak I, I
- 3 took the position that the court got sovereign
- 4 immunity wrong, and basically I argued -- the
- 5 majority disagreed -- that -- that the Quiet
- 6 Title Act really granted immunity. And the
- 7 majority disagreed and said this had to do with
- 8 APA waiver of immunity.
- 9 I look at statutory history and this
- 10 new act, the Reaffirmation Act, was in the
- 11 context of that dispute in that case. And what
- 12 Congress did was settled the question, which I
- 13 believe it's entitled to do and is not
- 14 unconstitutional, it ratified the acts of the
- 15 Secretary's taking of this land, and by that
- 16 act implicated the Quiet Title Act.
- 17 And so, if it did that, I see this --
- 18 and I don't understand why it's not, that
- 19 waiver of sovereign immunity that the court did
- 20 not recognize in Patchak I.
- 21 And I raise this for two reasons:
- One, I do think there's a difference between
- 23 the Congress coming in between two private
- 24 parties and directing a result in favor of one
- 25 private party. I think that's a quintessential

- 1 separation of powers question and a very, very
- 2 serious one.
- 3 But I think there is something
- 4 fundamentally different about suits involving
- 5 the government because sovereign immunity or
- 6 any suit against the government is a matter
- 7 only of largesse and the government's voluntary
- 8 choice.
- 9 We have repeatedly through the
- 10 centuries said the government can at any moment
- 11 take away its sovereign immunity. It can take
- away that niceness of giving you the immunity.
- So I see the potential of less of a
- 14 problem with separation of powers if -- if the
- 15 government has withdrawn sovereign immunity
- than it directing the outcome between private
- 17 parties. I would be really frightened if we
- 18 let the government do that.
- 19 MR. GANT: Well, I --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But -- so, given
- 21 that statutory history, the only issue that was
- left alive or was at issue in Patchak I, given
- 23 that the waiver of sovereign immunity that was
- taken away tracks the APA language, the APA's
- language says that a suit can be maintained

- 1 against the government, why isn't this a
- 2 sovereign immunity case?
- Why am I dealing with personal
- 4 jurisdiction at all or separation of powers
- 5 questions at all?
- 6 MR. GANT: Because, with respect to
- 7 both the text of the Gun Lake Act, as well as
- 8 the statutory history, I submit that sovereign
- 9 immunity, the restoration of sovereign immunity
- 10 did not exist. The text nowhere mentions
- 11 sovereign immunity. If you look at --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: We've never said
- 13 it had to.
- MR. GANT: Well, it doesn't have to,
- 15 but there -- there are no other indicia, I
- 16 submit, that suggest --
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All of the
- 18 statutory history indicia.
- MR. GANT: Well --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: The whole fight in
- 21 Patchak I was over the existence or
- 22 non-existence of sovereign immunity.
- MR. GANT: But given that, and of
- 24 course the statutory history is to some extent
- in the eye of the beholder, I look at it and I

- 1 see, given the history that you've just
- 2 outlined, that if what Congress had intended to
- do was to restore sovereign immunity, there
- 4 would have been more evidence of that.
- 5 It wasn't mentioned anywhere in any of
- 6 the -- the hearings. It wasn't mentioned in
- 7 the House or Senate reports. It wasn't
- 8 mentioned --
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, why wouldn't
- 10 -- wouldn't -- Patchak turned on this Court's
- 11 holding sovereign immunity had been waived.
- 12 And now Congress -- using the APA words, and
- the APA itself doesn't say sovereign immunity,
- 14 so the APA withdrew the immunity, and this,
- using the same kind of language, restores it.
- 16 Why isn't that the appropriate way to
- 17 look at this case? What did Congress want to
- 18 do? They -- we said sovereign immunity is
- 19 waived. They said sovereign immunity is not
- 20 waived.
- 21 MR. GANT: I take Congress at its word
- in what it intended to do, and the D.C. Circuit
- said the same, which is to void the case, to
- 24 make it go away, to direct dismissal against
- 25 Patchak and for Zinke. That's what -- that's

- 1 what the statute says. That's how the D.C.
- 2 Circuit, I think, properly understood it.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: If this suit had
- 4 proceeded to a conclusion, would -- and Patchak
- 5 prevailed, would he be entitled to costs?
- 6 MR. GANT: He might be. And that's
- 7 certainly one of the things that would have --
- 8 there are a number of things that would be
- 9 addressed on remand. And for the -- the
- 10 statute, (a) and (b) are not severable. And --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, I'm -- I'm
- wondering if it helps your position to say that
- 13 the Congress is stripping him of certain rights
- 14 that he had because of the litigation.
- MR. GANT: Well, there -- there's no
- 16 question. I mean, we'd have to go back on
- 17 remand in addressing the question of
- 18 entitlement to costs and others, the
- 19 entitlement to declaratory judgment, the
- 20 meaning of 2(a). What Congress --
- JUSTICE BREYER: When -- when you say
- 22 2(a) --
- MR. GANT: Yeah.
- JUSTICE BREYER: -- imagine that was
- 25 the only statute. I thought your claim -- and

- 1 imagine, as well, that 2(a) is, in fact,
- 2 constitutional and Congress can say in 2017
- 3 that when we took this into federal trust
- 4 territory, Indian trust territory, that was
- 5 constitutional. That's what it does, right.
- If that's constitutional to do that,
- 7 do you have any case left?
- 8 MR. GANT: We do. We do have a case.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: What's the case?
- 10 MR. GANT: Leaving aside the -- am I
- 11 assuming that it's separable?
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: You forget -- suppose
- 13 (b) and (c) were never there. They just passed
- 14 (a).
- MR. GANT: If they just passed (a), as
- 16 I -- I think I mentioned this earlier in
- 17 response to another question, we would not be
- 18 arguing.
- 19 JUSTICE BREYER: I realize that, but
- 20 my question is: Would your client have a
- 21 lawsuit? What would be the basis for it?
- 22 Because I thought his basis was that the taking
- 23 of the land into trust was not lawful under a
- 24 particular act because that just referred to
- 25 tribes that were tribes in the '30s. Right?

- 1 MR. GANT: Yeah.
- 2 JUSTICE BREYER: Now, this act says we
- 3 don't give a -- we don't care about that; we
- 4 say that the government had the power to take
- 5 it into trust anyway. And it had that power to
- 6 take it into trust when it did. All right?
- 7 So, if that's the law, what is your
- 8 client suing about?
- 9 MR. GANT: Well --
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: How can he win?
- 11 MR. GANT: For purposes of your
- 12 question, I'm presupposing that that's the law.
- 13 JUSTICE BREYER: Yeah.
- MR. GANT: But one thing that happened
- 15 here is no court could make that determination.
- JUSTICE BREYER: No, no, but what's
- 17 your argument?
- 18 MR. GANT: The argument -- the
- 19 argument is that -- well, we would argue that
- 20 it's not retroactive. We would argue --
- JUSTICE BREYER: It says -- it says
- 22 ratified.
- 23 MR. GANT: I -- I understand. But I
- 24 -- I -- we haven't briefed this, but I submit
- 25 that there is an argument, a colorable

- 1 argument, to be made that ratification is in a
- 2 sense an endorsement -- if you look at -- on
- 3 page 2 of the --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. So your
- 5 argument is that (a) applies only to taking
- 6 into trust after the passage of the act -- the
- 7 (a), after the passage of (a)?
- 8 MR. GANT: Yes.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: In other words, it
- 10 doesn't ratify the prior taking into trust of
- 11 Indian land?
- MR. GANT: That is an argument. There
- was an argument made below about the meaning of
- 14 (a) before the district court when this was --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. That's your
- 16 best argument?
- 17 MR. GANT: No, no, it's not. It is
- 18 not. There was an argument made below that the
- 19 -- the ratification talks about taking the land
- 20 into trust. But that doesn't mean that it
- 21 authorizes all uses of the property. So
- there's a distinction between the land being
- 23 into trust and --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay, I've got
- 25 it. Got it, got it.

1 MR. GANT: -- there are other -- there

- 2 are others.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Gant, could I --
- 4 I'm sorry to drag you around like this, but the
- 5 Chief Justice asked you a question and you
- 6 indicated that you agreed with his
- 7 understanding of when a jurisdictional statute
- 8 violated the Constitution, and -- and then you
- 9 were interrupted.
- I just want to hear a little bit more
- 11 about what you think of his question.
- 12 MR. GANT: Sure. I hope I have it
- 13 firmly in mind. And at the same time, I want
- 14 to try and answer your -- some of your prior
- 15 questions and the question --
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: There's also the
- 17 parties' side.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, I'm interested
- in that question, the Chief Justice's question,
- 20 because he gave you a theory; you said yes.
- MR. GANT: Okay.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: But what does that
- mean, "yes"? Yes why?
- 24 MR. GANT: What Congress cannot do is
- 25 direct the outcomes of a case even under the

guise of jurisdiction. Let's go back to the 1 2 "Smith wins" hypothetical from Bank Markazi. 3 JUSTICE ALITO: But I -- I thought the Chief Justice's examples were instances in 4 5 which a hypothetical statute deprived the 6 federal court of the opportunity to rule on violations of -- on constitutional -- alleged 7 constitutional violations, the same as the 8 9 question that Justice Ginsburg gave to you, taking away jurisdiction over cases involving 10 prayer in the schools or jurisdiction over 11 12 equal protection violations, but this is a 13 statutory case. 14 MR. GANT: It is, although it has -because there were -- the Court in Patchak I 15 16 addressed standing and sovereign immunity, 17 which at least have constitutional dimensions, but there's no doubt about the fact that the 18 19 underlying claims at issue in the pending 2.0 complaint that's still operative are statutory in nature. The only thing I think --21 2.2 JUSTICE BREYER: So why don't you 23 bring your case in state court? It doesn't say 24 the state court doesn't have a -- I mean, yeah, bring it in state court. 25

1 MR. GANT: I would have to think about

- 2 whether we could do that.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Why?
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, can the
- 5 tribe be sued in state court?
- JUSTICE BREYER: Yeah, general
- 7 jurisdiction.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Can the
- 9 federal government be sued in state court?
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: You can. Yeah.
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I'm asking
- 12 you.
- 13 (Laughter.)
- MR. GANT: I don't want to get in the
- 15 way of a good discussion.
- 16 (Laughter.)
- 17 MR. GANT: I honestly don't know the
- 18 -- I don't know the answer.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But I suppose
- 20 -- I suppose the question is, I mean, just as
- in a case of -- the antibusing cases, there's a
- 22 constitutional violation that Congress is
- trying to insulate from review, and that's the
- 24 separation-of-powers claim.
- 25 MR. GANT: And I took your question to

- 1 be that these were -- not that these were
- 2 identical situations, this case and -- and the
- 3 situations that Mr. Chief Justice posited, but
- 4 that they were close cousins.
- 5 And to go back to a question to try
- and more directly answer your question, Justice
- 7 Gorsuch -- and I want to do save a few moments
- 8 for rebuttal -- if a statute said we think
- 9 Smith should win and, therefore, we -- we
- 10 determine that the courts shall not have
- 11 jurisdiction, that can't -- the fact that it
- says it's jurisdictional cannot possibly save
- it from a separation-of-powers scrutiny and
- 14 analysis.
- 15 And this is substantially similar to
- 16 that situation.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: So why -- why is it
- 18 substantially similar to that situation? That
- 19 makes it sound like it's because it's about a
- 20 single case, but you said that that wasn't your
- 21 theory. So what is your theory?
- MR. GANT: Right. We could change it
- 23 to -- to 10 Smiths win or in every case of
- 24 Smith v. Jones. It's not the number. It's the
- 25 fact that Congress is directing the outcome and

- 1 it's saying that you win not because we've
- 2 changed the law, and notwithstanding old law
- 3 because we know two things about the old law --
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: But doesn't Congress
- 5 always do that when it strips the federal
- 6 courts of jurisdiction over a category of
- 7 cases?
- 8 MR. GANT: No.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Because we have said
- 10 that that applies to pending suits. So I guess
- 11 the question is: Why aren't you saying that
- 12 every time we said that, we were wrong; that
- any time Congress changes the jurisdiction of
- 14 the federal court and then applies to pending
- 15 cases, that that's a separation-of-powers
- 16 issue?
- 17 MR. GANT: Because Shore and the other
- 18 separation-of-powers cases of this Court
- 19 counsel that we should take a functional,
- 20 practical look at the particulars of the case.
- 21 And in this case, unlike these hypothetical
- 22 statutes, you have Congress clearly directing
- 23 the outcome of the case where, under old law,
- this Court held that this case may proceed.
- 25 The House report at page 2 said, under existing

- 1 law, the -- putting the land into trust was
- 2 likely unlawful.
- 3 And the only thing that changed was
- 4 Congress said this case goes away, period.
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: I mean, sounds like
- 6 this is just based on your -- your analysis of
- 7 Congress's intent.
- 8 MR. GANT: No, I -- it's not.
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: Let's take a case that
- 10 we -- we had earlier this term under the Alien
- 11 Tort Statute. I don't know whether you're
- 12 familiar with it. But it provides jurisdiction
- in the federal courts for a suit by an alien
- 14 concerning certain torts. And we have the
- 15 question whether a corporation can be sued.
- 16 Suppose Congress were to pass a
- 17 statute that says that no federal court shall
- 18 have jurisdiction of an Alien Tort Statute suit
- 19 where the defendant is a corporation. There
- are a limited number of cases involving that,
- 21 pending cases. Would that be unconstitutional?
- MR. GANT: We'd have to look at the
- 23 particulars of the case and make a judgment
- 24 based on the case whether Congress was
- 25 directing the outcome of particular cases or

- 1 was it functioning more in a legislative role.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, it's certain --
- 3 I'm sorry. Your light's on.
- 4 MR. GANT: Well, I'm here for you, but
- 5 I would like to reserve --
- 6 (Laughter.)
- 7 MR. GANT: I would like to reserve a
- 8 few moments for rebuttal, but I -- but --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, why
- don't you answer the -- ask and then answer the
- 11 question, and we'll afford you time for
- 12 rebuttal.
- 13 MR. GANT: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 14 Justice.
- 15 JUSTICE KAGAN: I was just following
- 16 up on Justice Alito's because you -- you say
- 17 directing the outcome of these cases, but any
- 18 time Congress jurisdiction strips, and that
- 19 applies to pending cases, it does direct the
- 20 outcome of those cases. Once upon a time those
- 21 cases could proceed. Now they can't.
- 22 So Congress is directing the outcome
- of those cases in some sense that we've
- 24 consistently held to be perfectly fine. We
- 25 might have been wrong in saying that's

- 1 perfectly fine, but we've said it a lot of
- 2 times.
- MR. GANT: Right. And this may be an
- 4 example of what the Court has talked about in
- 5 other contexts where line-drawing can be hard.
- 6 Again, I'd step back and look at -- ask the
- 7 fundamental questions.
- 8 Has the legislature overstepped its
- 9 bounds, traversed the boundary between the
- 10 legislative function and the judicial function
- in deciding how cases should be determined?
- 12 Congress is entitled to try and affect the
- outcomes, but the process of how it does it
- 14 very much matters.
- 15 And this is about as an egregious
- 16 circumstance as I can imagine of Congress
- 17 actually dictating the outcome of a case by
- 18 saying you shall -- must dismiss without
- 19 changing the underlying law and leaving it to
- 20 the courts to apply in future circumstances.
- Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- counsel.
- Ms. O'Connell.

1	ORAL ARGUMENT OF ANN O'CONNELL
2	ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL RESPONDENTS
3	MS. O'CONNELL: Mr. Chief Justice, and
4	may it please the Court:
5	The United States took title to the
6	Bradley Property in 2009, but the tribe's
7	operations on that land have been subject to
8	great uncertainty ever since then nevertheless.
9	Part of that uncertainty stems from
10	this Court's decision in Patchak I, which
11	interpreted the laws enacted by Congress up to
12	that point and concluded that the Quiet Title
13	Act did not bar Petitioner's challenge to the
14	trust status of this land.
15	The Court acknowledged in Patchak I
16	that barring claims like Petitioner's is within
17	Congress's legislative power. Through the Gun
18	Lake Act, Congress did a couple of things. It
19	eliminated any doubt about the trust status of
20	this land by ratifying and confirming the
21	Secretary's action in 2005.
22	And Congress also eliminated federal
23	court jurisdiction over challenges to the trust
24	status of this property, thereby revoking the
25	waiver of sovereign immunity in the APA.

- 1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Suppose that Patchak
- 2 relied on his interpretation of the law and had
- 3 built a facility on a neighboring property that
- 4 was just completely inconsistent with a casino,
- 5 so that he's -- has some serious reliance
- 6 interests.
- 7 Would -- would this case be any
- 8 different?
- 9 MS. O'CONNELL: Well, there -- there
- 10 could be other constitutional concerns that may
- 11 be implicated by Congress -- by an act of
- 12 Congress that takes away vested property rights
- or something like that, but they're -- they're
- 14 not Article III interests.
- I don't think that it would violate
- 16 the separation of powers for Congress to enact
- 17 a law that --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, they're taking
- 19 away his expectations when he built on the
- 20 property.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, then maybe --
- 22 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In the hypothetical
- 23 case, hypothetical.
- MS. O'CONNELL: He may be able to
- 25 bring some other sort of a challenge like a

- 1 takings challenge or something like that. I
- 2 mean, this Court in Bank Markazi --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: But Congress could
- 4 still pass this statute?
- 5 MS. O'CONNELL: Yes. And, you know,
- 6 the Court explained in Bank Markazi there are
- 7 other limits imposed in the Constitution on
- 8 retroactive application of laws. And so
- 9 perhaps if there was some kind of a takings
- 10 claim, then regardless of Section 2(b), the --
- 11 the Petitioner could bring some sort of a suit
- 12 to --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Then maybe he has --
- 14 this might be his best argument, that this
- 15 ratification business is not in certain
- 16 respects retroactive.
- 17 Can he bring this case in state court
- 18 against the Secretary?
- MS. O'CONNELL: No. The Secretary --
- JUSTICE BREYER: No. Okay. The
- 21 answer is no.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, he could bring
- 23 it, but the Secretary would still have immunity
- in state court as for the trial.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. Has immunity

- in state court, so you can't bring it. So he
- 2 has let's imagine under state law a right to
- 3 the peaceful enjoyment of his property. That's
- 4 what he's worried about.
- Now, this (b) means -- his best claim,
- 6 he thinks, is not a constitutional claim that
- 7 they've taken it away, but he sees that in the
- 8 background.
- 9 His best claim, he thinks, is to say
- 10 that this law is not retroactive, and that in
- 11 the 1930s this tribe did not get -- was not one
- of the ones that that Act protected.
- That's his argument. With (b), he
- 14 cannot bring his claim in a state court. He
- 15 cannot bring his claim in federal court. And
- 16 there's no other person anywhere who even is
- 17 dreaming of such a claim.
- And, therefore, what (b), he says,
- does, as I understand it, is whatever general
- language they dress it up in, it is taking the
- 21 only case that is likely to be brought,
- 22 challenging the taking of this land into trust
- and challenging this later statute as well as
- being interpreted, you know, such and such, and
- 25 throwing it out of court.

- 1 So there we have, though they have
- 2 excellent language and have tried to make it
- 3 general, in reality an act of Congress that
- 4 does nothing other than take his case and throw
- 5 it out of court. And that, he says, is for the
- 6 Congress, the legislative branch, to enter into
- 7 the judicial process and say: Mr. Plaintiff,
- 8 in this case you lose.
- 9 Now, what is your answer to that?
- 10 MS. O'CONNELL: I've got a couple of
- answers to -- specifically to the second part.
- On the first part, I don't know if in this case
- 13 you're talking about some sort of a
- 14 hypothetical relief that he's asking for.
- 15 Regardless of whether this is a statute that's
- 16 retroactive or not in terms of taking the land
- 17 into trust --
- JUSTICE BREYER: It's not retroactive.
- 19 That's why I asked him the question.
- MS. O'CONNELL: He -- he's --
- JUSTICE BREYER: I take -- I take his
- 22 answer to my question was he retains certain
- 23 arguments that (a) is not sufficient to deprive
- him of the right to use his property because
- 25 (a) does not move this tribe's land into trust

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1 as of -- prior to its enactment.
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- MS. O'CONNELL: His --
- JUSTICE BREYER: I think it's
- 4 something like that.
- 5 MS. O'CONNELL: The -- just to
- 6 clarify, he's filed an APA claim. So the
- 7 relief he is asking for is prospective
- 8 injunctive relief. There doesn't -- it doesn't
- 9 actually matter if the statute is retroactive
- 10 or not.
- But to answer the question about
- whether the Congress is targeting one
- 13 particular lawsuit in this case, a couple of
- 14 responses: First is that this statute,
- 15 although that seems to the Petitioner, and it
- 16 may be the practical effect, that because his
- is the only case that's pending, it's the only
- one that is dismissed, this is not a statute
- 19 that is directed toward just Smith v. Jones,
- 20 Smith wins. This is a case that applies to any
- 21 suit related to --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, what if it were?
- What -- what if they -- the Congress had said
- the Secretary's decision to make the Bradley
- 25 Property is confirmed, and David Patchak's suit

- shall not be maintained and shall be dismissed.
- 2 MS. O'CONNELL: I -- I don't think
- 3 there is an Article III problem with a case
- 4 that takes away jurisdiction over even just one
- 5 case. It may have other constitutional
- 6 concerns. Footnote 27 of Bank Markazi said
- 7 maybe you could look to the equal protection
- 8 clause, if it's just a statute that targets one
- 9 person and it's irrational, there's no rational
- 10 basis for it, but we don't see any separation
- of powers problem with taking jurisdiction over
- 12 -- away over only just one case.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, in that
- 15 -- in that case, is -- does the government
- 16 recognize any limit on Congress's power to
- 17 decide the result in a pending case?
- MS. O'CONNELL: To decide the result
- in a pending case, yes.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What is it?
- 21 If saying Smith wins, isn't that -- what would
- 22 an unconstitutional statute under the
- 23 separation of powers look like from your
- 24 viewpoint?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, certainly Smith

- 1 wins would be an unconstitutional statute
- 2 because in that case Congress is just directing
- 3 the results of a case without changing the
- 4 underlying law.
- 5 JUSTICE KAGAN: But what's the
- 6 difference between --
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And -- and so
- 8 we should -- so we should look at this and
- 9 decide whether we think this is in substance
- 10 different from Smith wins?
- MS. O'CONNELL: I think that would be
- 12 a perfectly fine way to do it. And I think
- 13 this case is different from Smith wins in a
- 14 variety of different ways.
- 15 JUSTICE KAGAN: Is there a difference
- 16 between Smith wins and there's no jurisdiction
- 17 over Jones's suit?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Yes.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: And, therefore, Smith
- 20 wins?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Yes. I think that
- that is one of the differences between Smith
- wins and the -- and the statute that's going on
- 24 here, even if you think -- even if you imagine
- a hypothetical statute that's just limited to

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1 Smith v. Jones, and, again, this Court -- the
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- 2 statute is broader than that.
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So Congress
- 4 has plenary authority to insulate itself from
- 5 separation of powers arguments. They -- a
- 6 statute that says in any case in which a
- 7 statute is alleged to violate the separation of
- 8 powers, federal courts have no jurisdiction.
- 9 You think that's okay?
- MS. O'CONNELL: No. I --
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why not?
- MS. O'CONNELL: And we haven't
- 13 contested in this case that the Court can
- 14 analyze 2(b) to determine whether it violates
- 15 the separation of powers. That's what the
- 16 whole case is about. Congress has not
- insulated 2(b) from that review and Petitioner
- is bringing a constitutional challenge to
- 19 Section 2(b).
- I think one of the -- another one of
- 21 the key --
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, Ms. O'Connell,
- 23 it seems to me like a lot hinges on whether
- this is jurisdictional or not in response to
- 25 all of these questions.

- 1 And this Court in recent years has
- 2 instructed that we're not going to lightly
- 3 assume Congress is stripping jurisdiction. We
- 4 need a clear statement, Arbaugh, Sebelius, and
- 5 whatever might have been permissible before,
- 6 Congress is now on notice that it needs to
- 7 provide a clear rule. And this statute comes
- 8 after those warnings from this Court.
- 9 And help me understand why this
- 10 statute is, in fact, jurisdiction stripping
- 11 without reference to old past laws but after
- 12 Sebelius, after Arbaugh?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, I think --
- 14 there's two cases we've cited that show that
- 15 this is jurisdictional language. One of them I
- 16 won't use to answer your question --
- 17 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Right. You can't.
- 18 Right.
- 19 MS. O'CONNELL: -- because it's
- 20 older.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Keene. Right.
- MS. O'CONNELL: But I think Gonzalez
- versus Thaler is another -- another opinion
- where this Court took some language that's
- 25 similar. We think it's like the appellate

- 1 court equivalent.
- 2 JUSTICE GORSUCH: But you've also got
- Reed Elsevier, which has similar language to
- 4 this. No -- basically no claim shall be
- 5 maintained or something like that that we held
- 6 wasn't jurisdictional, in the copyright
- 7 statute.
- 8 MS. O'CONNELL: In this statute, we
- 9 think there's -- there's a lot of different
- 10 things at play that make it a jurisdictional
- 11 statute, one being that it says a case can't be
- 12 filed or maintained in federal court. If it
- just says it can't be maintained, maybe that
- 14 could be something different, but if it's it
- 15 can't be filed even in the first place, that
- speaks to jurisdictional terms.
- 17 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Parties file things.
- 18 That could be a claims processing rule too.
- 19 Right? You don't file it.
- 20 MS. O'CONNELL: Well, although this --
- 21 I mean, so those are the two cases that
- 22 Petitioner cites in his opening brief. One is
- 23 Sebelius, which is the claims processing rule,
- 24 and then Arbaugh, which is the -- the elements
- of a cause of action.

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1
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: Let's say -- let's
      say it isn't jurisdictional. Let's say --
 2
      let's say we're going to stick with our clear
 3
 4
      statement rule and that we find this
      non-jurisdictional. Don't we then have a real
 5
 6
      problem because a dismissal would be not
      12(b)(1) but 12(b)(6), it would be on the
 7
      merits and have collateral consequences?
 8
 9
               And wouldn't that be a real problem
      for Article III?
10
               MS. O'CONNELL: A couple of responses.
11
      I think the -- requiring the jurisdictional
12
      clear statement rule in this case flips the
13
14
      constitutional --
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: I'm -- I'm asking
15
16
      you to put that aside in this question.
17
               MS. O'CONNELL: Well, I think the
      Court would -- would want to invoke the
18
19
      constitutional avoidance principle to --
2.0
               JUSTICE GORSUCH: I'm asking you to --
      again, assuming this isn't jurisdictional, for
21
      purposes of this question, wouldn't we have a
22
23
      real problem because you are directing
24
      dismissal and dismissal wouldn't be 12(b)(1),
      it would be 12(b)(6), and that has collateral
25
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- 1 consequences potentially.
- 2 MS. O'CONNELL: If -- if the Court
- 3 concluded that -- that Congress was just
- 4 telling the Court that it had to dismiss this
- 5 case on the merits, then -- then, yes, I think
- 6 that may be a problem, but even if the Court
- 7 doesn't think that -- I mean, even if you don't
- 8 use jurisdictional language or you think that
- 9 the statute may not be taking away jurisdiction
- 10 over a category of cases, which we think it is,
- 11 I'd like to come back to the sovereign immunity
- 12 point, which is that, you know, the APA
- provides the waiver of sovereign immunity, and
- 14 that's the statute that the Petitioner has sued
- under.
- The APA doesn't apply if another
- 17 statute precludes judicial review.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Sovereign
- 19 immunity is --
- 20 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Can I ask you a
- 21 question about the -- the APA? The argument
- that has been raised on the other side is it
- 23 doesn't -- you don't need sovereign immunity
- 24 waiver because sovereign immunity doesn't
- 25 protect a federal employee from a suit alleging

1 that that employee acted in excess of statutory

- 2 authority.
- So, I mean, what -- what I suggested
- 4 in the first part of this argument was we held
- 5 there is sovereign -- there -- sovereign
- 6 immunity is not a bar. Congress says sovereign
- 7 immunity is a bar. But the answer to that is,
- 8 so what? We can sue a federal officer and
- 9 sovereign immunity wouldn't bar that.
- 10 MS. O'CONNELL: Justice Ginsburg, I
- 11 think this Court's decision in Block versus
- 12 North Dakota goes a long way to answering that
- 13 question. In Block, the state was suing --
- 14 bringing an officer suit because it was outside
- of the statute of limitations in the Quiet
- 16 Title Act. What the Court said was you can't
- just use an officer suit to get around the
- 18 Quiet Title Act; now that we have Congress's
- 19 waiver of sovereign immunity in the Quiet Title
- 20 Act, you have to comply with those statutory
- 21 provisions. The same should be true of the
- 22 APA.
- 23 So if -- if Petitioner could -- could
- just bring an officer suit against Secretary
- 25 Zinke for prospective injunctive relief, that

- 1 would vitiate the final agency action
- 2 requirement of the APA, the statute of
- 3 limitations of the APA. Congress has given us
- 4 its waiver of sovereign immunity in the APA,
- 5 and when it enacts a statute like this, it has
- 6 revoked it.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Can you tell me
- 9 what other actions in your judgment, besides
- this one, could be or would be filed relating
- 11 to the land? Would a slip-and-fall no longer
- 12 be permissible?
- MS. O'CONNELL: So I think there are
- some questions about just how broad this
- 15 statute is. We think it -- it at least covers
- 16 suits that relate to the trust status of the
- 17 Bradley Property or the -- the Secretary's
- 18 decision and Congress's decision to take it
- 19 into trust. But --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But any suit like
- 21 that would be way past the statute of
- 22 limitations. Who -- who could even bring it?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, I -- it may be
- 24 outside the statute of limitations now. 1
- 25 believe there was a -- a regulation passed

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1 later in time that made the -- the land a part
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- of the tribe's reservation, which I guess
- 3 there's questions about whether that could
- 4 restart the statute of limitations, but, you
- 5 know, now -- and also Congress has enacted 2(a)
- 6 now.
- 7 And so, if somebody wanted to bring a
- 8 challenge to that, then that would also be
- 9 barred by 2(b) and it would --
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yeah, but
- 11 there wouldn't be any challenge to that. It
- does seem -- I mean, you say, well, "relating
- to" could mean different things. And it could,
- 14 but that would be for a court to decide.
- And it's not clear how they get to
- decide what "relating" means in light of 2(b),
- which says if it does relate, it's dismissed
- 18 automatically. And I guess I just don't
- 19 understand how -- well, you're saying it's an
- open issue how broad Congress's determination
- that these cases shouldn't be in federal court
- 22 is?
- MS. O'CONNELL: That's -- it's -- it's
- 24 an open issue how broad 2(a) is. The -- that
- 25 any action -- well, yes, that any action

- 1 relating to the Bradley Property can't be filed
- 2 or maintained in federal court.
- JUSTICE BREYER: On 2(a) --
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: On the
- 5 sovereign immunity question, you know, that is
- 6 the federal government sort of going nuclear.
- 7 You know, they're -- they're -- I'm like the
- 8 king; you can't sue me because I can do no
- 9 wrong. And it seems to me there's a real
- 10 political accountability problem there because
- 11 this statute doesn't say anything about
- 12 sovereign immunity.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Even if the statute --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And you didn't
- 15 argue it even in the -- the brief in
- opposition, if I'm remembering right.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Well, this is an
- 18 argument that we -- we presented to the court
- of appeals. The court of appeals said they
- 20 didn't need to reach it because they decided
- 21 that this was a jurisdiction-stripping statute.
- But -- but even so, it's -- it's
- 23 really just another way of getting you to the
- 24 point that the court lacks jurisdiction over
- 25 the case, that Congress has changed the law,

- 1 and it takes you outside the scope of Klein,
- 2 but --
- 3 JUSTICE ALITO: Can you point to any
- 4 case in which we've held there was sovereign
- 5 immunity where the statute said nothing --
- 6 never mentioned either immunity or the United
- 7 States as a party?
- 8 MS. O'CONNELL: Well, I -- again, I
- 9 think that in this context it doesn't matter if
- 10 the statute is broader than just precluding
- 11 claims against the United States because under
- 12 the APA, what you're looking for in order to
- 13 say that the APA doesn't apply is a statute
- 14 that precludes judicial review.
- 15 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, how much broader
- 16 is it? It's somewhat difficult to decide this
- 17 case without having some idea what "relating
- 18 to" here means.
- 19 MS. O'CONNELL: Well --
- JUSTICE ALITO: It's hard to believe
- 21 that this statute means what it literally says,
- 22 that no -- no action relating to the land --
- 23 suppose that -- that the tribe said anybody who
- 24 has toxic waste any place in the country can
- bring it here and just dump it in a big pit.

- 1 Would you say, well, the federal government
- 2 couldn't bring a lawsuit about that?
- 3 MS. O'CONNELL: No. I think we would
- 4 --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Okay. So what does
- 6 "relating to" mean?
- 7 MS. O'CONNELL: In -- we -- it at
- 8 least means that you can't -- that nobody can
- 9 bring a statute that challenges the trust
- 10 status of the land and the Secretary's decision
- 11 to take the land into trust. So I think --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Here in the trust --
- 13 I'm on my own track here, but I -- I know this
- 14 question is fascinating, what we've been
- discussing, and it's right there in (b), but
- 16 I'm still stuck on (a) and why we really have
- 17 to get to (b).
- 18 You said that all they've asked for is
- 19 prospective relief.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Correct.
- JUSTICE BREYER: And as far as
- 22 prospective relief, when this was passed in
- 23 2014, it certainly, in (a), took the Indian
- 24 land into trust.
- MS. O'CONNELL: Yes.

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1 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. That's
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- what they're challenging, prospectively.
- 3 What's the argument?
- 4 MS. O'CONNELL: Well, I don't --
- 5 Petitioner hasn't brought challenges to Section
- 6 2(a). It certainly hasn't brought any
- 7 constitutional challenges to what Congress has
- 8 done in Section 2(a).
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: So we should get into
- 10 the most fascinating and difficult questions in
- 11 what one of my -- I heard once described as the
- 12 course federal courts call "darkness at noon,"
- and -- and the -- the -- but perhaps we don't
- 14 have to in this case, fascinating though it is,
- 15 because there is no claim under (a) that
- 16 prospectively this land is not Indian trust
- 17 land.
- 18 MS. O'CONNELL: That's -- I think
- 19 that's correct.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Is that your view?
- MS. O'CONNELL: Yes.
- JUSTICE BREYER: You think that's
- 23 correct?
- MS. O'CONNELL: I think under 2(a),
- 25 Congress has really --

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, then maybe
- 2 we'll get a minute on the other side.
- 3 MS. O'CONNELL: -- exercised its own
- 4 --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Suppose -- suppose
- 6 in this case that about 80 percent of the
- 7 litigation had -- had been completed, no
- 8 judgment yet, and suppose, assume, that had
- 9 Patchak prevailed, he would be entitled to
- 10 costs.
- 11 Could the case be ordered dismissed so
- that he could no longer get those costs?
- MS. O'CONNELL: If there's no -- it
- depends on what basis the Congress is
- 15 ordering --
- 16 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Under this statute.
- 17 Under (a) --
- 18 MS. O'CONNELL: Under -- if Congress
- 19 is taking away --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Under both (a) and
- 21 (b) of this statute.
- MS. O'CONNELL: If Congress is taking
- away jurisdiction, then, no, I don't think the
- court would have the authority to order costs.
- 25 And he also wouldn't be a prevailing party if

- 1 no judgment had been entered.
- 2 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, I'm -- I'm
- 3 assuming -- I'm assuming that he would have
- 4 been a prevailing party, there was a
- 5 substantial chance of it, and he would have
- 6 been entitled to costs. But even though
- 7 80 percent of the costs had been expended, he
- 8 -- the Congress could suddenly say he can't get
- 9 them?
- 10 MS. O'CONNELL: The -- the rule that
- 11 this Court has laid out is that once a final
- judgment has been entered, that Congress can't
- 13 undo that.
- 14 And so any time up to -- I mean, the
- 15 Court's cases have said again and again that
- 16 the Congress can enact jurisdictional rules and
- apply them to pending cases, so, no, I don't
- 18 think there is any separation of powers problem
- 19 with such a -- with such a rule.
- 20 One other final point I'd like to
- 21 make, the -- the Petitioner argues that by
- 22 enacting Section 2(b), that Congress is taking
- away the Court's ability to interpret the law,
- but when it's a jurisdictional statute that
- 25 Congress is enacting, a jurisdiction-stripping

- 1 statute, there's not going to be much left for
- 2 the Court to do.
- 3 There's cases from this Court that
- 4 talk about whether there is something left for
- 5 the Court to do and whether that's enough to --
- 6 to give the Court a role in exercising its
- 7 judicial role. Those cases are all trying to
- 8 decide whether Congress has changed the law
- 9 such that the case is taken outside the scope
- 10 of Klein.
- 11 When you have a statute like this one
- 12 that takes away subject matter jurisdiction of
- the federal courts and gets a category of cases
- off of the judicial agenda, the court just has
- to determine whether this case falls within
- 16 that category and then it -- it should dismiss.
- 17 If there are no further questions, we
- 18 ask that the Court affirm.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 20 counsel.
- 21 Mr. Shah.
- ORAL ARGUMENT OF PRATIK A. SHAH ON BEHALF OF
- THE MATCH-E-BE-NASH-SHE-WISH BAND OF
- 24 POTTAWATOMI INDIANS RESPONDENT
- 25 MR. SHAH: Mr. Chief Justice, and may

- 1 it please the Court:
- 2 I quess I'd like to start with Justice
- 3 Alito's question because I think it cuts to the
- 4 matter, what would be an administrable line in
- 5 a separation of powers case.
- And the line that we would embrace is
- 7 the line that the other side has offered in the
- 8 federal court scholars amicus brief supporting
- 9 the other side, and this is at page 15 of that
- 10 amicus brief. It says -- and this is relying
- on Professor Hart, it says, "It is one thing to
- 12 exclude completely the federal courts from
- 13 adjudication. It is quite another to vest the
- 14 federal courts with jurisdiction to adjudicate
- 15 but simultaneously restrict the power of those
- 16 courts to perform the adjudicatory function in
- 17 the manner they deem appropriate."
- Now, the scholars then explain why
- 19 that first category, which this case clearly
- falls within when you're taking federal courts
- 21 out of the business entirely raises no
- 22 separation of powers problems.
- They say, "By wholly excluding the
- 24 federal court, Congress loses its ability to
- 25 draw upon the integrity possessed by the

- 1 Article III judiciary in the public's eyes."
- 2 And so we think that gets to the core
- 3 separation of powers concerns that are
- 4 underlying the lines that this Court has drawn.
- 5 It avoids any puppeteering concern that
- 6 Congress is using the Article III, the judicial
- 7 imprimatur to give a merits judgment. It
- 8 avoids any public misperception concern that
- 9 this is an Article III resolution on the merits
- 10 of the controversy.
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I don't see --
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: I guess I don't
- 13 understand, Mr. Shah, how that helps you. I
- mean, doesn't this just exclude the power of
- 15 the federal courts?
- 16 MR. SHAH: Yes. And so that -- that's
- the permissible side of the line, that the
- 18 professors lay out. They say if you are
- 19 excluding completely the federal courts from
- 20 adjudication, that does not raise a separation
- 21 of powers problem.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I -- I see.
- MR. SHAH: They rely on Professor
- 24 Hart's dialectic for that proposition. They
- 25 say the harder cases --

- 1 JUSTICE KAGAN: Got it.
- 2 MR. SHAH: -- are like -- oh, sorry.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Could I ask you to --
- 4 Ms. O'Connell said when you were looking at
- 5 that, if you had a piece of legislation that
- 6 said in Jones v. Smith, Smith loses, that that
- 7 would be unconstitutional.
- 8 MR. SHAH: Right.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: And she has to say
- 10 that because nine of us said it.
- MR. SHAH: Yes.
- 12 (Laughter.)
- 13 JUSTICE KAGAN: So then the question
- is why is it different --
- MR. SHAH: Sure.
- 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- if Congress instead
- 17 says in Jones v. Smith, there shall be no
- 18 jurisdiction, and Smith loses. Why -- why is
- 19 that different?
- MR. SHAH: So, Your Honor, if, in
- 21 fact, what they're doing is taking away
- jurisdiction, they just say there is no -- so
- in your hypothetical, there is no --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: In Jones v. Smith,
- 25 there shall be no jurisdiction --

- 1 MR. SHAH: Right.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: -- ergo, Smith loses.
- 3 MR. SHAH: Right. Well, the reason
- 4 why we think that statute is different is
- 5 because of the first part of it. It's saying
- 6 there is no jurisdiction.
- 7 So, when it says Smith loses, it's not
- 8 in the same way that was in the hypothetical in
- 9 Bank Markazi where all nine Justices said that
- 10 that would be problematic.
- And three reasons why it's different.
- 12 First, in the Bank Markazi hypothetical of
- 13 Smith wins in a civil suit between Smith and
- Jones, that is a merits judgment that the Court
- 15 had in mind. Presumably, in Smith wins, there
- is a merits judgment that the Court --
- 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Suppose -- suppose
- 18 the statute said in order to ensure that Smith
- 19 wins, there shall be no jurisdiction.
- MR. SHAH: Well, again, Your Honor, I
- 21 guess I still -- if what it's doing is -- is
- 22 asking the Court or taking away the --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: It's doing -- what
- it's doing is clear to everybody.
- MR. SHAH: It's taking away --

1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In fact, it says 2 that it's clear. What's the result? MR. SHAH: Sure. So I still think 3 4 that is distinguishable from the hypothetical statute in Bank Markazi. And the reason is 5 6 because of the -- because it's taking away jurisdiction. So there are a couple reasons 7 why it's different. 8 9 One is a functional matter. The judgment is quite different. It's not a merits 10 judgment. Smith is presumably not in the Bank 11 12 Markazi hypothetical. 13 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But you're taking 14 away jurisdiction --MR. SHAH: Yes. 15 JUSTICE KENNEDY: -- in order to have 16 17 a particular result in litigation. MR. SHAH: Right, Your Honor, but the 18 19 result that you're getting is different than in 20 Smith v. wins -- Smith wins, because --JUSTICE KAGAN: I don't think Smith 2.1 much cares. Why would Smith care? 22 23 MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, in -- in Bank Markazi, Smith was the plaintiff. He 24

cares a lot, because if he wins, he gets an

- 1 award of relief, and that relief has res
- 2 judicata effect.
- 3 That's very different from a dismissal
- 4 for lack of jurisdiction in which there's no
- 5 merits judgment, there's no award of relief,
- and there's no res judicata effect.
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It doesn't say
- 8 anything about jurisdiction. And you are
- 9 enlisting the courts. You're telling the court
- 10 you have to -- you take this stamp and you
- 11 stamp dismissed on it.
- 12 And it doesn't say dismissed for want
- of jurisdiction. I suppose we'd have to figure
- out what the collateral consequences are, since
- 15 the statute doesn't say.
- MR. SHAH: Well, your --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You aren't
- dragooning the court into doing something the
- 19 court doesn't want to do. You're making them
- 20 dismiss a case that's pending before them.
- MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, it --
- we're assuming -- if we're assuming this is a
- jurisdiction-stripping statute; that is, it is
- 24 withdrawing jurisdiction, then the only thing
- 25 the court can do is dismiss for lack of

- 1 jurisdiction.
- 2 And if that, enlisting the courts in
- 3 that limited matter is a problem, then that's
- 4 true for 150 years of this Court's precedent.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, that
- 6 begs the answer -- that begs the answer to the
- 7 -- the -- the Hart & Wechsler dialogue that
- 8 when the court -- when Congress strips
- 9 jurisdiction to achieve an otherwise
- 10 unconstitutional result, that that's perfectly
- 11 fine.
- MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor --
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And I think
- that's a very difficult question.
- MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, I think
- that question implicates different interests.
- 17 It's not a separation of powers problem, I
- don't think, for Congress to say a certain set
- of cases can't be within the federal courts.
- 20 If they're talking about equal
- 21 protection cases and singling those out, that
- 22 runs afoul of the equal protection clause.
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, is it --
- 24 I understand your answer, but is it a
- 25 separation of powers question if they say, if

the claim is separation of powers, the case --1 2 there -- there is no jurisdiction? 3 MR. SHAH: Yes, Your Honor, there --4 there I grant you we're not arguing that 5 Congress can take away the court's jurisdiction 6 to adjudicate whether there is a separation of powers problem itself, the constitutional vow 7 8 itself, and that's why we're here, on here. 9 We are not arguing that Congress has done or could -- could do that. It can't 10 prevent the court from adjudicating whether the 11 12 statute it has passed is constitutional, but that's not what's going on here, we're having a 13 full airing of the claim. 14 The question is can they withdraw 15 jurisdiction. And if, in fact, enlisting the 16 17 courts, as you say, in that limited manner violates separation of powers, well, that's 18 19 true in the seminal withdrawal of jurisdiction case in McCardle and 150 years of cases after 20 that. In fact, in McCardle, the petitioner 21 2.2 made --23 JUSTICE GINSBURG: What about the

answer to McCardle is it was just a question of

how you get habeas. There was another route.

24

- 1 Congress had closed off one route, but it left
- 2 open another.
- 3 MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, I guess a
- 4 couple responses.
- 5 One is the petitioner in McCardle
- 6 actually made the very same argument that
- 7 Petitioner makes here, is that Congress was
- 8 targeting my suit when it passed that statute.
- 9 And the court expressly addressed that argument
- 10 and said, no, we're not going to look behind
- 11 Congress's act.
- 12 It describes a category of suits. And
- we're not going to ask whether Congress had
- 14 some illicit motive of targeting your suit.
- 15 That's my first response, Justice Ginsburg.
- 16 The second response is if, in fact,
- 17 there's a claim that there is no other forum to
- bring this case, then maybe there is, as this
- 19 Court said in Bank Markazi, there are other
- 20 constitutional limitations. Maybe that's a due
- 21 process problem.
- 22 In fact, Petitioner raised a due
- 23 process claim in the lower courts. And in its
- 24 cert petition, this Court denied cert on the
- 25 due process claim. So that is out of the case.

- 1 We're strictly on separation of powers
- 2 grounds, and there is no separation of powers
- 3 problem in this Court withdrawing jurisdiction,
- 4 including with respect to pending cases.
- 5 That's what it did in McCardle. That's what it
- 6 did in Assessors v. Osborne. That's what it
- 7 did in Hallowell. That's what --
- 8 JUSTICE KAGAN: I guess I'm -- I'm not
- 9 quite sure what you're reserving there, Mr.
- 10 Shah, so here is a hypothetical.
- MR. SHAH: Okay.
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: There's a very large
- 13 corporation, commits a lot of employment
- 14 discrimination. Because it does, it has a lot
- of employment discrimination suits filed
- 16 against it.
- 17 And so the CEO of this big corporation
- 18 goes to Congress and says: These suits are
- 19 getting to be a real hassle, and so I'd like a
- 20 piece of legislation. And Congress says: Good
- 21 enough, and it says there shall be no
- jurisdiction over any employment discrimination
- 23 suits filed against that corporation.
- MR. SHAH: Right.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: All right? And -- and

- 1 -- and -- and -- and in so doing, it
- 2 knocks out all these employment litigation --
- 3 all these employment discrimination suits that
- 4 have been filed against that corporation.
- 5 Is that constitutional?
- 6 MR. SHAH: It may be unconstitutional,
- 7 but not for failure of separation of powers,
- 8 not a separation of powers violation. Maybe
- 9 that is the type of class-of-one problem that
- 10 this Court noted in -- in the Court's opinion
- 11 in Bank Markazi.
- 12 In Footnote 27, it said: Look, if
- 13 you're singling out a particular litigant for
- 14 special disfavored or favored treatment, that's
- the class -- maybe that's a class-of-one claim.
- 16 So it's not a separation --
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: So, if this had said
- 18 just David Patchak's suit, different case?
- 19 MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, if
- 20 Congress had singled out just Mr. Patchak's
- 21 suit in the text of the statute, maybe they
- 22 could have brought that sort of claim. I still
- 23 think based on this Court's decision in Bank
- 24 Markazi that talked about Congress is free to
- 25 legislate with -- in a particularized manner

- 1 even with respect to particular cases, it's
- 2 probably okay, but it would raise at least a
- 3 harder question. But make no mistake, the
- 4 statute here is about a class of cases.
- Now, I will grant you it is a
- 6 relatively narrow class of cases, suits that
- 7 were relating to the Bradley Property. And as
- 8 it turned out --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I -- I don't know
- 10 why the hypothetical that Justice Kagan just
- 11 put doesn't severely compromise the integrity
- of the courts. The courts are hearing cases
- 13 against one class or -- or against a large
- 14 class of defendants but not another class.
- And this, it seems to me, severely --
- MR. SHAH: Your Honor --
- 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: -- calls into
- 18 question the integrity of the courts. And
- 19 that's a separation of powers problem.
- MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, I agree
- 21 with you, everything up until that last part.
- 22 I agree if -- if the court was drawing lines
- 23 that you could only sue these type of
- defendants and not other types of defendants or
- 25 singling out one company --

- 1 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, that's the
- 2 hypothetical.
- 3 MR. SHAH: Yes. Well, I think that's
- 4 an --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And you said
- 6 separation of powers is not involved.
- 7 MR. SHAH: Right. I think that's an
- 8 equal --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It seems to me that
- 10 this is intrinsically separation of powers.
- MR. SHAH: Well, Your Honor, I think
- 12 that's an equal protection problem. And -- and
- as this Court recognized in Footnote 27, there
- 14 are claims to deal with that.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You can take
- an extra minute because we're going to give
- 17 your friend some rebuttal time.
- MR. SHAH: Sure, Your Honor.
- I guess what I was starting to finish
- 20 up on was on the -- on the class of claims, it
- 21 may be a narrow category, but just because it
- turned out that the only suit happened to be
- 23 Patchak's, it would be an odd constitutional
- rule if on the day before they -- if they've
- passed the statute on the day before Patchak's

- 1 suit, it's fine. On the day after Patchak's
- 2 suit, it's not fine. And then, if three other
- 3 people happen to file suit, suddenly it's fine
- 4 again.
- 5 That -- that is not a right sort of --
- 6 that does not strike us as a sensible
- 7 constitutional rule. Instead, you should look
- 8 at the words that Congress enacted which was
- 9 trying to insulate a category of cases from --
- 10 from this Court exer -- from any federal court
- 11 exercising jurisdiction. That's precisely what
- 12 Congress has done for over 150 years dating
- 13 back to McCardle and in a line of cases since
- 14 then.
- 15 If there are no further questions.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 17 counsel.
- 18 MR. SHAH: Thank you.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Three minutes,
- 20 Mr. Gant.
- 21 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF SCOTT E. GANT
- ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- MR. GANT: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- Justice. A few quick points. I'll try and run
- 25 through them quickly.

1	Justice Kennedy, I completely agree
2	with you that there is a separation of powers
3	problem posed by the circumstance the
4	hypotheticals that were posed. We shouldn't
5	lose sight of the fact that separation of
6	powers were designed in substantial part to
7	protect an individual's rights and to protect
8	an independent judiciary.
9	What we would have here is, if you
10	affirm and uphold the Gun Lake Act, you will
11	have judges looking over their shoulders
12	wondering if they're going to be next in a case
13	like this Court was in Patchak I, where
14	Congress says we don't like the results. We're
15	going to take the case away from the courts.
16	We can dress it up using the language of
17	jurisdiction, but it's still taking the case
18	away from the courts and directing the outcome.
19	Now, on the point, the distinction
20	that counsel for the Respondents were trying to
21	drive home, that somehow a direction to dismiss
22	in 2(b) is different because it's not merits.
23	I would refer to the Court to a unanimous
24	decision from last year, CRST versus EEOC,
25	where the Court found the the party that was

- 1 not prevailing in -- that -- that did not win
- 2 on the merits in the EEOC case was nevertheless
- 3 the prevailing party.
- 4 The Court, unanimous Court observed
- 5 the defendant, however, has fulfilled its
- 6 primary objective whenever plaintiff's
- 7 challenge is rebuffed, irrespective of the
- 8 precise reason.
- 9 As anyone who has ever been a
- 10 plaintiff or represented a plaintiff knows,
- 11 when the plaintiff's case is dismissed, the
- 12 plaintiff has lost and the defendant has won.
- 13 It could have different collateral
- 14 consequences, res judicata and so on, but
- 15 fundamentally, when the plaintiff gets kicked
- out of court, they have lost.
- 17 Mr. Patchak had that result as -- from
- 18 2(b).
- 19 With respect to the relationship
- between 2(a) and 2(b), 2(a) does one of two
- 21 things here. It's either meaningless because
- 22 all the work is done by 2(b). If the suit
- 23 relates to the Gun Lake -- to the Bradley
- 24 Property, it shall be dismissed.
- Or, as the House of Representatives

- 1 argued on pages 3 and 20 of its brief, what
- 2 2(a) -- 2(b) does is it implements 2(a). This
- 3 was an extraordinary assertion by the House of
- 4 Representatives, which came and filed an amicus
- 5 brief, and they said what they were really
- 6 telling you is that what the Congress did in
- 7 2(b) was it decided what 2(a) means and then
- 8 kicked the case out of court based on its own
- 9 understanding while depriving this Court or any
- other court of the opportunity to say what 2(a)
- 11 means.
- 12 Respondents -- Federal Respondents
- 13 said they didn't know quite what some of the
- 14 provisions in the Gun Lake Act means except
- 15 they do know that it prevents Mr. Patchak's
- 16 case from going forward.
- 17 This seems to me that their uncertain
- about the meaning, except when it comes to its
- 19 application to Mr. Patchak, only highlights the
- 20 fact that Congress was trying to direct the
- 21 outcome in Mr. Patchak's case.
- 22 With respect to the hypotheticals that
- 23 were posed to Mr. Shah by Justices Kagan and
- 24 Kennedy, this case is no different, I think,
- 25 than the hypotheticals you were posing. This

1	lS	substantially	like	Smith	wins.	You	can	play

- 2 around with the words. You can say we want
- 3 Smith to win; therefore, there's no
- 4 jurisdiction.
- I don't think anyone here believes
- 6 that Congress should be able to do that. So
- 7 this is effectively the same thing.
- 8 And finally, Justice Gorsuch, with
- 9 respect to the Gonzalez case that you were
- 10 discussing with counsel for the Federal
- 11 Respondents, in that case, both of the parties
- 12 acknowledged that there was no dispute about
- 13 jurisdiction.
- 14 Thank you for the extra time.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 16 counsel. The case is submitted.
- 17 (Whereupon, at 11:06 a.m., the case
- 18 was submitted.)

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