

SUMMARY STATEMENT

State of Idaho v. William Joseph Hale

Docket No. 46766

In this case arising out of Ada County, the Court of Appeals affirmed Hale's judgment of conviction for two counts of possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, and being a persistent violator. An officer stopped the vehicle Hale was driving for failing to display license plates or a temporary permit. Hale provided his license to the officer, but did not provide proof that the vehicle was insured. Hale also stated that he was borrowing the car from an individual who lived nearby. The officer then returned to his patrol vehicle to run routine license, registration, and warrant checks. The only noteworthy information revealed by the checks was that the address of the vehicle's registered owner contained in law enforcement databases did not match the information Hale provided. After obtaining the owner's phone number from Hale, the officer called the owner to verify Hale's authority to use the vehicle and then began issuing a citation to Hale for failing to provide proof of insurance. Before the officer finished speaking with the owner and issuing the citation, a drug dog arrived and alerted to the presence of drugs in the vehicle. Searches of the vehicle yielded controlled substances and drug paraphernalia.

The State charged Hale with two counts of possession of a controlled substance, one count of possession of drug paraphernalia, and a persistent violator enhancement. Hale moved to suppress the controlled substances and drug paraphernalia discovered in the vehicle, arguing, in part, that the stop was unlawfully extended. The district court denied Hale's motion. Hale appealed.

On appeal, Hale argued that the district court erred in denying his motion to suppress because the officer's efforts to verify Hale's claim of authority over the vehicle resulted in an unlawful extension of the traffic stop. The Court of Appeals held that the district court properly denied Hale's motion to suppress because the officer did not abandon the traffic stop's mission by making reasonable efforts to verify Hale's claim of authority to drive the vehicle in which he was stopped.