

SUMMARY STATEMENT

State of Idaho v. Merna Jean Tranmer

Docket No. 50077

After citizen complaints, law enforcement conducted surveillance of a trailer where there was suspected drug activity. During the surveillance, law enforcement observed a silver vehicle pull up to the trailer and an individual get out of the driver's side of the vehicle and approach the trailer. One officer contacted dispatch and was advised that the silver vehicle was registered in Merna Jean Tranmer's name; dispatch provided a photograph of Tranmer, and the officer confirmed that she was the person he saw get out of the silver vehicle.

Tranmer was subsequently stopped for traffic violations. During that stop, the officer requested Tranmer's license, registration, and insurance information. While waiting for a response, a drug dog requested by a different officer, performed a free air sniff and alerted to drugs in Tranmer's vehicle. Tranmer was arrested and charged with felony possession of a controlled substance. Tranmer filed a motion to suppress the evidence arguing the officer unlawfully extended the traffic stop when he ran her registration information through dispatch after she was stopped for the traffic violations. Tranmer argued that because the officer ran her license plate information through dispatch during surveillance, there was no reason to do so again. To do so, argued Tranmer, unlawfully extended the traffic stop to allow time for the drug dog to arrive and conduct a free air search. The district court denied the motion, Tranmer entered a conditional guilty plea to the charge and appealed.

On appeal, the Court of Appeals affirmed the district court's denial of the motion to suppress, holding that the second time the officer requested information, the officer requested both different and additional information. Consequently, the second request for information was permissible as an ordinary inquiry incident to a traffic stop and did not unlawfully extend the stop. As a result, the stop was not unlawfully extended and Tranmer's Fourth Amendment rights to the United States Constitution were not violated.

The order denying Tranmer's motion to suppress and her judgment of conviction are affirmed.

This summary constitutes no part of the opinion of the Court, but has been prepared by court staff for the convenience of the public.