1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES			
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3	LARRY BEGAY, :			
4	Petitioner :			
5	v. : No. 06-11543			
6	UNITED STATES. :			
7	x			
8	Washington, D.C.			
9	Tuesday, January 15, 2008			
10				
11	The above-entitled matter came on for ora	a]		
12	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States			
13	at 11:09 a.m.			
14	APPEARANCES:			
15	MARGARET A. KATZE, ESQ., Assistant Federal Public			
16	Defender, Albuquerque, N.M.; on behalf of the			
17	Petitioner.			
18	LEONDRA R. KRUGER, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor			
19	General, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.; or	า		
20	behalf of the Respondent.			
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:09 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	next in Case 06-11543, Begay v. United States.
5	Ms. Katze.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF MARGARET A. KATZE
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
8	MS. KATZE: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
9	please the Court:
10	The issue in this case is whether DWI is a
11	violent felony for purposes of an Armed Career Criminal
12	Act sentencing enhancement. Such an enhancement
13	takes the statutory sentencing range from zero to 10
14	years and raises it to 15 years to life. The intent of
15	the Armed Career Criminal Act is to punish most severely
16	that category of recidivist violent offenders who are
17	disproportionately responsible for the violent crimes
18	and who, when they possess a weapon, are more dangerous.
19	The government is trying to expand the reach
20	of the statute by so broadly reading the residual clause
21	as to include any crime that presents a serious
22	potential risk of injury to another.
23	Such a reading of that residual clause would
24	swallow the entire statute. Congress had no intention
25	of including DWI within the ambit of the Armed Career

- 1 Criminal Act. As Justice Breyer, writing for the First
- 2 Circuit in Doe, said, "there is no reason to believe
- 3 that Congress meant to enhance sentences pursuant to the
- 4 Armed Career Criminal Act based on convictions for
- 5 drunken driving --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: If you're quoting that,
- 7 then this is what's now bothering me. I'm not saying I
- 8 have an answer one way or the other.
- 9 Let's take two crimes and imagine that the
- 10 same number of people injured or killed is identical for
- 11 the two. One let's say is burglary and the other is
- 12 driving under the influence. Now, let's imagine exactly
- 13 the same number are put at risk, exactly the same number
- 14 hurt, exactly the same number killed.
- 15 When I wrote that opinion, it seemed to me
- 16 that there still is an important difference between the
- 17 two crimes that is controlling here. But if you look at
- 18 what I wrote, I didn't articulate that difference very
- 19 well. So, I would like you to tell me what I should have
- 20 said in order to have said very clearly just what that
- 21 intuitive difference was.
- MS. KATZE: Your Honor, I think what you
- 23 said was sufficient, but you might have added that there
- 24 are other attributes to the -- the crimes in the -- the
- 25 enumerated crimes, those being burglary, arson,

- 1 extortion, use of explosives. There are certain
- 2 attributes that they share in common that DWI does not
- 3 share, and those would include those, as you stated, an
- 4 active violent crime. But in addition to that, they're
- 5 all property crimes, as this Court said in Taylor.
- They are also all acts that have the intent
- 7 of causing harm. DWI does not have that. They are all
- 8 more dangerous when committed with a gun. And they're
- 9 all typical of crimes that would be committed by career
- 10 criminals.
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: Some of those
- 12 characteristics don't seem to apply to all of the
- 13 specific crimes that are mentioned. Take somebody who
- 14 sends a series of letter bombs for the purpose of
- 15 injuring other people. Now, that would fall within a
- 16 crime involving use of explosives. But it's not really
- 17 a property crime and it's not a crime that's more
- 18 dangerous when done with a gun.
- 19 So how -- how can you say that those
- 20 characteristics apply to every crime in the list?
- 21 MS. KATZE: Your Honor, arguably they might
- 22 not apply to everyone every time. But I think the vast
- 23 majority of them do. And what we're looking at are the
- 24 ordinary cases. And the example that you gave of the
- 25 letter bomb, I believe that would be a property crime.

- 1 When we're talking about a property crime as with arson
- 2 or use of explosives, it's the destruction of property.
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: I think you can say that
- 4 all of the crimes that are listed require mens rea and
- 5 DUI doesn't, does it?
- 6 MS. KATZE: Absolutely. Absolutely.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: That's a big different,
- 8 isn't it?
- 9 MS. KATZE: I think it's a huge difference.
- 10 DUI -- DUI in New Mexico is a strict liability crime.
- 11 It has no mens rea whatsoever. An individual doesn't
- 12 even have to have the intent to drive. And, in fact, we
- 13 have a case in New Mexico where a woman had taken Ambien
- 14 and was driving, and she didn't even know she was
- 15 driving, but she was still convicted because she merely
- 16 was in control of the vehicle. So in New Mexico, a
- 17 strict liability crime where you don't even have to know
- 18 you're driving, as opposed to the four enumerated
- 19 offenses, where there is clearly an intent to cause
- 20 some harm --
- 21 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Would you have the same
- 22 answer if you had a State statute which defined "felony
- 23 drunk driving, " as many do, as felony drunk driving
- 24 which causes serious death or serious physical injury
- 25 to another?

1 MS. KATZE: I t	think it	would	the	analysis
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- 2 wouldn't be different. There would be an additional
- 3 element, an additional piece of harm. But the --
- 4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: You would still say that
- 5 that statute does not qualify?
- 6 MS. KATZE: Not unless there is a definition
- 7 of -- if there is an actual intent to cause harm. If
- 8 there is just merely harm that's caused --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, there isn't in the
- 10 usual felony drunk driving statute, there is --
- 11 MS. KATZE: And I agree. I think in that
- 12 case, then that also would not fall within the statute.
- 13 There is not the intent to cause harm.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: What if the crime is
- 15 vehicular homicide, defined as causing the death of
- 16 another person while driving intoxicated? Would that be
- 17 a crime that creates a serious potential risk of
- 18 physical injury to another?
- 19 MS. KATZE: That would not fall under
- 20 paragraph 2, because it would not meet any of the other
- 21 attributes of the enumerated crimes. Possibly could it
- 22 fall under paragraph 1, the use of force? It would
- 23 depend how the elements described and what the
- 24 definition of "use of force." This Court has
- 25 previously defined "use of force" with an

- 1 intentionality that I think normally in that type of
- 2 vehicular homicide would not be included.
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You are assuming, of
- 4 course, that the canon of ejusdem generis applies to the
- 5 statute, as opposed to Congress just singling out a
- 6 couple of things it wanted to be sure were covered. And
- 7 we left that issue open in James, didn't we?
- MS. KATZE: Yes, you did. In James, you were
- 9 dealing with a clearly analogous case, and DWI is not
- 10 analogous in any way, shape, or form with those four
- 11 enumerated crimes. And I think that it's pretty
- 12 clear --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, in one way -- in
- 14 one way it is, in that like those other crimes it
- 15 presents a serious risk of potential injury to another.
- 16 That's what they all have in common. It's a residual --
- 17 one argument that was made was when the statute was
- 18 first drafted all it had was the residual, "presents a
- 19 serious risk of potential injury to another." So
- 20 that's, the argument is, that's what drives this
- 21 statute, and then these, these specific crimes, were
- 22 added just to be sure they would be covered.
- MS. KATZE: Your Honor, in answer to your
- 24 question and the Chief Justice's question, I think it's
- 25 important to remember that the first version of this

- 1 statute came out in 1984, and that just involved
- 2 burglary and robbery. And then in 1986, we have the
- 3 version that we have now.
- What we are discussing is the debate in
- 5 Congress that occurred between then and how the actual
- 6 wording was made up. But I submit that if Congress
- 7 wanted to use those four enumerated crimes merely as an
- 8 example, they would have structured the paragraph
- 9 differently. They would have made a third paragraph
- 10 under definition of violent felony and they didn't.
- 11 There are two paragraphs. The second
- 12 paragraph, the one that we're dealing with, clearly
- 13 there's a substantive connection between the four
- 14 enumerated crimes and it says, "or otherwise crimes that
- 15 present a serious potential risk of injury."
- 16 It seems clear to me if we look at this
- 17 under the rules of statutory interpretation -- and this
- 18 is a statutory interpretation case -- that Congress
- 19 added those four crimes as a means of limiting the
- 20 residual clause.
- 21 JUSTICE SOUTER: Then why did it use the
- 22 word "otherwise"? Why didn't it use the word
- 23 "likewise"?
- 24 MS. KATZE: I would agree, "likewise" would
- 25 have been a more artful way to have written it.

1	JUSTICE SOUTER: It would have meant
2	something different, wouldn't it?
3	MS. KATZE: I think, in fact
4	JUSTICE SOUTER: "Otherwise" means in some
5	other way.
6	MS. KATZE: That's the dictionary
7	definition, Your Honor.
8	JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, yes.
9	(Laughter.)
10	JUSTICE SOUTER: That's usually the best way
11	to understand each other is by, you know, assuming that.
12	MS. KATZE: I would agree that's one thing
13	that we look at. But under this is a statutory
14	interpretation case, not a dictionary case, and we have
15	to look at the plain meaning. And that involves looking
16	at this term of the phrase in context, in the whole
17	text. What was what was the intent of this statute?
18	What's the term to be defined, "violent felony."
19	JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't know why you've
20	run away from me on "otherwise." I think the
21	"otherwise" ties the last paragraph to the to the
22	preceding four enumerated crimes. And if if it had
23	just gone on to say "or presents a serious risk of

injury" without the "otherwise," then I don't think

you'd have any argument that you have to somehow look

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25

- 1 to the degree of injury, the -- the manner of injury
- 2 that the four enumerated crimes have. The "otherwise"
- 3 ties it together, "or otherwise presents a risk of
- 4 serious injury."
- 5 And I think the implication is that the --
- 6 that the -- the injury must be similar to the -- at
- 7 least in degree to the enumerated crimes beforehand. I
- 8 wouldn't run away from the "otherwise."
- 9 MS. KATZE: Your Honor, and I'm not running
- 10 away from the "otherwise." While I don't agree that
- 11 it's the dictionary meaning, I do agree with you, Your
- 12 Honor, that it is the substantive link. It's the
- 13 connection. It's a word and we have to give meaning to
- 14 every word in the statute --
- 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: But in -- in doing that,
- 16 you've got, in other words, to understand what
- 17 "otherwise" means. You've got to look at the language
- 18 that follows "otherwise." And that's -- that then
- 19 refers to "risk of serious injury to a person." And in
- 20 effect, it is saying the common element is risk of
- 21 injury to the person. How that risk is raised may be in
- 22 different ways from the way the risk is raised, say, in
- 23 a burglary case or what-not. And if that is the proper
- 24 analysis, then it seems to me you've got a tough row to
- 25 hoe here.

1	MS.	KATZE:	Ι	believe	the	correct

- 2 analysis -- and I do believe that ejusdem generis does
- 3 apply here, because here we have a list of four specific
- 4 offenses followed by a general term, and we have to read
- 5 that general term narrowly so as not to give additional
- 6 breadth to acts of Congress. And we have to remember
- 7 that we're defining the term "violent felony." And
- 8 those four violent felonies that have the certain
- 9 attributes in common then are followed by "or
- 10 otherwise." And in looking at it all in context, there
- 11 has to be some --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, but then -- I
- 13 was wondering about that as well, the violent felony,
- 14 whether that gives you any traction. But extortion, you
- 15 don't normally think of that as a violent felony and yet
- 16 it's clearly included in the definition.
- MS. KATZE: It's violent in the sense that
- 18 extortion is trying to get something from somebody of
- 19 value. It's the idea that --
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes, but you don't
- 21 say, give me that or I'll break your legs all the time.
- You may say, give me that or I'll release this
- 23 embarrassing letter. That's extortion. It's not
- 24 violent, though.
- 25 MS. KATZE: I think it is violent in the

- 1 sense of the terms that this Court used in Leocal and
- 2 that Justice Breyer used in Doe, the idea of some kind
- 3 of violent act or more closely related action.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, no, releasing
- 5 the letter is not violent and it may cause embarrassment
- 6 rather than physical injury. Yet it would qualify as
- 7 extortion.
- 8 MS. KATZE: It absolutely would, and this
- 9 Court in Taylor said that the four crimes all have those
- 10 -- basically, in general, have those attributes.
- 11 But I think we have to look at the ordinary
- 12 case. I believe even in the hypothetical that you have
- 13 given, Your Honor, is that -- that that does involve an
- 14 act of violence against an individual's reputation, that
- 15 reputation in the common law sense --
- JUSTICE SOUTER: No, but it says "person,"
- 17 not -- it says "person," not "reputation."
- MS. KATZE: I'm sorry, Your Honor?
- 19 JUSTICE SOUTER: You're saying the violence
- 20 can be against the reputation. That's not what the
- 21 statute is talking about. I mean that is -- that's
- 22 inconsistent with the plain language of the statute.
- MS. KATZE: But the statute does talk about
- 24 violence. If we look at the --
- 25 JUSTICE SOUTER: It doesn't talk about

- 1 violence in the abstract. It talks about physical force
- 2 against the person of another in number 1; and in number
- 3 2, where we are here, "a risk of physical injury to
- 4 another."
- 5 MS. KATZE: Yes, Your Honor. And in the
- 6 second paragraph it deals with property crimes. And the
- 7 whole -- it all comes under the rubric of violent
- 8 crimes. That's what Congress was concerned about. Even
- 9 the serious drug offenses, the reason those were added
- 10 to the statute is the concern about violence with drugs.
- 11 So it all has to do with the idea of violence, and so,
- 12 initially, it was --
- 13 JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, it has to do with the
- 14 idea of risk of violence. A burglar when he commits
- 15 burglary does not want violence. He wants to get the
- 16 silver out of the sideboard and get back down the
- 17 ladder. He doesn't want any violence with anybody.
- 18 MS. KATZE: I would agree with you, Your
- 19 Honor.
- 20 JUSTICE SOUTER: And the problem is that, by
- 21 being in the situation he's in, he creates a risk that
- 22 violence will occur. Somebody may show up.
- 23 And the person, likewise, who commits DWI
- 24 doesn't want to hurt anybody, but he has placed himself
- 25 in a situation in which, if somebody shows up driving

- 1 another car in front of him or walking across the street
- 2 or maybe even in apprehending him for his DWI, a risk of
- 3 violence is raised. The two cases in that respect are
- 4 parallel.
- 5 MS. KATZE: I would disagree, Your Honor,
- 6 and here's why I don't think they're parallel. In a
- 7 burglary, I agree with you, individual doesn't want
- 8 to get caught, but goes with the fear or the knowledge
- 9 that they may be apprehended. They may arm
- 10 themselves -- again, the concern with those violent
- 11 activities and being armed.
- 12 JUSTICE SOUTER: When the drunk leaves the
- 13 bar, doesn't he have the realization, unless he is just
- 14 blind at that point, that he may be apprehended?
- MS. KATZE: It is just --
- 16 JUSTICE SOUTER: He's not going to throw
- 17 himself into the arms of the nearest cop.
- MS. KATZE: Absolutely not, but here's the
- 19 big -- the big difference. If somebody is drunk and
- 20 gets in a car, at most their intention is to get from
- 21 Point A to Point B. They have no intention of hurting
- 22 an individual. They don't even have the intent of
- 23 driving.
- JUSTICE SOUTER: Right, and when the guys
- 25 goes up the ladder for the silver in the sideboard, at

- 1 most what he wants is the silver.
- MS. KATZE: But he intentionally goes to
- 3 somebody else's property to commit this act that will
- 4 cause harm.
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, the driver
- 6 intentionally drives the car knowing that there's a
- 7 risk.
- 8 MS. KATZE: With all due respect, Your
- 9 Honor, in DWI there is no intention to drive. It's a
- 10 strict liability offense, as the example I gave in --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But that -- that is
- 12 because everybody knows there are -- there are two
- 13 conditions: One in which he just is reckless and he
- 14 doesn't care, in which case he has the intent; the other
- one, he's so drunk he can't form the intent. Both of
- 16 them are covered, and the latter is simply because we
- 17 don't want an excuse to exonerate the more culpable of
- 18 the two.
- 19 MS. KATZE: Your Honor, in New Mexico, DWI
- 20 is a strict liability. There is no intent. There is
- 21 not even negligence. It's merely being in control of a
- 22 vehicle.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: That's true in almost
- 24 every State, for the reasons that I've indicated,
- 25 because many people have the intent, and those that

- 1 don't shouldn't be exonerated because they're more
- 2 drunk.
- 3 MS. KATZE: If I may just add as well, in
- 4 some of the discussions about the actions of DWI and
- 5 running into people, it's important to note, if we're
- 6 looking at this with a categorical analysis, just to
- 7 look at the elements of the offense. DWI in New Mexico
- 8 would necessarily -- there would have to be another
- 9 element. If somebody --
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: The residual clause is a
- 11 difficult problem, but I still have not heard what
- 12 characteristic the enumerated offenses have in common,
- 13 all of them, that provides a basis for limiting the
- 14 residual clause.
- They're not all property crimes. A lot of
- 16 crimes involving explosives: Illegal possession of
- 17 explosives, illegally manufacturing explosives,
- 18 obtaining explosives by making false statements. None
- 19 of those are property crimes and none of them involve
- 20 injury to a person -- I mean involve the threat of the
- 21 use of force against a person. So what is the
- 22 characteristic that all of the enumerated crimes have in
- 23 common that would provide a limitation on the residual
- 24 clause?
- 25 MS. KATZE: At their very least, they all

- 1 are acts that intend to cause harm. They all are
- 2 property crimes. This Court reiterated --
- JUSTICE ALITO: No, they're not. In 18
- 4 U.S.C. 842, explosives, unlawful -- "It shall be
- 5 unlawful to engage in the business of importing,
- 6 manufacturing, or dealing in explosive materials without
- 7 a license issued under this chapter."
- 8 MS. KATZE: Your Honor --
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: There's no intent to cause
- 10 harm there.
- 11 MS. KATZE: Your Honor, the term in the
- 12 Armed Career Criminal Act is the "use of explosives."
- 13 This Court has defined "use" as having an
- 14 intentionality, and intent -- and I think it's fair to
- 15 say that that intent to use those explosives -- and,
- 16 from a practical point of view, people who -- and we
- 17 could talk about the ordinary case. People who use
- 18 explosives, they blow up property. They blow up houses.
- 19 They blow up bridges. At the very least, they're
- 20 blowing up explosives. That certainly -- that certainly
- 21 is an act to cause some type of harm to property.
- 22 And, with respect to whether they are
- 23 property, I submit all four are property crimes. This
- 24 Court said in Taylor all four of them are property
- 25 crimes. This Court interpreted the congressional -- the

- 1 legislative history. Those were four property crimes
- 2 that Congress specifically wanted to add to the concern
- 3 about violence --
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't -- I don't
- 5 understand this line of argument. You would exclude,
- 6 let's say, physical assault from -- from this, I mean
- 7 assault with intent to kill, because it's not a
- 8 property crime?
- 9 MS. KATZE: Yes.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: That wouldn't be included
- in the "otherwise involved"?
- 12 MS. KATZE: No, Your Honor, that would not
- 13 fit under paragraph 2. That would fit under paragraph
- 14 1, the use of force against an individual.
- 15 Congress carefully crafted this statute.
- 16 They dealt with serious drug offenses and they dealt
- 17 with offenses against people, and then they dealt with
- 18 offenses against property where there was --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It's kind of odd,
- 20 when the catch-all is phrased in terms of physical
- 21 injury to another, to say that it's concerned only with
- 22 property crimes.
- MS. KATZE: Property crimes with the
- 24 potential for physical injury to another, not just
- 25 purely property crimes. The four enumerated crimes all

- 1 have the potential for physical injury to another.
- 2 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It seems to me that
- 3 your argument gives us greater reason to treat the last
- 4 clause as independent just so that we can be sure that
- 5 it doesn't include only property crimes, because, as the
- 6 Chief Justice just pointed out, "physical injury" is
- 7 really the term that does the work in the second clause.
- 8 So it seems to me that you're almost giving
- 9 us a reason to make that clause more independent, more
- 10 forceful, more significant.
- 11 MS. KATZE: Absolutely not, Your Honor. You
- 12 wouldn't be able to make that interpretation, which is
- 13 basically what the government is suggesting, which would
- 14 read "otherwise" out of the statute and therefore either
- 15 make it tantamount to a third paragraph, which there is
- 16 not a third paragraph, or would basically make the
- 17 residual clause so broad it would swallow the entire
- 18 statute. And we can't believe that Congress would have
- 19 so carefully delineated the different areas of violent
- 20 felonies and then eviscerate it all with this residual
- 21 clause.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: May I ask this question
- 23 about your interpretation of the word "otherwise." Do
- 24 you think it is the equivalent of the statute that
- omitted that word, but added in "conduct that presents

- 1 an equally serious potential risk of physical injury"?
- 2 Do you think -- in other words, do you think that the
- 3 four examples define the risk of physical injury that,
- 4 the risk of potential physical injury the statute
- 5 contemplates?
- 6 MS. KATZE: Your Honor, I don't know that I
- 7 would agree "equally serious" would be the exact correct
- 8 equivalent. I think that that would be in keeping with
- 9 Justice Scalia's, more or less, my impression of Justice
- 10 Scalia's dissent in James, because I would submit that
- 11 there has to be even more than just an equal balance of
- 12 risk. I do think that is an issue that needs to be
- 13 compared, as this Court did in James. The Court
- 14 compared the risk of attempted burglary to burglary and
- 15 found that they were similar.
- 16 I think in a non-analogous case there are
- 17 other attributes that we have to look at, and that's
- 18 why we suggest --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, doesn't that
- 20 suggest that "otherwise" in the statute is in fact used
- 21 to mean "likewise"? I mean, if we said "attempted
- 22 burglary" in James is obviously included because
- 23 burglary is -- attempted burglary doesn't present a risk
- in a different fashion than burglary, it presents it in
- 25 the same fashion.

- 1 MS. KATZE: And that was this Court's
- 2 analysis in James, and I think that that's reasonable to
- 3 --
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: That was a helpful
- 5 question.
- 6 (Laughter.)
- 7 MS. KATZE: I think it's important not to
- 8 lose sight of the term that we are defining, "violent
- 9 felony," and that -- as well as the purpose or intent of
- 10 the statute was to punish a very small percentage, as
- 11 this -- as this Court said in Taylor, a very small
- 12 percentage of very serious offenders. This isn't a
- 13 statute that is written to say any individual who has
- 14 three felony convictions that may cause serious
- 15 potential risk of injury to an individual is going to
- 16 get 15 years. That simply wasn't the purpose. The --
- 17 the intent of the statute was to punish this small
- 18 population of individuals.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, particularly
- 20 when you look at subsection (i) in the broad reading of
- 21 serious potential risk of (ii), why would -- why would
- 22 Congress mean to exclude a particular category of
- 23 physical injury from the reach of the statute?
- 24 MS. KATZE: Because if it -- if it did
- 25 include absolutely everything, then it would swallow the

- 1 whole statute, because certainly --
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, not everything;
- 3 everything that presents a serious potential risk of
- 4 physical injury.
- 5 MS. KATZE: I think it -- if it -- for
- 6 example, if it could include DWI, it would be hard to
- 7 imagine what kind of crime wouldn't be included in
- 8 there. Under that type of reading, if we look at that
- 9 the structure could have been --
- 10 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Filling out a false income
- 11 tax return. I mean, I thought of one.
- MS. KATZE: Other than maybe some
- 13 white-collar crime.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, there is a whole
- 15 category of those. So --
- 16 MS. KATZE: But the -- the problem with that
- 17 analysis is that Congress was very clear who these --
- 18 who this statute was geared at; and as Judge McConnell
- 19 said in his dissent, the name of the statute, the Armed
- 20 Career Criminal Act, is not just window dressing.
- 21 There's a -- I mean, that just reinforces our
- 22 interpretation that there is this very small percentage
- 23 of individuals. It's not supposed to be a general catch
- 24 phrase. And --
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What do you think

- 1 presents the most serious potential risk of injury to
- 2 all of us, that we are going to be a victim of arson or
- 3 that we are likely to get hit by a drunk driver?
- 4 MS. KATZE: Here's why it's hard to answer
- 5 that: I wouldn't argue with you that there are more
- 6 people driving drunk than there are people burglarizing
- 7 houses, but the relevant analysis is what's the risk in
- 8 an individual incident? And in that case statistically
- 9 there is a greater risk of injury in a burglary. Under
- 10 this Court -- in Tennessee versus Garner, it said 3.8
- 11 percent, as opposed to a quarter of a percent in an
- 12 individual episode of drunk driving. So we can't put
- 13 the cumulative drunk driving on the back of Mr. Begay.
- 14 We look at the individual incident, doing categorical
- 15 analysis, looking at the elements in that individual
- 16 incident.
- 17 Congress was very concerned about issues of
- 18 federalism. The reason for the Armed Career Criminal
- 19 Act was to support law enforcement efforts on the part
- 20 of States, not to federalize crime, not to federalize
- 21 criminal investigation and prosecution. We are
- 22 suggesting that keeping that in mind and looking at the
- 23 -- the plain meaning of the phrase that we were
- 24 discussing, and looking at the way the statute is
- 25 actually structured and the fact that there are not

- 1 three different paragraphs, as well as the fact that
- 2 Congress could have picked to just say "or" as opposed
- 3 to "or otherwise," and we have to give "otherwise" a
- 4 meaning; and we suggest that our meaning of "likewise"
- 5 is one that this Court has adopted previously.
- 6 Previously this Court has said "or otherwise
- 7 qualified for a position" and found that people were
- 8 qualified in a similar way than other people; "otherwise
- 9 qualified to vote, " found that individuals were as
- 10 qualified or similarly qualified as individuals of
- 11 another race. One other example, bringing a -- by
- 12 certiorari "or otherwise" was found to mean to be
- 13 brought by similar means as certiorari.
- 14 And, Your Honor, if I may reserve the
- 15 remainder of my time?
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 17 MS. KATZE: Thank you.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Ms. Kruger.
- 19 ORAL ARGUMENT OF LEONDRA R. KRUGER
- 20 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- 21 MS. KRUGER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
- 22 please the Court:
- 23 Drunk driving is an act that by its nature
- 24 endangers people's lives. It is precisely for that
- 25 reason that it is a crime under the laws of all 50

- 1 States. When a person is repeatedly convicted of that
- 2 offense and therefore becomes subject to punishment as a
- 3 felon, he has committed a violent felony as Congress
- 4 defined that term in the Armed Career Criminal Act, that
- 5 is because he has committed a crime that in the words of
- 6 the statute involves conduct that "presents a serious
- 7 potential risk of physical --
- 8 JUSTICE GINSBURG: How about a habitual
- 9 speeder?
- 10 MS. KRUGER: Well, speeding isn't a felony
- 11 offense under the laws of any State, to my knowledge.
- 12 And we have to recall that the ACCA contains two
- 13 requirements for treatment of a prior conviction as a
- 14 violent felony that would support enhanced sentencing
- 15 under that act. The felony requirement is not a trivial
- 16 requirement. It was in fact a focus of congressional
- 17 debate, and it was intended to capture only serious
- 18 crimes. As a general matter, crimes of ordinary
- 19 negligence, simple carelessness, or totally blameworthy
- 20 acts don't merit felony punishment.
- 21 As this Court recognized in Staples, to
- 22 label a criminal act as a felony is indeed a serious
- 23 thing and something that legislatures, by long
- 24 tradition, reserved for truly serious acts.
- 25 JUSTICE ALITO: And what if a -- if a

- 1 legislature made it a crime to send text messages on a
- 2 cell phone while driving, and the punishment were severe
- 3 enough to qualify here? Would that be treated the same
- 4 way?
- 5 MS. KRUGER: Well, it would present a harder
- 6 question, Justice Alito, and that's because, for one
- 7 thing, we don't have the uniform judgment of
- 8 legislatures that helps us know in this case that drunk
- 9 driving does in all cases present a serious risk of
- 10 injury. And also because the conduct that's defined by
- 11 the DUI statute of New Mexico, as well as other States,
- 12 by definition defines conduct that is unsafe. You only
- 13 violate the statute if you are impaired to such a degree
- 14 that your faculties and motor skills are such that you
- 15 are unable to drive a car safely. With text messaging
- 16 there isn't quite that categorical mapping on of the
- 17 risk to the conduct that's proscribed.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: So there is no State where
- 19 speeding -- even if maybe you hurt somebody or something
- 20 -- there is no State where speeding is under a statute
- 21 that you could be imprisoned for more than a year?
- MS. KRUGER: To my knowledge, there is no
- 23 State in which speeding itself is a felony offense.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, a felony as defined
- 25 here. I just wanted to be sure you're focusing -- it's

- 1 defined here as "subject to imprisonment for a term
- 2 exceeding one year." Now is --
- 3 MS. KRUGER: To my knowledge, at least,
- 4 Justice Breyer --
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay, I just want to be
- 6 sure we're on the same wavelength. Fine.
- 7 MS. KRUGER: Reckless driving, on the other
- 8 hand, when it does result in serious physical injury to
- 9 another, is often punished as a felony. But there is
- 10 obviously a difference between speeding by itself and
- 11 reckless driving.
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: Ms. Kruger, what I don't
- 13 understand about this statute as you're interpreting it
- 14 is why you need any of it except the last phrase? Once
- 15 you give the last phrase, "involves conduct that
- 16 presents a serious potential risk of physical injury to
- another," all of the rest of it is automatically
- 18 included. "Has as an element the use, attempted use or
- 19 threatened use of physical force against the person of
- 20 another" -- that obviously presents a serious potential
- 21 risk of physical injury to another. Or is burglary,
- 22 arson, extortion, the use of explosives? Congress could
- 23 have saved itself a lot of trouble by simply erasing all
- 24 the rest of the statute and simply saying any conduct
- 25 that presents a serious potential risk of physical

- 1 injury or not. That can't be what they meant.
- 2 MS. KRUGER: Well, what this Court said
- 3 about the structure of the statute in Taylor is that
- 4 Congress's purpose was first to identify crimes that do
- 5 have as an element the use of force, but also to
- 6 capture a category of crimes that do not have as an
- 7 element the use force but nevertheless present a
- 8 potential harm to another human being.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: Why -- why would Congress
- 10 go through that trouble, unless they wanted to suggest
- 11 what other kind of crimes they mean to include by this
- 12 residual category of "any conduct" that presents a
- 13 serious potential risk of physical injury?
- MS. KRUGER: Well, indeed as the Court said
- 15 in Taylor and I think as the Court reiterated in James,
- 16 it included the examples of four enumerated offenses in
- 17 clause 2 to provide examples of the kinds of crimes that
- 18 they believed to present a serious --
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: The degree of risk -- the
- 20 degree of risk, for example?
- MS. KRUGER: Yes.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: So if it doesn't come up to
- 23 the degree of risk that any of those four would, it
- 24 would not be included?
- 25 MS. KRUGER: Well, I don't know that the --

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- 2 MS. KRUGER: -- that the enumerated crimes
- 3 set an absolute floor. Congress could have written a
- 4 statute that said that.
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, then what does it do?
- 6 What does it do?
- 7 MS. KRUGER: They do provide examples of the
- 8 kinds of crimes that Congress thought did present a
- 9 serious risk.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: How? How? How does it
- 11 limit the latter part? Is it because they are all
- 12 crimes that require mens rea, intent? So should we
- 13 limit it by saying it has to be a -- a conduct that's
- 14 intentional conduct that presents a serious risk?
- MS. KRUGER: Well, I think, as the Court
- 16 said in James, all of these crimes are quite different
- 17 offenses that don't share very many characteristics in
- 18 common, including incidentally intent to cause harm.
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: But you say it does limit
- 20 it. So tell me how it limits it?
- 21 MS. KRUGER: Well, what it does is it
- 22 provides a useful benchmark against which to assess the
- 23 risks that are associated with any other crime. And in
- 24 this case --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: That's nice. Benchmark of

- 1 what? Of intent, of degree of risk?
- MS. KRUGER: Of degree -- it's degree and
- 3 kinds of risk. Yes.
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay. So the degree of
- 5 risk has to be pretty much similar to those four?
- 6 MS. KRUGER: It has to be comparable, which
- 7 is what the Court said in James --
- 9 MS. KRUGER: And in this case we do think
- 10 that the risks associated with DUI are comparable to the
- 11 risks --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How do we know that?
- 13 I guess this is a question I asked your friend. I mean,
- 14 degree of risk. I mean what are the odds that we're
- 15 going to -- that if there's a burglary, some physical
- 16 injury might result as opposed to an episode of drunk
- 17 driving.
- MS. KRUGER: Well, Your Honor --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: In other words, I
- 20 guess -- do we really look at how -- what percentage of
- 21 drunk drivers are involved in accidents as opposed to
- 22 what percentage of burglars are involved in violent
- 23 confrontations?
- 24 MS. KRUGER: No, Your Honor. I don't think
- 25 that the answer to the question can turn on statistical

- 1 comparisons of the likelihood that harm will result in
- 2 any given episode of any of these crimes. I think that
- 3 that is a proposition that the Court underscored in
- 4 James, when it decided whether attempted burglary
- 5 qualified without reference to hard statistics. And the
- 6 fact of the matter is that hard statistics for most of
- 7 these crimes are simply unavailable. So to make the
- 8 answer in any case turn on the availability of
- 9 statistics would lead to fundamentally arbitrary
- 10 results.
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Ms. Kruger, one of the
- 12 anomalies about this, and we start out -- this is an
- 13 armed career criminal. And you can say, well,
- 14 burglary -- burglary and arson, if you're apprehended,
- 15 you're the career criminal; you commit these kinds of
- 16 crimes. Congress doesn't want you to have a gun, or
- if you do, you're going to get the book thrown at you.
- 18 But there doesn't seem to be much of a connection. I
- 19 mean how -- how is it going to make the dangerous --
- 20 the drunk driver more or less dangerous that he happens
- 21 to have a gun in the glove compartment?
- 22 MS. KRUGER: Well, we think that it's clear
- 23 from the enumeration of the offenses in clause 2 in the
- 24 definition of "violent felony" that Congress wasn't
- 25 intending to capture only a set of crimes that are made

- 1 more dangerous when they're committed with a firearm.
- 2 It is, in fact, the kind of statute that Congress wrote
- 3 in 18 U.S.C. 942(c), which concerns the use or carrying
- 4 of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of
- 5 violence. But here what Congress was concerned about
- 6 was capturing a set of offenders who, by their criminal
- 7 history, have demonstrated an inherent disregard for the
- 8 value of human life and therefore should not only be
- 9 prohibited from possessing firearms but should face
- 10 particularly severe sanctions for failure to abide by
- 11 that prohibition. Our --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: Then they could have turned
- 13 it just on dangerousness. I'm back to Justice Scalia
- 14 and Justice Ginsburg's question, and I'm simply sort of
- 15 repeating those in a sense but making it quite specific.
- 16 Imagine a universe of crimes. Every member of that
- 17 universe we concede has precisely the same degree of
- 18 danger as arson, explosives, burglary. So there's no
- 19 argument about the risk to human life. It is identical.
- 20 And now we write a statute, and the statute's object is
- 21 to take people who are felons in possession of a gun and
- 22 those persons whom it is particularly bad that they have
- 23 a gun are going to go away for 15 years minimum. So
- 24 what we're looking are people who are particularly bad
- 25 that they have a gun. Now go back to our universe, and

- 1 in that universe we have some things on the one hand
- 2 like arson, but on the other hand -- I have to name a
- 3 few, environmental crimes committed by negligence or
- 4 recklessness, where somebody flushed a toxic substance
- 5 down the drain or -- here's a good one I found -- if you
- 6 are a steamboat captain or an executive of a steamboat
- 7 company and you fail through negligence or simple
- 8 inadvertence to stop somebody from not inspecting a
- 9 lifeboat, well, felony or worse. And there are quite a
- 10 few dozens of these things: Failing to stop at an
- 11 inspection station if you are a trucker. You know?
- 12 There are quite a few, where what's at issue is
- 13 negligence, thoughtlessness, and maybe even
- 14 recklessness, but it seems to have nothing -- and it's
- 15 dangerous -- but has nothing to do with whether, when
- 16 later on you want a gun, you are a greater risk for
- 17 having a gun, you're more likely to pull the trigger,
- 18 you're more likely to aim it at somebody and shoot him.
- 19 Now, that's I think what we are trying to drive at.
- MS. KRUGER: Well, Your Honor, I think that
- 21 the initial response to that question is that the
- 22 statute that Congress wrote unequivocally focuses the
- 23 inquiry on the risk of harm to other human beings.
- 24 Congress could very well have written a statute that
- 25 required intent to harm. It could have written a

- 1 statute that required intentional use of force, as it
- 2 did in --
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: Oh, but it didn't mean that
- 4 -- you said it didn't mean that because they could have
- 5 said that and nothing else. If that's what they meant,
- 6 they could have eliminated everything else that they
- 7 said. They obviously meant to tie that to the preceding
- 8 portions. And when you tie it to the preceding
- 9 portions, you come up with some limitations of the sort
- 10 that Justice Breyer was suggesting.
- MS. KRUGER: Well, I think you don't, Your
- 12 Honor, because I think the most obvious way to tie it to
- 13 the preceding sections is, again, to import a kind of
- 14 use-of-force requirement such as the 18 U.S.C. 16(b)
- 15 requirements that would look at the risk that force
- 16 intentionally will be used in the course of committing
- 17 the offense, and --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How much of a
- 19 limitation is the point Justice Breyer was making? I
- 20 mean, let's say you've got a habitual drunk driver.
- 21 Everybody in town says he always drives drunk. I mean,
- 22 how would they greet the news: Guess what? He's just
- 23 got a gun. I mean, that raises the level of risk
- 24 significantly, doesn't it?
- MS. KRUGER: Well, indeed, I think that it

- 1 does, and I think the facts of this case bear out that
- 2 Congress's concern about possession of firearms by
- 3 people who have committed crimes of this character that
- 4 present a serious risk in a serial manner was indeed
- 5 well-founded.
- 6 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Can you tell me what test,
- 7 what conclusion, you want me to come to in your
- 8 argument? Drunk driving is within the last clause
- 9 because --
- 10 MS. KRUGER: It is because, first of all,
- 11 the risks of drunk driving are commonly understood.
- 12 They're supported by the uniform legislative judgment of
- 13 the 50 States. And also because those risks are
- 14 comparable in both kind and degree to the kinds of risks
- 15 that are associated with crimes that Congress
- 16 specifically enumerated in the statute as meeting the
- 17 test.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: She says not at all. Your
- 19 friend on the other side says that it's something like,
- 20 what, two and a half percent for burglary and point
- 21 something for the chances of hurting somebody if you're
- 22 driving DUI?
- MS. KRUGER: Well, I think, again, the
- 24 statistical inquiry, while it can be helpful and
- 25 relevant in individual cases, is not dispositive. I

- 1 think if you look at the statistics, the chances of
- 2 injury resulting from a given arson fire are also well
- 3 below 1 percent. What Congress wasn't concerned about
- 4 was the statistical likelihood of injury in any
- 5 particular episode --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: So, I'm suppose to say
- 7 most legislatures think this is dangerous. That's
- 8 enough?
- 9 MS. KRUGER: Well, I think that Congress was
- 10 entitled to look at --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm not trying to be
- 12 captious, but I -- it's difficult to find out what the
- 13 standard is.
- JUSTICE STEVENS: Isn't the significance of
- 15 Justice Breyer's point that each of the listed crimes is
- 16 more dangerous when a criminal is carrying a gun, but
- 17 driving drunk isn't made any more dangerous whether or
- 18 not there's a gun in the car?
- 19 MS. KRUGER: Well, Justice Stevens, it's
- 20 difficult to see how arson, for example, or explosives
- 21 use is made more dangerous when the criminal is carrying
- 22 a gun. Presumably in those cases the criminal's use --
- 23 weapon of choice is fire or explosives rather than a
- 24 gun. The only risk that would inhere would be the risk
- 25 that any criminal would pose when apprehended by the

- 1 authorities, and it's the same risk that a presumably a
- 2 drunk driver would pose to others when apprehended by an
- 3 officer who pulls them over.
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Isn't a person who
- 5 deliberately burns down buildings, is a person who if he
- 6 had a gun might pull the trigger? And I will suggest
- 7 that's a reasonable inference. I also will give you
- 8 this: That a person who's so careless as to go drunk
- 9 driving is a person whose gun might go off carelessly or
- 10 he might leave it around the house. So I'll give you
- 11 that one. But my instinct is that Congress, in this
- 12 Act, is not worried about guns going off carelessly
- 13 around the house. They are worried about a person being
- 14 the kind of person who will point a gun at somebody and
- 15 pull the trigger. Now, is there something you can say
- 16 that disabuses me of that instinct?
- 17 MS. KRUGER: Well, I think one way to start
- 18 to answer that question is by looking specifically at
- 19 what Congress likely meant when it referred to "arson"
- 20 in the statute. Under 18 U.S.C. 844(i), arson is
- 21 defined as "maliciously damaging property by means of
- 22 fire or explosives." But the way courts have interpreted
- 23 that language is not to require intent to damage
- 24 property in all instances. It also covers situations in
- 25 which the fire is set with willful disregard for the

- 1 likelihood that damage will occur; in other words, in
- 2 situations in which the fire has occurred and recklessly
- 3 poses harm. And we think that that is the kind of
- 4 injury that is at issue in this case; that is,
- 5 fundamentally the same kind of risk that DUI poses.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't think this is
- 7 just limited to intentional arson? You think negligent
- 8 arson? Wow.
- 9 MS. KRUGER: Well, it's certainly true that
- 10 --
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: Negligent extortion,
- 12 negligent use of explosives? I mean, it's in a list of
- things that are talking about, you know, intentional
- 14 crimes that armed career criminals would be likely to
- 15 do.
- MS. KRUGER: Well, I think that Congress was
- more than likely aware of the fact that 18 U.S.C. 844
- 18 did treat arson in this manner, particularly considering
- 19 that --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't think Congress had
- 21 the slightest idea.
- (Laughter.)
- MS. KRUGER: Well, the definition of -- the
- 24 reach of the Federal arson statute came to encompass use
- of fire in 1982, only shortly before the ACCA was

- 1 enacted. And certainly it's true that most State
- 2 legislatures have also defined arson offenses to include
- 3 similar kinds of intentional setting of fire with
- 4 reckless disregard to the likelihood of damage or injury
- 5 that would result.
- 6 JUSTICE STEVENS: Could you comment on one
- 7 other point that Judge McConnell made in his opinion?
- 8 Is there significance in the title of this statute?
- 9 "Armed Career Criminal Act." Does this statute intend
- 10 to identify career criminals?
- 11 MS. KRUGER: Well, I think it's difficult to
- 12 see how it would support a limitation to the kinds of
- 13 crimes that are normally committed as a means of
- 14 livelihood in that sense of "career." It certainly does
- 15 refer to career criminals in the sense that they are
- 16 habitual offenders, that they are recidivists. But
- 17 certainly not all the enumerated offenses, nor even the
- 18 offenses that are encompassed by the definition that's
- 19 contained in clause 1 of the statute, are normally
- 20 committed as a means of violent --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, I'm not so sure. It
- 22 seems to me that the burglary, arson, extortion,
- 23 explosives involves at least the stereotype of the armed
- 24 career criminal that people see in movies and hear about in
- 25 organized crimes testimony and so forth. I don't -- I

- 1 don't think it's completely far of the mark.
- MS. KRUGER: Well, it is certainly true that
- 3 the kind of --
- 4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Obviously -- obviously
- 5 incomplete.
- 6 MS. KRUGER: Well, it's certainly true that
- 7 the kinds of crimes that are encompassed by clause 1 of
- 8 the definition, sort of traditional crimes of violence
- 9 like murder, assault, rape, are not ordinarily committed
- 10 as a means of livelihood. People rarely make a
- 11 profession of those types of careers.
- 12 And it's also true that ordinarily arson is
- 13 not committed for insurance fraud, but is committed for
- 14 a large number of other purposes that have nothing to do
- 15 with the profit motive, including covering up evidence
- of other crimes, including simple vandalism.
- 17 So I think it's implausible to think that
- 18 Congress was really focused here on the kinds of crimes
- 19 that are ordinarily committed for profit as a means
- 20 of --
- 21 JUSTICE GINSBURG: What else -- what else
- 22 would be in this catalogue? You rejected my speeder,
- 23 but I think you said something about a reckless driver
- 24 might, habitually reckless driver. What else would fit
- 25 the description "conduct that presents a serious

- 1 potential risk of physical injury to another"?
- MS. KRUGER: We think the category of crimes
- 3 of recklessness that pose an injury, reckless disregard
- 4 of the risk of injury to others, would qualify because
- 5 in those cases juries have necessarily found that there
- 6 was objectively a serious risk and that failures to
- 7 appreciate that risk and to act accordingly constitutes
- 8 a gross deviation from the ordinary standard of care
- 9 that a reasonable person would exercise.
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: I'd like to know
- 11 specifically. You said reckless driving; and what else?
- 12 MS. KRUGER: Reckless driving that results
- in serious bodily injury or death to another, which is a
- 14 felony under the laws of many States, would qualify.
- 15 JUSTICE GINSBURG: That has the potential
- 16 for doing that, not --
- MS. KRUGER: Yes, but reckless driving,
- 18 simple, is ordinarily not punishable as a felony under
- 19 the traffic laws. We think, similarly, reckless
- 20 homicide would qualify.
- 21 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But wouldn't that come in
- 22 in the first, the violent crime, the first part?
- MS. KRUGER: Well, presumably it wouldn't,
- 24 because by definition a reckless homicide does not
- 25 involve the intentional use of force, the threatened use

- 1 of force, or attempted use of force. And the definition
- 2 relates solely to the killing of another, whether or not
- 3 by intentional use of force, in situations that
- 4 disregard the great dangerousness to human life and
- 5 those actions.
- 6 The other things that would qualify would be
- 7 cases like DUI, where recklessness need not be proved as
- 8 such, but that are underscored by legislative
- 9 determinations that the conduct that is proscribed is by
- 10 definition reckless, by definition poses a serious risk
- 11 that a person should appreciate and should accordingly
- 12 conform their conduct to a different standard.
- 13 Petitioner's argument suffers from the
- 14 fundamental flaw that it describes a statute that
- 15 Congress didn't write. Congress did indeed consider
- 16 incorporating the definition of "crime of violence" that
- is set forth at 18 U.S.C. 16 when it redrafted the
- 18 statute in 1986 and it decided against it, instead
- 19 making the inquiry turn on the potential for risk to
- 20 human life as opposed to the potential that -- the risk
- 21 that force would be used or on the intentional use of
- 22 force.
- We think that that decision is one that
- 24 needs to be given effect in interpreting the statute.
- 25 As this Court recognized in Leocal, the risk of

- 1 intentional use of force is simply not the same thing
- 2 that a risk of -- the risk that an accident will occur
- 3 that will cause serious injury to another.
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: May I ask about something
- 5 in your brief on page 37? You said: "Congress settled
- 6 on this language because it had two other proposals, one
- 7 that it considered too narrow and one that it considered
- 8 as potentially too broad." And the one that it
- 9 considered potentially too broad is "any felony that by
- 10 its nature involves a substantial risk that physical
- 11 force against a person or property of another may be
- 12 used in the course of committing an offense is the "--
- 13 this is on page 37 of your brief.
- MS. KRUGER: Yes, Your Honor. That is the
- 15 definition of "crime of violence" that's contained at 18
- 16 U.S.C. 16. And it is, indeed, unquestionably broader
- 17 than the definition of "violent felony" at
- 924(e)(2)(B)(ii) in at least two respects. One is that
- 19 it would cover misdemeanors involving use of force as
- 20 well as felonies. And the second is that it would cover
- 21 crimes that involve a risk that force would be used
- 22 against property, rather than focusing exclusively on
- 23 the risk of harm to human beings, as the definition of
- 24 "violent felony" in the ACCA does.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: It would, in the case of

- 1 drunk driving, though, it seems this would be a better
- 2 case for the Petitioner if we were operating under this
- 3 statute.
- 4 MS. KRUGER: Well, indeed, I think that that
- 5 is the thrust of the Court's decision in Leocal.
- 6 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It's narrower in that
- 7 sense as applied to this case.
- 8 MS. KRUGER: That's correct.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: May I ask you this
- 10 question? If the government were not to prevail in the
- 11 first case, Rodriquez, should we remand in this case,
- 12 because -- because then he -- the fourth felony would
- 13 have been improperly found if we rule against the
- 14 government in Rodriguez?
- 15 MS. KRUGER: Well, if the Court decided to
- 16 reach that issue in this case, even though the issue was
- 17 not pressed or passed on in the court of appeals and
- 18 wasn't raised in the cert petition, we do think the
- 19 Court's analysis of the issue in that case applies
- 20 equally to its analysis of the issue of whether or not
- 21 the felony prong of the definition of "violent felony"
- 22 is meant in this case.
- So were the Court to decide that the
- 24 applicable maximum term of imprisonment that applies to
- 25 a recidivist is the term of imprisonment that would

- 1 apply to a hypothetical first-time offender, then that
- 2 decision would control in this case as well. And the
- 3 Court should dispose of this case accordingly.
- 4 But it bears noting that that would not
- 5 dispose of this question entirely, because there are, of
- 6 course, other reasons why States treat drunk driving
- 7 offenses as felony offenses, particularly in situations
- 8 in which they result in serious bodily harm or death to
- 9 another, as Your Honor previously noted.
- 10 The issue in this case comes down to the
- 11 interpretation of the statute that Congress wrote, not a
- 12 hypothetical statute that Congress could have written.
- 13 And that statute identifies one criterion for
- 14 determining whether or not a felony offense qualifies as
- 15 a violent felony under the ACCA, and that is its
- 16 potential for harming other human beings.
- 17 Drunk driving is commonly understood to
- 18 present a serious potential risk of injury. The
- 19 potential risks of injury are the only reason why it's a
- 20 crime under the laws of 50 States. And the risks
- 21 associated with drunk driving are comparable in both
- 22 kind and degree to the risks associated with arson and
- 23 explosives use, two crimes that Congress specifically
- 24 identified in the statute as satisfying its definition.
- 25 For that reason, we think that the court of

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- 2 sentenced properly under the Armed Career Criminal Act
- 3 and would urge the Court to affirm its determination.
- If there are no further questions, thank
- 5 you.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, Ms.
- 7 Kruger.
- 8 Ms. Katze, you have four minutes remaining.
- 9 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF MARGARET A. KATZE
- 10 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- 11 MS. KATZE: The problem with the
- 12 government's interpretation is that it offers no
- 13 limiting principle whatsoever. It's merely open to say
- 14 absolutely any offense that would present a serious
- 15 potential risk of injury to another would fall within
- 16 the statute. And that clearly does not take Congress's
- 17 intent to heart.
- 18 And there has to be some other limiting
- 19 principle, something more than just the words in the
- 20 residual clause, especially when we are giving every
- 21 word in the statute meaning. We suggest that our test
- 22 of analyzing those four enumerated crimes which were
- 23 intentionally put there by Congress, to look at the
- 24 attributes of those four crimes. That they are active,
- 25 violent property crimes more typical of crimes committed

- 1 by career offenders, more dangerous when committed with
- 2 a gun --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Why wouldn't drunk driving
- 4 be a property crime? Doesn't it cause an enormous
- 5 amount of property damage?
- 6 MS. KATZE: Under a categorical analysis,
- 7 there is no element that has anything to do with
- 8 property whatsoever in DWI, which brings me to my next
- 9 point that recidivism is not an element of DWI in New
- 10 Mexico.
- 11 The elements to commit DWI in the first
- 12 offense are exactly the same as the fourth offense.
- 13 There is no difference. And there is -- certainly,
- 14 Congress, intended that there would be a distinction
- 15 between violent, intentional felonies and accidental or,
- 16 at worst, negligent crimes.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Extortion doesn't
- 18 involve property as an element.
- 19 MS. KATZE: I believe it does. It's trying
- 20 to get something of value from another person. That
- 21 thing of value is property.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Something of value
- 23 -- something of value could be, you know, a confession
- in a related case or something. It doesn't necessarily
- 25 have to be property.

- 1 MS. KATZE: In the ordinary case, it's
- 2 property even if we think of it as reputation; property
- 3 in the sense of the common law, life, liberty, and
- 4 property; that that includes more than just physical
- 5 property, I think. In addition, this Court has said
- 6 that those four offenses are --
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I don't understand
- 8 that. Yes. Life, liberty, and property include more
- 9 than property, but --
- 10 MS. KATZE: "Property" includes more than
- 11 tangible, physical property. Reputation is considered
- 12 property under that definition. Merely stating that --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: I thought you said you
- 14 -- you look at the generality of cases. In most
- 15 extortion cases what they want is money.
- 16 MS. KATZE: That is correct, and money is
- 17 property. And that is exactly what -- in addition to
- 18 the fact that this Court said in Taylor that those four
- 19 offenses are property offenses. And, again, in James
- 20 this Court again referred to those four offenses as --
- 21 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, if you look at the
- 22 generality of drunk-driving offenses, those that result
- 23 in physical injury almost always involve, or in the
- 24 great majority of cases involve, property damage, too;
- 25 don't they?

- 1 MS. KATZE: But that's not an element of the
- 2 crime. We can --
- JUSTICE ALITO: It's not an element of some
- 4 of these other crimes, either. Is it an element in
- 5 burglary? Is there a property element in burglary?
- 6 MS. KATZE: Yes, Your Honor. There is a
- 7 breaking and entering into a building, in some type
- 8 -- that's a property.
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: That's an entering. An
- 10 unlawful entering --
- 11 MS. KATZE: Right.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: That's a property element?
- MS. KATZE: Yes, sir.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What about --
- 15 MS. KATZE: You have to enter a property.
- 16 It's this something -- property --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But we know that
- 18 attempted burglary is covered, and you don't have to
- 19 enter the house in an attempted burglary.
- MS. KATZE: I think that's exactly the
- 21 situation when there are analogous crimes. It's clear
- 22 to see that --
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes. Well, you are
- 24 saying this is an analogous crime to the four that are
- 25 listed, or it is not an analogous crime to the four that

Τ	are listed?
2	MS. KATZE: That's correct, but this Court
3	has said that the four offenses that were enumerated by
4	Congress are, in fact, property crimes. This Court has
5	said that in Taylor and again referred to those four
6	crimes as property crimes in James.
7	But even if this Court doesn't believe they
8	are property crimes, the bottom line is DWI is so far
9	afield of the four enumerated crimes, the attributes
10	that they had, at the very least the intent to do crime
11	that it's clearly outside the scope of what Congress
12	could ever have intended.
13	Thank you.
14	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, Ms.
15	Katze. The case is submitted.
16	(Whereupon, at 12:04 p.m., the case in the
17	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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