

SUPREME COURT OF NORTH DAKOTA

State v. Steiger

644 N.W.2d 187 (N.D. 2002) · No. No. 20010240 · Decided May 14, 2002

SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of North Dakota affirmed Raymond Steiger's conviction for failing to register as a sex offender. The court held that admissible evidence and reasonable inferences supported a finding that Steiger had abandoned his registered address and therefore failed to report a change of address as required by North Dakota law. The court also explained that it reviews the entire record for substantial evidence and is not limited to the trial court's stated reasons for its judgment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of North Dakota
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Kapsner, Justice; Gerald W. Vande Walle, C.J.; Dale V. Sandstrom, J.; William A. Neumann, J.; Mary Muehlen Maring, J.; Kapsner, J.
JURISDICTION	North Dakota
DECIDED	May 14, 2002
DOCKET	No. 20010240
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Steiger appealed a criminal judgment finding him guilty of failure to register as a sex offender under N.D.C.C. § 12.1-32-15, challenging the sufficiency of the evidence and the admission and consideration of allegedly hearsay testimony.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	When sufficiency of the evidence is challenged, the court examines the evidence and reasonable inferences in the light most favorable to the verdict to determine whether a rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of the crime established beyond a reasonable doubt. The appellate court considers the entire record and is not limited to the reasons stated by the trial court for its finding of guilt.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published North Dakota Supreme Court opinion
PARTIES	Raymond Steiger v. State of North Dakota

TOPICS

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PRACTICE AREAS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether sufficient evidence supported the finding that Steiger had abandoned his registered address and therefore was required to report a change of address under N.D.C.C. § 12.1-32-15.
2. Whether allegedly hearsay testimony concerning Steiger's absence from the registered address rendered the evidence insufficient to support the conviction.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence and reasonable inferences, viewed in the light most favorable to the verdict, established beyond a reasonable doubt that Steiger had abandoned his registered address and failed to register his change of address within ten days.
2. The conviction may be affirmed based on the admissible evidence and reasonable inferences in the entire record, regardless of the allegedly hearsay testimony or the trial court's stated reasons for finding guilt.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"When sufficiency of evidence is challenged, "we will examine the evidence in the light most favorable to the verdict to see if a rational trier of fact could have found that the essential elements of the crime were established beyond a reasonable doubt."" (644 N.W.2d at 188)

"Using address in the broader sense rather than limiting it to residence, more clearly effects the legislature's intent." (644 N.W.2d at 189)

"Regardless of the allegedly hearsay testimony, the admissible evidence in the record, when viewed in a light most favorable to the verdict, establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt." (644 N.W.2d at 190)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Steiger was required to register as a sex offender and had registered a Mandan address with North Dakota authorities. During an investigation, an officer twice went to that address but did not find Steiger there; Steiger later stated that he alternated living between friends and the registered address. The evidence also showed that Steiger was not on the lease for the Mandan address. Steiger did not report a change of address and was convicted of failing to register.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Steiger was charged with and convicted of failing to register as a sex offender after allegedly abandoning his registered Mandan address without reporting a change of address. The case was tried to the court without a jury. The Supreme Court of North Dakota reviewed the conviction and affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State v. Morris, 331 N.W.2d 48, 53 (N.D. 1983)
- State v. Treis, 1999 ND 136, ¶ 9, 597 N.W.2d 664
- State v. Rubey, 2000 ND 119, ¶¶ 17-19, 611 N.W.2d 888
- State v. Berger, 235 N.W.2d 254, 263 (N.D. 1975)
- State v. Hartleib, 335 N.W.2d 795, 797 (N.D. 1983)
- State v. Dietz, 115 N.W.2d 1, 8 (N.D. 1962)