**Loper Bright Enterprise v. Raimondo Facts:**

P Looper Bright Enterprises Inc., H&L Axelsson, Inc., Lund Marr Trawlers LLC, and Scombrus One LLC are family businesses that operate in the Atlantic herring fishery. Theychallenged a regulation imposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The regulation mandates that they pay for federally required observers onboard their vessels as part of a fishery management plan. The plaintiffs argue that the MSA does not authorize NMFS to impose this financial burden, contending that such a rule exceeds the agency’s statutory authority and violates the Administrative Procedure Act (APA).

**Procedural History:**

The District Court ruled in favor of NMFS, applying Chevron deference. D. C. Circuit court of appeals affirmed. The U.S. Supreme Court granted certiorari in both cases.

**Issue:**

Does Chevron deference allow NMFS to require commercial fishing companies to pay for government-mandated observers or should the Chevron doctrine be overruled or clarified?

**Holding:**

Yes, the Chevron doctrine should be overruled. Courts must exercise their independent judgment in deciding whether an agency has acted within its statutory authority, as the APA requires.

**Judgement:**

The U.S. Supreme Court **reversed** the lower court's judgment.

**Legal Reasoning for majority, concurrence and dissent:**

* **Majority Justice John Roberts:** Courts must interpret statutes using traditional tools of statutory construction, free from policy preferences. The Framers designed the

Constitution to ensure judicial independence from political influence. Judges must fulfill their obligations under the APA, rather than assume statutory ambiguities are implicit delegations of power. Chevron wrongly forced courts to defer to agencies, undermining their duty to judge. It was fundamentally misguided and failed to properly consider the APA.

* **Concurring**, opinion of **Gorsuch, J.:** emphasizes that overturning Chevron restores the judiciary’s role in statutory interpretation without bias toward agencies. He argued that courts, not agencies, should have the ultimate authority to resolve statutory ambiguities while still respecting the Executive Branch’s views. Chevron, rather than protecting stability, allowed agencies to shift interpretations unpredictably, undermining reliance interests. Gorsuch maintained that traditional judicial methods provide a more consistent and constitutionally sound approach to statutory interpretation.

**Concurring** opinion of **Thomas, J.:** Justice Thomas argued that Chevron deference unconstitutionally expanded executive agency power beyond what Article II permits, allowing agencies to exercise judicial and even legislative functions. He maintained that this violated the separation of powers by stripping courts of their role in interpreting the

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law and giving excessive authority to the executive branch. *Chevron*, he asserted, was not a harmless shift in power but a fundamental disruption of constitutional design. The Founders intended for courts—not agencies—to serve as a check on executive overreach by ensuring the correct interpretation of laws. By overturning *Chevron*, the court restores the proper balance of power and safeguards individual liberty through structural constraints.

* **Dissent (Justice Kagan, joined by Justices Sotomayor and Jackson):** The dissent criticized the majority for stripping agencies of their role in interpreting complex statutes, instead giving courts authority over technical and policy-driven decisions. It argued that Chevron deference was rooted in congressional intent, recognizing that agencies, unlike courts, have the expertise needed to interpret scientific and regulatory matters. Overturning Chevron would cause widespread disruption, as it has been applied in thousands of cases and is deeply embedded in modern governance. Agencies play a crucial role in enforcing regulations that protect public health, the environment, and financial stability—areas courts lack specialized knowledge in. The decision disregards precedent and upends a system Congress has relied on to implement effective regulations.

**Relation To Other Cases, Precedent:** This case relates to Marbury v. Madison, as both reinforce the principle that it is the judiciary’s role to interpret the law. Additionally, the Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. case was overruled.

**Source of Law:** The U.S. Constitution, the APA, and the MSA, the statute at issue.

**System Operations:** This case demonstrates the tremendous power of the judiciary in shaping how laws are interpreted and applied. By overruling Chevron, the court fundamentally shifted the balance of power between the branches of government, reclaiming the judiciary’s authority to independently interpret statutes. The decision emphasizes that courts, rather than executive agencies, have the final say on legal meaning, reinforcing judicial supremacy in statutory interpretation.

**Impact:** The decision significantly shifts power from executive agencies to the judiciary, empowering courts to independently interpret statutes without deferring to agency expertise. This change creates regulatory uncertainty, creating uncertainty of businesses and interest groups. Offices such as the Office of Education and other governmental agencies will be affected, requiring them to ensure that their regulations and policies are clearly defined and legally sound, as they can no longer rely on judicial deference to agency interpretations. This change may lead to increased scrutiny and legal challenges from stakeholders.