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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN JOSE DIVISION**

ODTMAN ALFONSO CARDENAS
CASTELLANOS, et al.,

Petitioners,

v.

SERGIO ALBARRAN, et al.,

Respondents.

CASE NO. 5:25-cv-07962-NW

**PETITIONERS' REPLY TO
RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE AND
OPPOSITION TO MOTION FOR
PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

INTRODUCTION

Respondents do not contest that Petitioners' re-detention was not based on any individualized determination that they posed a flight risk or a danger to the community. Respondents are also unable to distinguish this case from the "tsunami" of district court decisions in recent weeks that have issued preliminary relief in nearly identical circumstances. *See Caicedo Hinestroza et al., v. Kaiser*, No. 3:25-cv-07559-JD, 2025 LX 333950 at *4 (Sept. 9, 2025). Instead, Respondents double down on their chilling position that Petitioners have no due process rights to challenge their detention outside of what is statutorily provided for them, despite many courts squarely rejecting this argument. Respondents also try to draw attention away from the due process question by introducing a dramatic and implausible new statutory scheme that they claim subjects Petitioners, and millions of people like them, to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). However, it is undisputed that Respondents released Petitioners at the border subject to discretionary detention under § 1226(a). They cannot now reverse course. In addition, in *Salcedo Aceros v. Kaiser*, a court in this district recently thoroughly examined the text, structure, agency application, and legislative history of § 1225(b) and determined it cannot be applied to noncitizens in the interior of the United States, like Petitioners. *See* No. 3:25-cv-06924-EMC at *13-21. This Court should adopt the reasoning in *Salcedo Aceros* and hold the same.

ARGUMENT

I. The Due Process Clause Protects Petitioners' Liberty Interests.

The Due Process Clause applies to noncitizens regardless of whether they are "seeking admission" or are "admitted" under immigration law. *Wong v. United States*, 373 F.3d 952, 973 (9th Cir. 2004), abrogated on other grounds by *Wilkie v. Robbins*, 551 U.S. 537 (2007). Respondents do not allege that Petitioners' re-detention resulted from an assessment of either danger or flight risk,

1 the sole lawful bases for immigration detention. *See Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001).
2 Rather, Respondents claim that Petitioners do not have due process rights beyond what is provided
3 for them in § 1225. Opp. at 12 (citing *Landon v. Plasencia*, 459 U.S. 21 (1982) and *Dep't of*
4 *Homeland Sec. v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, (2020)). However, numerous courts have found that
5 Respondents' contention is not supported by the cases on which it relies. *See, e.g., Jaraba Olivero*
6 *v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-07117-BLF, at *7-8 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 18, 2025) (accepting Respondents'
7 request at the PI hearing to consider the applicability of *Thuraissigiam* and finding it does not
8 apply); *Padilla v. U.S. Immigr. & Customs Enf't*, 704 F. Supp. 3d 1163, 1170 (W.D. Wash. 2023)
9 ("The Court stands unconvinced that the Supreme Court's decision in *Thuraissigiam* requires
10 dismissal of Plaintiffs' due process claim."); *Jatta v. Clark*, No. 19-cv-2086, 2020 WL 7138006, at
11 *2 (W.D. Wash. Dec. 5, 2020) (finding *Thuraissigiam* "inapposite" to due process challenge to
12 detention); *Leke v. Hott*, 521 F. Supp. 3d 597, 604 (E.D. Va. 2021) ("Quite clearly, *Thuraissigiam*
13 does not govern here, as the Supreme Court there addressed the singular issue of judicial review of
14 credible fear determinations and did not decide the issue of an Immigration Judge's review of
15 prolonged and indefinite detention."); *Mbalivoto v. Holt*, 527 F. Supp. 3d 838, 844–48 (E.D. Va.
16 2020) (similar); *see also, e.g., Lopez v. Sessions*, No. 18-cv-4189, 2018 WL 2932726, at *7
17 (S.D.N.Y. June 12, 2018) (ordering release of "arriving" noncitizen who was unlawfully
18 redetained); *Mata Velasquez v. Kurzdorfer*, No. 25-cv-493, 2025 WL 1953796, at *11 (W.D.N.Y.
19 July 16, 2025) (same).

22 Moreover, Respondents claim that the multi-factor "balancing test" of *Mathews v. Eldridge*,
23 424 U.S. 319, 335 (1976) does not apply because the Supreme Court has not used the test to address
24 mandatory detention challenges. Opp. at 11-12. However, the Ninth Circuit has "assume[d] without
25 deciding" that *Mathews* applies in the immigration detention context. *See Rodriguez Diaz v.*
26 *Garland*, 53 F.4th 1189, 1206-8 (9th Cir. 2022) (applying *Mathews* to § 1226(a) and explaining "it

remains a flexible test”); *accord Pinchi v. Noem*, No. 5:25-cv-05632-PCP, F. Supp. 3d, 2025 WL 2084921, at *3 n.2 (N.D. Cal. July 24, 2025) (discussing *Rodriguez-Diaz*); *Landon v. Plasencia*, 459 U.S. 21, 34–35 (1982) (applying *Mathews* to due process challenge to immigration hearing procedures). Courts in this circuit also regularly apply *Mathews* in due process challenges in identical or similar circumstances to those here. *Salcedo Aceros v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-06924-EMC, at *9. The Court should thus reject Respondents’ unsupported claim and, consistent with recent decisions in factually similar cases, grant the preliminary injunction. *See Pinchi v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2084921, at *7 (converting TRO requiring release of asylum seeker arrested at immigration court into preliminary injunction prohibiting Government from re-detaining her without hearing); *Singh v. Andrews*, 2025 WL 1918679, *8-10 (E.D. Cal. July 11, 2025); *Castellon v. Kaiser*, No. 1:2-cv-00968, 2025 WL 2373425, at *24 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 14, 2025).

II. Petitioners Are Not Subject to Mandatory Detention.

As an initial matter, it is important to stress that Petitioners have a liberty interest in remaining free regardless of which detention statute applies. As the court in *Espinoza v. Kaiser* pointed out, “even assuming Respondents are correct that § 1225(b) is the applicable detention authority for all ‘applicants for admission,’ Respondents fail to contend with the liberty interests created by the fact that the Petitioners in this case were released on recognizance prior to the manifestation of this interpretation.” *See* No. 1:25-CV-01101 JLT SKO, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 183811, at *28 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 18, 2025). This Court can thus grant preliminary relief without reaching the detention statute question.

Should the Court reach the detention statute question, it should find that Petitioners are not subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(1) or § 1225(b)(2). First, as of the date of this filing, an immigration judge has not yet ruled on DHS’s motions to dismiss any of Petitioners’

1 cases.¹ There is also a stay of the government's implementation of the 2025 Designation Notice
 2 and the Huffman Memorandum applying expedited removal to "people living in the interior of the
 3 country who have not previously been subject to expedited removal," which includes Petitioners.
 4 *Make the Rd. N.Y. v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-190 (JMC), 2025 LX 389496, at *70 (D.D.C. Aug. 29,
 5 2025). Petitioners reserve all rights and arguments to challenge any future assertion by
 6 Respondents of such authority.

7
 8 Petitioners are also currently subject to § 1226(a) and not § 1225(b)(2), as Respondents
 9 now claim. For decades, courts and agencies have recognized that the detention of individuals who
 10 entered the U.S. without inspection is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), the default discretionary
 11 detention statute that permits release by DHS or an immigration judge. Regulations promulgated
 12 nearly thirty years ago provide that noncitizens "who are present without having been admitted or
 13 paroled (formerly referred to as [noncitizens] who entered without inspection) will be eligible for
 14 bond and bond redetermination" under Section 1226. 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997).
 15 Respondents also consistently adhered to this interpretation. *See, e.g., Matter of Garcia-Garcia*,
 16 25 I&N. Dec. 93 (BIA 2009); *Matter of D-J-*, 23 I&N. Dec. 572 (A.G. 2003); Transcript of Oral
 17 Argument at 44:24–45:2, *Biden v. Texas*, 597 U.S. 785 (2022) (No. 21-954) ([Solicitor General]:
 18 "DHS's long-standing interpretation has been that 1226(a) applies to those who have crossed the
 19 border between ports of entry and are shortly thereafter apprehended.").

20
 21 Consistent with this longstanding practice, Petitioners were issued Form I-220A, Order of
 22 Release on Recognizance when they were released at the border, which states the detention
 23 authority as Section 236 of the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA"), codified at 8 U.S.C. §
 24

25
 26 ¹Petitioners are also in the process of submitting written oppositions to their motions to dismiss. If the motions to
 27 dismiss are granted despite Petitioners' opposition, Petitioners will have the right to appeal the dismissals to the Board
 28 of Immigration Appeals, and expedited removal proceedings cannot be initiated against them during the appeal period. In
 Petitioners' counsel's experience, an appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals is unlikely to be adjudicated in
 less than six months.

1 1226. Opp, 10-1 at 14; *Id.*, 10-2 at 13; *Id.*, 10-3 at 13, *Id.*, 10-4 at 14; *Id.*, 10-5 at 13; *Jimenez*
 2 *Garcia v. Kaiser*, No. 4:25-cv-06916-YGR at *2 (taking judicial notice of the fact that Form I-
 3 220A, Order of Release on Recognizance cites release subject to 8 U.S.C. Section 1226). A
 4 district judge in New York recently examined release documents, such as Form I-220A, Order of
 5 Release on Recognizance, found that they “unequivocally establish that [the petitioner] was
 6 detained pursuant to Respondents’ discretionary authority under § 1226(a).” *Lopez Benitez v.*
 7 *Francis*, No. 25-cv-5937, 2025 WL 2371588, at *11–12 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025). As further
 8 evidence of release under section 1226(a), Petitioners were charged with removability pursuant to
 9 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), which is a statute applicable to noncitizens who are already present in
 10 the U.S., not to noncitizens who are considered “arriving.” *See Ortega-Cervantes v. Gonzales*, 501
 11 F.3d 1111, 1116 (9th Cir. 2007); Opp, 10-1 at 10; *Id.*, 10-2 at 9; *Id.*, 10-3 at 9; *Id.*, 10-4 at 10; *Id.*,
 12 10-5 at 9. Further, the fact that Petitioners were released on an Order of Release on Recognizance
 13 in and of itself is evidence that they are subject to § 1226(a) because § 1225(b) only authorizes
 14 release on parole. *Martinez v. Hyde*, No. 25-cv-11613, 2025 WL 2084238, at *4 (D. Mass. July
 15 24, 2025) (“Respondents’ contrary theory of the procedural history cannot make sense of
 16 Petitioner’s release on recognizance because individuals detained following examination under
 17 section 1225 can only be paroled into the United States ‘for urgent humanitarian reasons or
 18 significant public benefit’”) (citing *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 300 (2018)).
 19 Respondents also do not dispute that the government “released [Petitioners] on orders of
 20 recognizance.” Opp. at 7.

21 Respondents now claim, however, that they can revoke their earlier determination at the
 22 border and subject Petitioners to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).² Opp. at 12.

26 ² Curiously, Respondents frame their argument as “Petitioners’ detention authority cannot be converted to § 1226(a)”,
 27

As explained above, Petitioners have a liberty interest that protects them from this type of arbitrary government action. *See also Jimenez Garcia v. Kaiser*, No. 4:25-cv-06916-YGR, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 178531, at *9 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 19, 2025) (the government may not “unilaterally reclassify [a petitioner] as ‘detained’ pursuant to Section 1225(b)(2))” after making an initial determination that they are detained under Section 1226(a)). To do so would amount to an impermissible post hoc rationalization. *Lopez Benitez*, No. 25-cv-5937 at *13–14. Still, however, Respondents “steamroll over this line of authority” and claim they have these powers based on a dramatic and implausible reinterpretation of section 1225(b)(2)(A). *Espinoza v. Kaiser*, No. 1:25-CV-01101 JLT SKO, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 183811, at *27 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 18, 2025). They assert that noncitizens who entered the U.S. without inspection are “applicants for admission” who are still “seeking admission” years after DHS released them into the interior on their own recognizance, and as a result are subject to indefinite mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), without access to a bond hearing. *Opp.* at 12; *cf. Martinez v. Hyde*, No. 25-cv-11613, 2025 WL 2084238, at *4 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025) (describing DHS’s recent major shift in position).

There are many problems with this interpretation. First, the Supreme Court explained in *Jennings v. Rodriguez* that discretionary detention governs the cases of those, like Petitioners, who are “already in the country” and are detained “pending the outcome of removal proceedings.” 583 U.S. at 289. In contrast, section 1225(b) concerns decision making by immigration officials at “the Nation’s borders and ports of entry.” *See id.* at 287. The plain text of section 1225(b)(2)(A) also shows it only applies to people at the border. Section 1225(b)(2)(A) states: “[I]n the case of an alien who is an applicant for admission, if the examining immigration officer determines that an alien *seeking admission* is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted, the alien shall be

Opp. at 12, when it is apparently undisputed that the detention authority was always § 1226(a), and the issue is whether Respondents can now unilaterally convert it to § 1225(b).

1 detained for a proceeding under section 1229a of this title.” (emphasis added). The phrase
 2 “seeking admission” implies a present-tense action. Someone who is already in the United States
 3 is no longer “seeking admission” because they have already entered and, in the case of Petitioners,
 4 have lived in the United States for well over a year.³ If the phrase “seeking admission” did not
 5 modify the phrase “applicant for admission,” then there would be no reason to include it. *See*
 6 *Salcedo Aceros*, No. 3:25-cv-06924-EMC, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 179594, at 16 (invoking the
 7 rule against surplusage). Respondents’ reading of the statute that non-citizens who have entered
 8 the United States and lived here for years are still “seeking admission” is thus “unnatural and
 9 ignores the tense of the term.” *See id.* Petitioners also respectfully refers the Court to the following
 10 additional comprehensive explanations for why § 1225(b)(2)(A) does not apply to noncitizens
 11 living in the interior of the United States: *Lopez Benitez*, No. 25-cv-5937, 2025 WL 2371588, at
 12 *5–9. *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at *2–8; *Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 25-cv-11571 (JEK), 2025 WL
 13 1869299, at *5–9 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025)); *Rodriguez v. Bostock*, No. 3:25-cv-5240-TMC, 2025
 14 WL 1193850, at *14 (W.D. Wash. Apr. 24, 2025); *Cuevas Guzman v. Andrews*, No. 1:25-cv-
 15 01015-KES-SKO, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 176145 at *9–12 (E.D. Cal. Sep. 9, 2025); *Rosado v.*
 16 *Figueroa*, No. CV 25-02157 PHX DLR (CDB), 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 156344, at *8–32 (D. Ariz.
 17 Aug. 11, 2025).

20 Respondents also argue that “applicants for admission” and “seeking admission” are
 21 equivalent because 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(3) states: “All aliens (including alien crewmen) who are
 22 applicants for admission *or otherwise seeking admission or readmission to or transit through the*
 23

24 ³ Several courts have used the following example: “[S]omeone who enters a movie theater without purchasing a ticket
 25 and then proceeds to sit through the first few minutes of a film would not ordinarily then be described as ‘seeking
 26 admission’ to the theater. Rather, that person would be described as already present there. Even if that person, after
 27 being detected, offered to pay for a ticket, one would not ordinarily describe them as ‘seeking admission’ (or ‘seeking’
 28 ‘lawful entry’) at that point—one would say that they had entered unlawfully but now seek a lawful means of remaining
 there.” *Salcedo Aceros*, No. 3:25-cv-06924-EMC at *17 (citing *Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, No. 25 CIV. 5937 (DEH),
 2025 WL 2371588, at *7 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025)).

1 *United States* shall be inspected by immigration officers.” (emphasis added). Opp at 10. However,
2 Congress added the “or otherwise seeking admission” to ensure that even if a noncitizen is not
3 formally an “applicant for admission” under the statutory definition, but is functionally trying to
4 enter the United States, they still must be inspected. In addition, if the statute eliminated the word
5 “otherwise” and read: “all aliens (including alien crewmen) who are applicants for admission or
6 ~~otherwise~~ seeking admission or readmission to or transit through the United States shall be
7 inspected by immigration officers,” then it would apply too broadly to applicants for admission
8 who are in the interior of the United States, which is outside the purview of § 1225, which deals
9 with the inspection of noncitizens at the border. By adding the word “otherwise,” Congress thus
10 avoided the statute being read in the way that Respondents’ now assert it should be read.
11

12 Respondents also cite the Board of Immigration Appeal’s recent decision in *Matter of*
13 *Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I.&N. Dec. 216, 219 (BIA 2025) for the proposition that applicants for
14 admission are forever seeking admission and therefore subject to mandatory detention regardless
15 of how long they have been in the United States. Opp. at 10. Within the last couple of weeks,
16 however, a judge in this district directly addressed *Matter of Yajure* and issued a comprehensive
17 and thorough rejection of the government’s application of section 1225(b)(2) this way, rooted in
18 the text, structure, agency application, and legislative history of the statute. *See Salcedo Aceros v.*
19 *Kaiser*, No. 3:25-cv-06924-EMC at *13-21. The BIA is also under the control of the executive
20 branch, and it is well known that the current presidential administration is waging a mass-
21 deportation campaign. The Court should thus give more weight to the statutory construction
22 conducted by an independent judge in *Salcedo Aceros* rather than a novel statutory construction
23 put forth by an agency under control of the Attorney General that advances the administration’s
24 anti-immigrant policy goals. The Court should also consider the recent political firings of BIA
25
26
27

judges when considering what level of deference to give BIA decisions,⁴ especially when those decisions have such dark implications as stripping fundamental constitutional rights from millions of individuals as they do here.

Thus, Petitioners, who have no criminal history, are subject to discretionary detention. In line with the reasoned analysis of these authorities, this Court—if it reaches the question—should reject the government’s contrary new statutory interpretation.

III. The Balance of the Equities and the Public Interest Weigh Strongly in Petitioner’s Favor.

Respondents do not rebut Petitioners’ showing that the remaining factors weigh in their favor. They face irreparable injury in the form of constitutional harm of the highest order if the preliminary injunction is not granted. *See Pinchi*, 2025 WL 2084921, at *7 (collecting cases). The public interest likewise weighs strongly in Petitioners’ favor. *Id. See Pinchi*, 2025 WL 2084921, at *7.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, this Court should grant the preliminary injunction.

Date: September 23, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jordan Weiner
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Attorney for Petitioners

⁴ Rachel Uranga, *Trump fires more immigration judges in what some suspect is a move to bend courts to his will*, *LA Times*, April 23, 2025, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-04-23/immigration-judges>.