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9
10 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
11 FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

12 MIGUEL PORTILLO,

13 Petitioners,

14 v.

15 KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, Department
16 of Homeland Security, et al.,

17 Respondents.

No. 5:25-cv-02892-JFW-PVC

**FEDERAL RESPONDENTS'
OPPOSITION TO PETITIONERS' *EX*
PARTE APPLICATION FOR
TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER
AND ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE RE:
PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

Honorable John F. Walter
United States District Judge

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	2
II. STATUTORY BACKGROUND	2
A. Detention under <u>8 U.S.C. § 1225</u>	2
B. Detention under <u>8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)</u>	3
C. Review at the Board of Immigration Appeals (“BIA”)	4
III. ARGUMENT	5
A. The Court Lacks Jurisdiction to Entertain Petitioners’ Action under <u>8 U.S.C. § 1252</u>	5
B. Even Assuming Jurisdiction, Petitioners Fail to Meet the High Bar for Injunctive Relief.	9
1. Petitioners are unable to show a likelihood of success on the merits.	9
2. Petitioners Failed to Exhaust Their Administrative Remedies before the BIA.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. Petitioners have not established irreparable harm because they have an adequate remedy in appealing to the BIA.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4. The Government has a compelling interest in allowing the BIA to speak on the issue.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
IV. CONCLUSION	14

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Federal Cases	
<i>Aden v. Nielsen</i> , No. C18-1441RSL, <u>2019 WL 5802013</u> (W.D. Wash. Nov. 7, 2019)	13, 14, 15
<i>Aguilar v. ICE</i> , <u>510 F.3d 1</u> (1st Cir. 2007)	7
<i>Ajlani v. Chertoff</i> , <u>545 F.3d 229</u> (2d Cir. 2008)	7
<i>All. for Wild Rockies v. Cottrell</i> , <u>632 F.3d 1127–35</u> (9th Cir. 2011)	16
<i>Alvarez v. ICE</i> , <u>818 F.3d 1194</u> (11th Cir. 2016)	5
<i>Barton v. Barr</i> , <u>590 U.S. 222</u> (2020)	12
<i>Bd. of Tr. of Constr. Laborers’ Pension Trust for S. Calif. v. M.M. Sundt Constr. Co.</i> , <u>37 F.3d 1419</u> (9th Cir. 1994)	14
<i>Biden v. Texas</i> , <u>597 U.S. 785</u> (2022)	3
<i>Bogle v. DuBois</i> , <u>236 F. Supp. 3d 820</u> (S.D.N.Y. 2017)	14
<i>Clark v. Martinez</i> , <u>543 U.S. 371</u> (2005)	5
<i>Delgado v. Quarantillo</i> , <u>643 F.3d 52</u> (2d Cir. 2011)	7
<i>Delgado v. Sessions</i> , No. C17-1031-RSL-JPD, <u>2017 WL 4776340</u> (W.D. Wash. Sept. 15, 2017)	13, 14, 15
<i>Demore v. Kim</i> , <u>538 U.S. 510</u> (2003)	10
<i>E.F.L. v. Prim</i> , <u>986 F.3d 959–65</u> (7th Cir. 2021)	5

1	<i>Florida v. United States,</i>	
2	<u>660 F. Supp. 3d 1239</u> (N.D. Fla. 2023)	9, 10, 11
3	<i>Global Rescue Jets, LLC v. Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.,</i>	
4	<u>30 F.4th 905</u> (9th Cir. 2022)	16
5	<i>Herrera-Correra v. United States, No. CV 08-2941 DSF</i>	
6	(JCx), <u>2008 WL 11336833</u> (C.D. Cal. Sept. 11, 2008)	6
7	<i>J.E.F.M. v. Lynch,</i>	
8	<u>837 F.3d 1026</u> (9th Cir. 2016)	7
9	<i>Jennings v. Rodriguez,</i>	
10	<u>583 U.S. 281</u> (2018)	<i>passim</i>
11	<i>Karczewski v. DCH Mission Valley LLC,</i>	
12	<u>862 F.3d 1006</u> (9th Cir. 2017)	9
13	<i>Laing v. Ashcroft,</i>	
14	<u>370 F.3d 994</u> (9th Cir. 2004)	14, 15
15	<i>Lands Council v. McNair,</i>	
16	<u>537 F.3d 981</u> (9th Cir. 2008)	16
17	<i>Leonardo v. Crawford,</i>	
18	<u>646 F.3d 1157</u> (9th Cir. 2011)	13, 14
19	<i>Loper Bright Enters. v. Raimondo,</i>	
20	<u>603 U.S. 369–33</u> (2024)	12
21	<i>Lopez v. Barr, No. CV 20-1330</i>	
22	(JRT/BRT), <u>2021 WL 195523</u> (D. Minn. Jan. 20, 2021)	6
23	<i>Marquez-Reyes v. Garland,</i>	
24	<u>36 F.4th 1195</u> (9th Cir. 2022)	10
25	<i>McCarthy v. Madigan,</i>	
26	<u>503 U.S. 140</u> (1992)	16, 17
27	<i>McDonnell v. United States,</i>	
28	<u>579 U.S. 550</u> (2016)	10
	<i>Meneses v. Jennings, No. 21-CV-07193-JD,</i>	
	<u>2021 WL 4804293</u> (N.D. Cal. Oct. 14, 2021)	14, 15
	<i>Miranda v. Garland,</i>	
	<u>34 F.4th 338–66</u> (4th Cir. 2022)	16

1	<i>Nasrallah v. Barr</i> ,	
2	<u>590 U.S. 573</u> –80 (2020)	6
3	<i>Noriega–Lopez v. Ashcroft</i> ,	
4	<u>335 F.3d 874</u> (9th Cir. 2003)	13
5	<i>Ortega-Cervantes v. Gonzales</i> ,	
6	<u>501 F.3d 1111</u> (9th Cir. 2007)(a)	3
7	<i>Porter v. Nussle</i> ,	
8	<u>534 U.S. 516</u> (2002)	16
9	<i>Puga v. Chertoff</i> ,	
10	<u>488 F.3d 812</u> (9th Cir. 2007)	13
11	<i>Reno v. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.</i> ,	
12	<u>525 U.S. 471</u> (1999)	6
13	<i>Reyes v. Wolf</i> , No. CV 20-0377JLR,	
14	<u>2021 WL 662659</u> (W.D. Wash. Feb. 19, 2021)	14-15
15	<i>Rosario v. Holder</i> ,	
16	<u>627 F.3d 58</u> (2d Cir. 2010)	7
17	<i>Ruiz v. Mukasey</i> ,	
18	<u>552 F.3d 269</u> (2d Cir. 2009)	7
19	<i>Saadulloev v. Garland</i> , No. 3:23-CV-00106,	
20	<u>2024 WL 1076106</u> (W.D. Pa. Mar. 12, 2024)	8
21	<i>Santos-Zacaria v. Garland</i> ,	
22	<u>598 U.S. 411</u> (2023)	14
23	<i>Sissoko v. Rocha</i> ,	
24	<u>509 F.3d 947</u> (9th Cir. 2007)	6
25	<i>Skidmore v. Swift & Co.</i> ,	
26	<u>323 U.S. 134</u> (1944)	12
27	<i>Suzlon Energy Ltd. v. Microsoft Corp.</i> ,	
28	<u>671 F.3d 726</u>	11
	<i>Tazu v. Att’y Gen. U.S.</i> ,	
	<u>975 F.3d 292</u> –99 (3d Cir. 2020)	5
	<i>Torres v. Barr</i> ,	
	<u>976 F.3d 918</u> (9th Cir. 2020) (en banc)	11

1	<i>Ubiquity Press Inc. v. Baran</i> , No 8:20-cv-01809-JLS-DFM,	
2	<u>2020 WL 8172983</u> (C.D. Cal. Dec. 20, 2020)	16
3	<i>United States v. Arango</i> , CV 09-178 TUC DCB,	
4	<u>2015 WL 11120855</u> (D. Ariz. Jan. 7, 2015)	16
5	<i>United States v. Gambino-Ruiz</i> ,	
6	<u>91 F.4th 981</u> (9th Cir. 2024)	11
7	<i>United States v. Woods</i> ,	
8	<u>571 U.S. 31</u> (2013)	10
9	<i>USA Farm Labor, Inc. v. Su</i> ,	
10	<u>694 F. Supp. 3d 693</u> (W.D.N.C. 2023)	16
11	<i>Valencia-Mejia v. United States</i> , No. CV 08–2943 CAS	
12	(PJWx), <u>2008 WL 4286979</u> (C.D. Cal. Sept. 15, 2008)	5
13	<i>Velasco Lopez v. Decker</i> ,	
14	<u>978 F.3d 842</u> (2d Cir. 2020)	8
15	<i>Wang v. United States</i> , No. CV 10-0389 SVW	
16	(RCx), <u>2010 WL 11463156</u> (C.D. Cal. Aug. 18, 2010)	5, 6
17	<i>Washington v. Chimei Innolux Corp.</i> ,	
18	<u>659 F.3d 842</u> (9th Cir. 2011)	11
19	<i>Weinberger v. Salfi</i> ,	
20	<u>422 U.S. 749</u> (1975)	16
21	<i>Xiao Ji Chen v. U.S. Dep’t of Justice</i> ,	
22	<u>434 F.3d 144</u> (2d Cir. 2006)	7

Federal Statutes

23	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A)</u>	3
24	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1225</u>	<i>passim</i>
25	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1)</u>	10
26	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)</u>	2, 9
27	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1226</u>	<i>passim</i>
28	<u>8 U.S.C. § 1252</u>	<i>passim</i>
	<u>8 U.S.C. §§ 1252 (b) (9)</u>	4, 13

**OPPOSITION TO EX PARTE APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY
RESTRAINING ORDER**

Respondents hereby oppose Petitioners' *ex parte* application for temporary restraining order and order to show cause re: preliminary injunction (the "Application") [Dkt. 4]. The government reiterates here the legal position it has taken in its opposition to the *ex parte* TRO application filed in the *Bautista* case, 5:25-cv-01873-SSS-BFM, which the government filed on July 24, 2025 as Docket no. 8.¹ The same legal issue at issue in *Bautista* has also been raised in this District in other cases including *Javier Ceja Gonzalez, et al. v. Kristi Noem, et al.*, 5:25-cv-02054-ODW-ADS and *Ruben Benitez et al. v. Kristi Noem, et al.*, 5:25-cv-02190-RGK-AS. This Court has also ruled on the same legal issue in *Arreola Armenta et al. v. Noem et al.*, 5:25-cv-02416-JFW-SP (September 16, 2025 order granting application for temporary restraining order) [Dkt. no. 7].

The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) has recently ruled on this issue in its order issued on September 5, 2025 in *Matter of Jonathan Javier Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). After detailed analysis, the BIA determined that based on the plain language of section 235(b)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) (2018), Immigration Judges lack authority to hear bond requests or to grant bond to aliens who are present in the United States without admission. A copy of the BIA's decision in *Matter of Yajure* is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Hon. Cathy Ann Bencivengo in the Southern District of California recently issued a decision affirming that the reasoning of *Matter of Yajure* is correct and denying a TRO accordingly in *Chavez v. Noem*, Case no. 3:25-cv-02325-CAB-SBC, Dkt. no. 8 (September 24, 2025). A copy of that *Chavez* decision is attached as Exhibit B hereto.

¹ The District Court granted the *ex parte* TRO application in *Bautista* via its order issued on July 28, 2025 [Dkt. 14]. Shortly thereafter, an amended complaint asserting putative class claims for similarly situated petitioners was filed in *Bautista* [Dkt. 15].

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 Petitioners, detainees in immigration custody, filed a petition for writ of habeas
3 corpus (the “Petition”) asking the Court to release them, or provide them a bond hearing
4 within 7 days. *See* Dkt. 1. Petitioners then filed their *ex parte* Application seeking
5 essentially the same relief in the form of a Temporary Restraining Order requiring a bond
6 hearing within 7 days. The Application and the Petition should be denied for two reasons.

7 First, numerous provisions of 8 U.S.C. § 1252 deprive this Court of jurisdiction to
8 review the Petitioners’ claims and preclude this Court from granting the relief that they
9 seek. Congress has unambiguously stripped federal courts of jurisdiction over challenges
10 to the commencement of removal proceedings, including detention pending removal
11 proceedings. Congress further directed that any challenges arising from any removal-
12 related activity—including detention pending removal proceedings—must be brought
13 before the appropriate federal court of appeals, not a district court.

14 Second, assuming jurisdiction, Petitioners nonetheless fail to demonstrate they are
15 entitled to injunctive relief. Petitioners cannot show a likelihood of success on the merits
16 because they seek to circumvent the detention statute under which they are rightfully
17 detained to secure bond hearings that they are not entitled to. Petitioners fall precisely
18 within the statutory definition of aliens subject to mandatory detention without bond found
19 in § 1225(b)(2). As the BIA determined in *Matter of Yajure*, Immigration Judges lack
20 authority to hear bond requests or to grant bond to aliens who are present in the United
21 States without admission. *See* Exhs. A-B hereto.

22 For these reasons, and those set forth below, the Court should deny Petitioners’
23 request for relief and dismiss this action in its entirety.

24 **II. STATUTORY BACKGROUND**

25 **A. Detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225**

26 Section 1225 applies to “applicants for admission,” who are defined as “alien[s]
27 present in the United States who [have] not been admitted” or “who arrive[] in the United
28 States.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1). Applicants for admission “fall into one of two categories,

1 those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered by § 1225(b)(2).” *Jennings v. Rodriguez*,
2 583 U.S. 281, 287 (2018).

3 Section 1225(b)(1) applies to arriving aliens and “certain other” aliens “initially
4 determined to be inadmissible due to fraud, misrepresentation, or lack of valid
5 documentation.” *Id.*; 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (iii). These aliens are generally subject
6 to expedited removal proceedings. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i). But if the alien
7 “indicates an intention to apply for asylum . . . or a fear of persecution,” immigration
8 officers will refer the alien for a credible fear interview. *Id.* § 1225(b)(1)(A)(ii). An alien
9 with “a credible fear of persecution” is “detained for further consideration of the
10 application for asylum.” *Id.* § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii). If the alien does not indicate an intent to
11 apply for asylum, express a fear of persecution, or is “found not to have such a fear,” he
12 is detained until removed. *Id.* §§ 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (B)(iii)(IV).

13 Section 1225(b)(2) is “broader” and “serves as a catchall provision.” *Jennings*, 583
14 U.S. at 287. It “applies to all applicants for admission not covered by § 1225(b)(1).” *Id.*
15 Under § 1225(b)(2), an alien “who is an applicant for admission” shall be detained for a
16 removal proceeding “if the examining immigration officer determines that [the] alien
17 seeking admission is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted.” 8 U.S.C. §
18 1225(b)(2)(A); *see Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 66, 68 (BIA 2025) (“for aliens arriving
19 in and seeking admission into the United States who are placed directly in full removal
20 proceedings, section 235(b)(2)(A) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), mandates
21 detention ‘until removal proceedings have concluded.’”) (citing *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at
22 299). Still, the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) has the sole discretionary
23 authority to temporarily release on parole “any alien applying for admission to the United
24 States” on a “case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public
25 benefit.” *Id.* § 1182(d)(5)(A); *see Biden v. Texas*, 597 U.S. 785, 806 (2022).

26 **B. Detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)**

27 Section 1226 provides for arrest and detention “pending a decision on whether the
28 alien is to be removed from the United States.” 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). Under § 1226(a), the

1 government may detain an alien during his removal proceedings, release him on bond, or
2 release him on conditional parole.² By regulation, immigration officers can release aliens
3 if the alien demonstrates that he “would not pose a danger to property or persons” and “is
4 likely to appear for any future proceeding.” 8 C.F.R. § 236.1(c)(8). An alien can also
5 request a custody redetermination (i.e., a bond hearing) by an immigration judge (“IJ”) at
6 any time before a final order of removal is issued. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); 8 C.F.R.
7 §§ 236.1(d)(1), 1236.1(d)(1), 1003.19.

8 At a custody redetermination, the IJ may continue detention or release the alien on
9 bond or conditional parole. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); 8 C.F.R. § 1236.1(d)(1). IJs have broad
10 discretion in deciding whether to release an alien on bond. *In re Guerra*, 24 I. & N. Dec.
11 37, 39–40 (BIA 2006) (listing nine factors for IJs to consider). But regardless of the factors
12 IJs consider, an alien “who presents a danger to persons or property should not be released
13 during the pendency of removal proceedings.” *Id.* at 38.

14 **C. Review at the Board of Immigration Appeals (“BIA”)**

15 The BIA is an appellate body within the Executive Office for Immigration Review
16 (“EOIR”). *See* 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(d)(1). Members of the BIA possess delegated authority
17 from the Attorney General. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(a)(1). The BIA is “charged with the review
18 of those administrative adjudications under the [INA] that the Attorney General may by
19 regulation assign to it,” including IJ custody determinations. 8 C.F.R.
20 §§ 1003.1(d)(1), 236.1; 1236.1. The BIA not only resolves particular disputes before it,
21 but also “through precedent decisions, [it] shall provide clear and uniform guidance to
22 DHS, the immigration judges, and the general public on the proper interpretation and
23 administration of the [INA] and its implementing regulations.” *Id.* § 1003.1(d)(1). “The
24 decision of the [BIA] shall be final except in those cases reviewed by the Attorney
25

26 ² Being “conditionally paroled under the authority of § 1226(a)” is distinct from
27 being “paroled into the United States under the authority of § 1182(d)(5)(A).” *Ortega-*
28 *Cervantes v. Gonzales*, 501 F.3d 1111, 1116 (9th Cir. 2007) (holding that because
release on “conditional parole” under § 1226(a) is not a parole, the alien was not eligible
for adjustment of status under § 1255(a)).

General.” 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(d)(7).

III. ARGUMENT

A. The Court Lacks Jurisdiction to Entertain Petitioners’ Action under 8 U.S.C. § 1252.

As a threshold matter, 8 U.S.C. §§ 1252(g) and (b)(9) preclude review of Petitioners’ claims. Accordingly, Petitioners are unable to show a likelihood of success on the merits.

First, Section 1252(g) specifically deprives courts of jurisdiction, including habeas corpus jurisdiction, to review “any cause or claim by or on behalf of any alien arising from the decision or action by the Attorney General to [1] *commence proceedings*, [2] *adjudicate cases*, or [3] *execute removal orders* against any alien under this chapter.”³ 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) (emphasis added). Section 1252(g) eliminates jurisdiction “[e]xcept as provided in this section and notwithstanding any other provision of law (statutory or nonstatutory), including section 2241 of title 28, United States Code, or any other habeas corpus provision, and sections 1361 and 1651 of such title.”⁴ Except as provided in § 1252, courts “cannot entertain challenges to the enumerated executive branch decisions or actions.” *E.F.L. v. Prim*, 986 F.3d 959, 964–65 (7th Cir. 2021).

Section 1252(g) also bars district courts from hearing challenges to the *method* by which the Secretary of Homeland Security chooses to commence removal proceedings, including the decision to detain an alien pending removal. *See Alvarez v. ICE*, 818 F.3d 1194, 1203 (11th Cir. 2016) (“By its plain terms, [§ 1252(g)] bars us from questioning ICE’s discretionary decisions to commence removal” and also to review “ICE’s decision to take [plaintiff] into custody and to detain him during removal proceedings”).

³ Much of the Attorney General’s authority has been transferred to the Secretary of Homeland Security and many references to the Attorney General are understood to refer to the Secretary. *See Clark v. Martinez*, 543 U.S. 371, 374 n.1 (2005)

⁴ Congress initially passed § 1252(g) in the IIRIRA, Pub. L. 104-208, 110 Stat. 3009. In 2005, Congress amended § 1252(g) by adding “(statutory or nonstatutory), including section 2241 of title 28, United States Code, or any other habeas corpus provision, and sections 1361 and 1651 of such title” after “notwithstanding any other provision of law.” REAL ID Act of 2005, Pub. L. 109-13, § 106(a), 119 Stat. 231, 311.

1 Petitioners' claims stem from their detention during removal proceedings. That
2 detention arises from the decision to commence such proceedings against them. *See, e.g.,*
3 *Valencia-Mejia v. United States*, No. CV 08–2943 CAS (PJWx), 2008 WL 4286979, at *4
4 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 15, 2008) (“The decision to detain plaintiff until his hearing before the
5 Immigration Judge arose from this decision to commence proceedings[.]”); *Wang v.*
6 *United States*, No. CV 10-0389 SVW (RCx), 2010 WL 11463156, at *6 (C.D. Cal. Aug.
7 18, 2010); *Tazu v. Att’y Gen. U.S.*, 975 F.3d 292, 298–99 (3d Cir. 2020) (holding that 8
8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) and (b)(9) deprive district court of jurisdiction to review action to
9 execute removal order).

10 As other courts have held, “[f]or the purposes of § 1252, the Attorney General
11 commences proceedings against an alien when the alien is issued a Notice to Appear
12 before an immigration court.” *Herrera-Correra v. United States*, No. CV 08-2941 DSF
13 (JCx), 2008 WL 11336833, at *3 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 11, 2008). “The Attorney General may
14 arrest the alien against whom proceedings are commenced and detain that individual until
15 the conclusion of those proceedings.” *Id.* at *3. “Thus, an alien’s detention throughout this
16 process arises from the Attorney General’s decision to commence proceedings” and
17 review of claims arising from such detention is barred under § 1252(g). *Id.* (citing *Sissoko*
18 *v. Rocha*, 509 F.3d 947, 949 (9th Cir. 2007)); *Wang*, 2010 WL 11463156, at *6; 8 U.S.C.
19 § 1252(g). As such, judicial review of the Application’s claims is barred by § 1252(g).
20 The Court should dismiss for lack of jurisdiction.

21 *Second*, under § 1252(b)(9), “judicial review of all questions of law . . . including
22 interpretation and application of statutory provisions . . . arising from any action
23 taken . . . to remove an alien from the United States” is only proper before the appropriate
24 federal court of appeals in the form of a petition for review of a final removal order. *See* 8
25 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9); *Reno v. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.*, 525 U.S. 471,
26 483 (1999). Section 1252(b)(9) is an “unmistakable ‘zipper’ clause” that “channels
27 judicial review of all [claims arising from deportation proceedings]” to a court of appeals
28 in the first instance. *Id.*; *see Lopez v. Barr*, No. CV 20-1330 (JRT/BRT), 2021 WL 195523,

1 at *2 (D. Minn. Jan. 20, 2021) (citing *Nasrallah v. Barr*, 590 U.S. 573, 579–80 (2020)).

2 Moreover, § 1252(a)(5) provides that a petition for review is the exclusive means
3 for judicial review of immigration proceedings:

4 Notwithstanding any other provision of law (statutory or nonstatutory), . . . a
5 petition for review filed with an appropriate court of appeals in accordance
6 with this section shall be the sole and exclusive means for judicial review of
7 an order of removal entered or issued under any provision of this chapter,
8 except as provided in subsection (e) [concerning aliens not admitted to the
9 United States].

10 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(5). “Taken together, § 1252(a)(5) and § 1252(b)(9) mean that *any*
11 issue—whether legal or factual—arising from *any* removal-related activity can be
12 reviewed *only* through the [petition-for-review] process.” *J.E.F.M. v. Lynch*, 837 F.3d
13 1026, 1031 (9th Cir. 2016) (emphasis in original); *see id.* at 1035 (“§§ 1252(a)(5) and
14 [(b)(9)] channel review of all claims, including policies-and-practices challenges . . .
15 whenever they ‘arise from’ removal proceedings”); *accord Ruiz v. Mukasey*, 552 F.3d 269,
16 274 n.3 (2d Cir. 2009) (only when the action is “unrelated to any removal action or
17 proceeding” is it within the district court’s jurisdiction); *cf. Xiao Ji Chen v. U.S. Dep’t of*
18 *Justice*, 434 F.3d 144, 151 n.3 (2d Cir. 2006) (a “primary effect” of the REAL ID Act is
19 to “limit all aliens to one bite of the apple” (internal quotation marks omitted)).

20 Critically, “[§] 1252(b)(9) is a judicial channeling provision, not a claim-barring
21 one.” *Aguilar v. ICE*, 510 F.3d 1, 11 (1st Cir. 2007). Indeed, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(2)(D)
22 provides that “[n]othing . . . in any other provision of this chapter . . . shall be construed
23 as precluding review of constitutional claims or questions of law raised upon a petition for
24 review filed with an appropriate court of appeals in accordance with this section.” *See also*
25 *Ajlani v. Chertoff*, 545 F.3d 229, 235 (2d Cir. 2008) (“[J]urisdiction to review such claims
26 is vested exclusively in the courts of appeals[.]”). The petition-for-review process before
27 the court of appeals ensures that aliens have a proper forum for claims arising from their
28 immigration proceedings and “receive their day in court.” *J.E.F.M.*, 837 F.3d at 1031–32

(internal quotations omitted); *see also* *Rosario v. Holder*, 627 F.3d 58, 61 (2d Cir. 2010) (“The REAL ID Act of 2005 amended the [IIRIRA] to obviate . . . Suspension Clause concerns” by permitting judicial review of “nondiscretionary” BIA determinations and “all constitutional claims or questions of law.”).

In evaluating the reach of subsections (a)(5) and (b)(9), the Second Circuit explained that jurisdiction turns on the substance of the relief sought. *Delgado v. Quarantillo*, 643 F.3d 52, 55 (2d Cir. 2011). Those provisions divest district courts of jurisdiction to review both direct and indirect challenges to removal orders, including decisions to detain for purposes of removal or for proceedings. *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95 (section 1252(b)(9) includes challenges to the “decision to detain [an alien] in the first place or to seek removal[.]”). Here, Petitioners challenge the government’s decision and action to detain them, which arises from DHS’s decision to commence removal proceedings, and is thus an “action taken . . . to remove [them] from the United States.” *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9); *see also, e.g., Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95; *Velasco Lopez v. Decker*, 978 F.3d 842, 850 (2d Cir. 2020) (finding that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(e) did not bar review in that case because the petitioner did not challenge “his initial detention”); *Saadulloev v. Garland*, No. 3:23-CV-00106, 2024 WL 1076106, at *3 (W.D. Pa. Mar. 12, 2024) (recognizing that there is no judicial review of the threshold detention decision, which flows from the government’s decision to “commence proceedings”). As such, the Court lacks jurisdiction over this action. The reasoning in *Jennings* outlines why Petitioners’ claims are unreviewable here.

While holding that it was unnecessary to comprehensively address the scope of § 1252(b)(9), the Supreme Court in *Jennings* also provided guidance on the types of challenges that may fall within the scope of § 1252(b)(9). *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 293–94. The Court found that “§1252(b)(9) [did] not present a jurisdictional bar” in situations where “respondents . . . [were] not challenging the decision to detain them in the first place.” *Id.* at 294–95. In this case, Petitioners *do* challenge the government’s decision to detain them in the first place. Though Petitioners may attempt to frame their challenge as

1 one relating to detention authority, rather than a challenge to DHS’s decision to detain
2 them in the first instance, such creative framing does not evade the preclusive effect of §
3 1252(b)(9).

4 Indeed, the fact that Petitioners are challenging the basis upon which they are
5 detained is enough to trigger § 1252(b)(9) because “detention is an ‘action taken . . . to
6 remove’ an alien.” *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. 318, 319 (Thomas, J., concurring); 8 U.S.C.
7 § 1252(b)(9). The Court should dismiss the Application’s claims for lack of jurisdiction
8 under § 1252(b)(9). If anything, Petitioners must present their claims before the
9 appropriate federal court of appeals because these claims challenge the government’s
10 decision or action to detain them, which must be raised before a court of appeals, not this
11 Court. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9).

12 **B. Even Assuming Jurisdiction, Petitioners Fail to Meet the High Bar for**
13 **Injunctive Relief.**

14 1. Petitioners are unable to show a likelihood of success on the merits.

15 a. *Under the Plain Text of § 1225, Petitioners Must Be Detained*
16 *Pending the Outcome of Their Removal Proceedings.*

17 The Court should reject Petitioners’ argument that § 1226(a) governs their detention
18 instead of § 1225. When there is “an irreconcilable conflict in two legal provisions,” then
19 “the specific governs over the general.” *Karczewski v. DCH Mission Valley LLC*, 862 F.3d
20 1006, 1015 (9th Cir. 2017). § 1226(a) “applies to aliens “arrested and detained pending a
21 decision” on removal. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). In contrast, § 1225 is narrower. *See* 8 U.S.C. §
22 1225. It applies only to “applicants for admission”; that is, as relevant here, aliens present
23 in the United States who have not be admitted. *See id.*; *see also Florida v. United States*,
24 660 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1275 (N.D. Fla. 2023). Because Petitioners fall within that category,
25 the specific detention authority under § 1225 governs over the general authority found at
26 § 1226(a).

27 The BIA recently analyzed and decided this legal issue in its order issued on
28 September 5, 2025 in *Matter of Jonathan Javier Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA

2025) (attached as Exhibit A hereto). After detailed analysis, the BIA determined that based on the plain language of section 235(b)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) (2018), Immigration Judges lack authority to hear bond requests or to grant bond to aliens who are present in the United States without admission.

“[T]he BIA is the subject-matter expert in immigration bond decisions.” *Aden v. Nielsen*, No. C18-1441RSL, 2019 WL 5802013, at *2 (W.D. Wash. Nov. 7, 2019). The BIA is well-positioned to assess how agency practice affects the interplay between 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225 and 1226. *See Delgado v. Sessions*, No. C17-1031-RSL-JPD, 2017 WL 4776340, at *2 (W.D. Wash. Sept. 15, 2017) (noting a denial of bond to an immigration detainee was “a question well suited for agency expertise”); *Matter of M-S-*, 27 I&N Dec. 509, 515-18 (2019) (addressing interplay of §§ 1225(b)(1) and 1226).

The BIA’s decision in *Matter of Yajure* is based upon and consistent with the governing statutory language. Under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a), an “applicant for admission” is defined as an “alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States.” Applicants for admission “fall into one of two categories, those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered by § 1225(b)(2).” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287. Section 1225(b)(2)—the provision relevant here—is the “broader” of the two. *Id.* It “serves as a catchall provision that applies to all applicants for admission not covered by § 1225(b)(1) (with specific exceptions not relevant here).” *Id.* And § 1225(b)(2) mandates detention. *Id.* at 297; *see also* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2); *Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I & N. Dec. at 69 (“[A]n applicant for admission who is arrested and detained without a warrant while arriving in the United States, whether or not at a port of entry, and subsequently placed in removal proceedings is detained under section 235(b) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b), and is ineligible for any subsequent release on bond under section 236(a) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).”). Section 1225(b) therefore applies because Petitioner is present in the United States without being admitted.

The BIA has long recognized that “many people who are not *actually* requesting permission to enter the United States in the ordinary sense are nevertheless deemed to be

1 ‘seeking admission’ under the immigration laws.” *Matter of Lemus-Losa*, 25 I. & N. Dec.
2 734, 743 (BIA 2012). Statutory language “is known by the company it keeps.” *Marquez-*
3 *Reyes v. Garland*, 36 F.4th 1195, 1202 (9th Cir. 2022) (quoting *McDonnell v. United*
4 *States*, 579 U.S. 550, 569 (2016)). The phrase “seeking admission” in § 1225(b)(2)(A)
5 must be read in the context of the definition of “applicant for admission” in § 1225(a)(1).
6 Applicants for admission are both those individuals present without admission and those
7 who arrive in the United States. See 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1). Both are understood to be
8 “seeking admission” under § 1225(a)(1). See *Lemus-Losa*, 25 I. & N. Dec. at 743. Congress
9 made that clear in § 1225(a)(3), which requires all aliens “who are applicants for admission
10 or otherwise seeking admission” to be inspected by immigration officers. 8 U.S.C. §
11 1225(a)(3). The word “or” here “introduce[s] an appositive—a word or phrase that is
12 synonymous with what precedes it (‘Vienna or Wien,’ ‘Batman or the Caped Crusader’).”
13 *United States v. Woods*, 571 U.S. 31, 45 (2013).

14 The court’s decision in *Florida v. United States* is instructive here. The district court
15 held that 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) mandates detention of applicants for admission throughout
16 removal proceedings, rejecting the assertion that DHS has discretion to choose to detain
17 an applicant for admission under either section 1225(b) or 1226(a). *Florida v. United*
18 *States*, 660 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1275 (N.D. Fla. 2023), *appeal dismissed*, No. 23-11528,
19 2023 WL 5212561 (11th Cir. July 11, 2023). Such discretion “would render mandatory
20 detention under § 1225(b) meaningless. Indeed, the 1996 expansion of § 1225(b) to
21 include illegal border crossers would make little sense if DHS retained discretion to apply
22 § 1226(a) and release illegal border crossers whenever the agency saw fit.” *Id.* The court
23 pointed to *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 518 (2003), in which the Supreme Court
24 explained that “wholesale failure” by the federal government motivated the 1996
25 amendments to the INA. *Florida*, 660 F. Supp. 3d at 1275. The court also relied on, *Matter*
26 *of M-S-*, 27 I&N Dec. 509, 516 (A.G. 2019), in which the Attorney General explained
27 “section [1225] (under which detention is mandatory) and section [1226(a)] (under which
28 detention is permissive) can be reconciled only if they apply to different classes of aliens.”

1 *Florida*, 660 F. Supp. 3d at 1275.

2 b. *Congress did not intend to treat individuals who unlawfully*
3 *enter the country better than those who appear at a port of entry.*

4 When the plain text of a statute is clear, “that meaning is controlling” and courts
5 “need not examine legislative history.” *Washington v. Chimei Innolux Corp.*, 659 F.3d
6 842, 848 (9th Cir. 2011). But to the extent legislative history is relevant here, nothing
7 “refutes the plain language” of § 1225. *Suzlon Energy Ltd. v. Microsoft Corp.*, 671 F.3d
8 726, 730 (9th Cir. 2011). Congress passed IIRIRA to correct “an anomaly whereby
9 immigrants who were attempting to lawfully enter the United States were in a worse
10 position than persons who had crossed the border unlawfully.” *Torres v. Barr*, 976 F.3d
11 918, 928 (9th Cir. 2020) (en banc), *declined to extend by*, *United States v. Gambino-Ruiz*,
12 91 F.4th 981 (9th Cir. 2024). It “intended to replace certain aspects of the [then] current
13 ‘entry doctrine,’ under which illegal aliens who have entered the United States without
14 inspection gain equities and privileges in immigration proceedings that are not available
15 to aliens who present themselves for inspection at a port of entry.” *Id.* (quoting H.R. Rep.
16 104-469, pt. 1, at 225). The Court should reject Petitioners’ interpretation because it would
17 put aliens who “crossed the border unlawfully” in a better position than those “who present
18 themselves for inspection at a port of entry.” *Id.* Aliens who presented at port of entry
19 would be subject to mandatory detention under § 1225, but those who crossed illegally
20 would be eligible for a bond under § 1226(a).

21 Nothing in the Laken Riley Act (“LRA”) changes the analysis. Redundancies in
22 statutory drafting are “common . . . sometimes in a congressional effort to be doubly sure.”
23 *Barton v. Barr*, 590 U.S. 222, 239 (2020). The LRA arose after an inadmissible alien “was
24 paroled into this country through a shocking abuse of that power.” 171 Cong. Rec. H278
25 (daily ed. Jan 22, 2025) (statement of Rep. McClintock). Congress passed it out of concern
26 that the executive branch “ignore[d] its fundamental duty under the Constitution to defend
27 its citizens.” *Id.* at H269 (statement of Rep. Roy). One member even expressed frustration
28 that “every illegal alien is currently required to be detained by current law throughout the

pendency of their asylum claims.” *Id.* at H278 (statement of Rep. McClintock). The LRA reflects a “congressional effort to be doubly sure” that such unlawful aliens are detained. *Barton*, 590 U.S. at 239.

c. *Prior agency practices are not entitled to deference under Loper Bright.*

The asserted longstanding agency practice carries little, if any, weight under *Loper Bright*. The weight given to agency interpretations “must always ‘depend upon their thoroughness, the validity of their reasoning, the consistency with earlier and later pronouncements, and all those factors which give them power to persuade.’” *Loper Bright Enters. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 432–33 (2024) (quoting *Skidmore v. Swift & Co.*, 323 U.S. 134, 140 (1944) (cleaned up)). And here, the agency provided no analysis to support its reasoning. *See* 62 Fed. Reg. at 10323. To be sure, “when the best reading of a statute is that it delegates discretionary authority to an agency,” the Court must “independently interpret the statute and effectuate the will of Congress.” *Loper Bright*, 603 U.S. at 395 (cleaned up). But read most naturally, §§ 1225(b)(1) and (b)(2) mandate detention for applicants for admission until certain proceedings have concluded. *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 297. Petitioners thus cannot show a likelihood of success on the merits.

2. The Balance of Hardships Favors Respondents

Where the moving party only raises “serious questions going to the merits,” the balance of hardships must “tip sharply” in his favor. *All. for Wild Rockies v. Cottrell*, 632 F.3d 1127, 1134–35 (9th Cir. 2011) (quoting *The Lands Council v. McNair*, 537 F.3d 981, 987 (9th Cir. 2008)). Petitioners fail to do so here. *See id.* The government has a compelling interest in the steady enforcement of its immigration laws. *See Miranda v. Garland*, 34 F.4th 338, 365–66 (4th Cir. 2022) (vacating an injunction that required a “broad change” in immigration bond procedure); *Ubiquity Press Inc. v. Baran*, No 8:20-cv-01809-JLS-DFM, 2020 WL 8172983, at *4 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 20, 2020) (“the public interest in the United States’ enforcement of its immigration laws is high”); *United States v. Arango*, CV 09-178 TUC DCB, 2015 WL 11120855, at 2 (D. Ariz. Jan. 7, 2015) (“the

Government’s interest in enforcing immigration laws is enormous.”). Judicial intervention would only disrupt the status quo. The Court should avoid a path that “inject[s] a degree of uncertainty” in the process. *USA Farm Labor, Inc. v. Su*, 694 F. Supp. 3d 693, 714 (W.D.N.C. 2023). The BIA exists to resolve disputes like this. *See 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(d)(1)*. By regulation it must “provide clear and uniform guidance” “through precedent decisions” to “DHS [and] immigration judges.” *Id.* Here, the BIA has provided that clear guidance by its decision in *Matter of Jonathan Javier Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).

IV. CONCLUSION

Petitioners’ request for relief via the Application and the Petition should be denied. Should the Court nonetheless grant the Application, however, the relief should be limited to what other Judges in this District have generally issued in similar cases: Requiring release unless a Section 1226(a) bond hearing is provided within seven (7) days.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 31, 2025

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LOCAL RULE 11-6.2 CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

The undersigned, counsel of record for the Federal Respondents certifies that this brief contains 4,710 words, which complies with the word limit of L.R. 11-6.1.

Dated: October 31, 2025

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