UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

ROMULO JOSE ORELLANO LOPEZ

Petitioner,

Case No. 1:25-cv-1459

VERIFIED PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

ORAL ARGUMENT REQUESTED

ROBERT LYNCH, Acting Field Director for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Detroit Field Office, in his official capacity; KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; PAMELA BONDI, U.S. Attorney General.

Respondents.

INTRODUCTION

1. This petition arises from the U.S. government's new policy—which contradicts both the plain language of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and decades of agency practice—of erroneously interpreting the INA to mandate detention without the possibility of bond for noncitizens who entered the United States without inspection, even if they have been residing here for years.
2. This is one of hundreds of almost identical petitions filed around the country. To date, counsel's research has revealed only a handful of district court cases that have agreed with the government's novel and expansive legal interpretation of the INA. *See, Chavez v. Noem*, No. 3:25-cv-02325-CAB-SBC, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 192940 (S.D. Cal. Sep. 24, 2025); *Lopez v. Trump*, No. 8:25CV526, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 192557 (D. Neb. Sep. 30,

2025); *Sandoval v. Acuna*, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 215357 (W.D. La. Oct. 31, 2025); *Oliveira v. Patterson*, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 218128 (W.D. La. Nov. 4, 2025).

3. Petitioner is a citizen of Venezuela and resident of Chicago, Illinois who was arrested by ICE and is currently detained in Baldwin, Michigan at the privately owned GEO North Lake detention facility.

4. Petitioner is statutorily entitled to a bond hearing before an Immigration Judge (IJ) but will not receive one or be released on bond because of a new policy and legal interpretation by ICE and the Department of Justice.

5. The denial of bond is a new policy issued on July 8, 2025,[1] instructing all ICE employees to no longer apply 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) to people charged with being inadmissible under § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i)—i.e., those who initially entered the United States without inspection. Instead, under the new policy, ICE employees are to subject people like Petitioners to mandatory detention without bond under § 1225(b)(2)(A), no matter how long they have resided in the United States.

6. The policy was joined by Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) in their precedential decision, *Matter of YAJURE HURTADO,* 29 I & N Dec. 216, issued on September 5, 2025.[2]

7. BIA decisions are binding authority on Immigration Judges and holds that IJs no longer have jurisdiction to hold bond hearings for detained individuals like Petitioner.

8. As a result, Petitioner will remain in mandatory detention. Absent relief from this Court, he face the prospect of months or years in immigration custody, separated from his family and

[1] Available at https://www.aila.org/library/ice-memo-interim-guidance-regarding-detention-authority-for-applications-for-admission [https://perma.cc/8SP7-TDDD]

[2] Available at https://www.justice.gov/eoir/media/1413311/dl?inline

community, all while being deprived an individualized hearing justifying his detention in violation of the INA and Due Process.

9. Respondents' new legal interpretation, which has caused Respondent to be detained without bond, is plainly contrary to the statutory framework of the INA and contrary to both agency regulations and decades of consistent agency practice applying § 1226(a) to people like Petitioner. It also violates his right to due process by depriving him of his liberty without any consideration of whether such a deprivation is warranted.

10. Accordingly, Petitioner seeks a writ of habeas corpus requiring that he be immediately released from custody unless Respondents provide him a bond hearing under § 1226(a) within 3 days.

JURISDICTION

11. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(5) (habeas corpus); 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question); and Article I, section 9, clause 2 of the United States Constitution (the Suspension Clause).

12. This Court may grant relief pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201 *et seq.*, and the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1651.

VENUE

13. Venue is proper in the Western District of Michigan under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 and 28 U.S.C. § 1391. Petitioner is detained at the direction, and is in the immediate custody, of Respondent Robert Lynch. *See Roman v. Ashcroft*, 340 F.3d 314, 320-21 (6th Cir. 2003).

14. Venue is also properly in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e) because Respondents are employees, officers, and agencies of the United States, and because a substantial part

of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims and relevant facts occurred in this District.

REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. § 2243

15. The Court must grant the petition for writ of habeas corpus or order Respondents to show cause "forthwith," unless the petitioner is not entitled to relief. 28 U.S.C. § 2243. If an order to show cause is issued, the Respondents must file a return "within three days unless for good cause additional time, not exceeding twenty days, is allowed." *Id.*

16. Habeas corpus is "perhaps the most important writ known to the constitutional law . . . affording as it does a *swift* and imperative remedy in all cases of illegal restraint or confinement." *Fay v. Noia*, 372 U.S. 391, 400 (1963) (emphasis added). "The application for the writ usurps the attention and displaces the calendar of the judge or justice who entertains it and receives prompt action from him within the four corners of the application." *Yong v. I.N.S.*, 208 F.3d 1116, 1120 (9th Cir. 2000) (citation omitted).

PARTIES

17. Petitioner is a citizen of Colombia and resident of Chicago, Illinois. He was arrested by ICE in Chicago on September 24, 2025.

18. Respondent Robert Lynch is the Acting Director of the Detroit Field Office of ICE's Enforcement and Removal Operations division. As such, Acting Director Lynch is Petitioner's immediate custodian and is responsible for Petitioner's detention and removal. He is named in his official capacity.

19. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. She is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the INA and oversees ICE,

which is responsible for Petitioner's detention. Ms. Noem has ultimate custodial authority over Petitioner and is sued in her official capacity.

20. Respondent U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the federal agency responsible for implementing and enforcing the INA, including the detention and removal of noncitizens.

21. Respondent Pamela Bondi is the Attorney General of the United States. She is responsible for the Department of Justice, of which the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) and the immigration system it operates is a component agency. She is sued in her official capacity.

22. Respondent Executive Office for Immigration Review is the federal agency responsible for implementing and enforcing the INA in removal proceedings, including for custody redeterminations in bond hearings.

FACTS

23. Petitioner has resided in the United States since early 2024. He is a resident of Chicago, Illinois where he lives with his wife

24. On information and belief, ICE charged Petitioner, *inter alia*, being inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i) as someone who entered the United States without inspection.

25. Petitioner is not flight risk nor a danger to his community.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

26. The INA prescribes three basic forms of detention for the vast majority of noncitizens in removal proceedings.

27. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1226 authorizes the detention of noncitizens in removal proceedings before an IJ. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. Under § 1226(a), individuals who are taken into immigration custody pending a decision on whether they are to be removed can be detained but are generally entitled to a bond hearing at the outset of their detention, *see* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.19(a), 1236.1(d).[3] *See also Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 289 (2018) (explaining that § 1226(a) applies to those who are "already in the country" and are detained "pending the outcome of removal proceedings"). Section 1226(a) is the statute that, for decades, has been applied to people like Petitioner who have been living in the United States and are charged with inadmissibility under § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i).

28. Second, the INA provides for mandatory detention of certain recently arrived noncitizens, namely those subject to expedited removal under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), and other recent arrivals seeking admission under § 1225(b)(2). *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287, 289 (explaining that § 1225(b)(2)'s mandatory detention scheme applies "at the Nation's borders and ports of entry" to noncitizens "seeking admission into the United States."). Section 1225(b)(2) is the statute that Respondents have suddenly decided is applicable to people like Petitioner.

29. Third, the INA also provides for detention of noncitizens who have already been ordered removed, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)–(b). Section 1231 is not relevant here.

30. This case concerns Respondents' policy as applied towards individuals like Petitioner – namely that he is subject to mandatory detention without bond under §1225(b)(2), rather than being bond-eligible under § 1226(a).

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[3] Section § 1226 contains an exception for noncitizens who have been arrested, charged with, or convicted of certain crimes, who are subject to mandatory detention without bond. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c). That exception is not relevant here – Petitioner has no criminal record.

31. The detention provisions at § 1226(a) and § 1225(b)(2) were enacted as part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-–208, Div. C, §§ 302–03, 110 Stat. 3009-546, 3009–582 to 3009–583, 3009–585. Section 1226(a) was most recently amended earlier this year by the Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No.119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025).

32. Following the 1996 enactment of the IIRIRA, EOIR drafted new regulations explaining that, in general, people who entered the country without inspection were not considered detained under § 1225 and that they were instead detained under § 1226(a). See Inspection and Expedited Removal of Aliens; Detention and Removal of Aliens; Conduct of Removal Proceedings; Asylum Procedures, 62 Fed. Reg. 10,312, 10,323 (Mar. 6, 1997) (explaining that "[d]espite being applicants for admission, [noncitizens] who are present without having been admitted or paroled (formerly referred to as aliens who entered without inspection) will be eligible for bond and bond redetermination.").

33. Thus, in the three decades that followed, people who entered without inspection and were subsequently placed in removal proceedings received bond hearings if ICE chose to detain them, unless their criminal history rendered them ineligible. That practice was consistent with many more decades of prior practice, in which noncitizens who were not deemed "arriving" were entitled to a custody hearing before an IJ or other hearing officer. See 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a) (1994); see also H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 229 (1996) (noting that § 1226(a) simply "restates" the detention authority previously found at § 1252(a)).

34. However, on July 8, 2025, ICE, "in coordination with" DOJ, suddenly announced a new governmental policy that rejected the well-established understanding of the statutory framework and reversed decades of agency practice.

35. The new policy, entitled "Interim Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Applicants for Admission," claims that all persons who entered the United States without inspection are subject to mandatory detention without bond under § 1225(b)(2)(A). The policy applies regardless of when a person is apprehended and affects those who have resided in the United States for months, years, and even decades.

36. Further, in a September 5, 2025, decision, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) issued a decision that holds that all noncitizens who entered the United States without admission or parole are ineligible for bond hearings before an immigration judge. *See, Matter of YAJURE HURTADO,* 29 I & N Dec. 216.

37. In particular, the Respondents have determined that immigration judges no longer have jurisdiction to hold bond hearings for noncitizens like Petitioner. The BIA's decision is binding on all immigration judges.

38. This novel interpretation has been roundly rejected by federal district courts almost unanimously. *See, inter alia, Reyes v. Raycraft*, No. 25-cv-12546, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 175767, at *19-20 (E.D. Mich. Sep. 9, 2025) ("...[T]he BIA's decision to pivot from three decades of consistent statutory interpretation and call for [petitioner's] detention under § 1225(b)(2)(A) is at odds with every District Court that has been confronted with the same question of statutory interpretation. At least a dozen federal courts concur generally with this Court's interpretation of the statutory language as applied in this context.") (internal citations omitted); *Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft*, No. 2:25-cv-12486, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 169423, at *23, 2025 WL 2496379 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025) (holding that "[t]here can be no genuine dispute that Section 1226(a), and not Section 1225(b)(2)(A), applies to a noncitizen who has resided in this country for over twenty-six years and was

already within the United States when apprehended and arrested during a traffic stop, and not upon arrival at the border."); *Sanchez v. Olson*, No. 25 CV 12453, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 211062, at *7 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 27, 2025)("almost every district court" has rejected DHS/DOJ interpretation); *Vazquez v. Bostock*, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 193611, 2025 WL 2782499, at *1 (W.D. Wash. Sept. 30, 2025) (collecting cases); *Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 201967, 2025 WL 2886346, at *3 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 7, 2025) ("As almost every district court to consider this issue has concluded, the statutory text, the statute's history, Congressional intent, and § 1226(a)'s application for the past three decades support finding that § 1226 applies to these circumstances.")).

39. DHS's and DOJ's interpretation defies the INA. As the above courts explained, the plain text of the statutory provisions demonstrates that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to people like Petitioner.

40. Section 1226(a) applies by default to all persons "pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States." These removal hearings are held under § 1229a to "decid[e] the inadmissibility or deportability of a[] [noncitizen]."

41. The text of § 1226 also explicitly applies to people charged as being inadmissible, including those who entered without inspection. See 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c)(1)(E). Subparagraph (E)'s reference to such people makes clear that, by default, such people are afforded a bond hearing under subsection (a).

42. Section 1226 therefore leaves no doubt that it applies to people who face charges of being inadmissible to the United States, including those who are present without admission or parole.

43. By contrast, § 1225(b) applies to people arriving at U.S. ports of entry or who recently entered the United States. The statute's entire framework is premised on inspections at the border of people who are "seeking admission" to the United States. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A). *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287 (explaining that this mandatory detention scheme applies "at the Nation's borders and ports of entry, where the Government must determine whether a[] [noncitizen] seeking to enter the country is admissible.").

44. Accordingly, the mandatory detention provision of § 1225(b)(2) does not apply to people, like Petitioner, who have already entered and were residing in the United States at the time they were apprehended by immigration authorities.

45. Petitioner is entitled to a bond hearing before an immigration judge where the government bears the burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence that he is a flight risk or danger to the community. *See, e.g., M.T.B. v. Byers*, Civil Action No. 2: 24-028-DCR, 2024 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 148118, at *11 (E.D. Ky. Aug. 20, 2024) (government should bear burden of proof at § 1226(a) bond hearing); *Lopez-Arevelo v. Ripa*, No. EP-25-CV-337-KC, 2025 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 188232, at *35 (W.D. Tex. Sep. 21, 2025) ("vast majority"—an "overwhelming consensus"—of courts have placed the burden on the Government to prove by clear and convincing evidence that the detainee poses a danger or flight risk.).

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT I
Violation of the INA

46. Petitioner incorporates by reference the allegations of fact set forth in the preceding paragraphs.

47. The mandatory detention provision at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) does not apply to all noncitizens residing in the United States who are subject to the grounds of inadmissibility. As relevant here, it does not apply to those who previously entered the country and have been residing in the United States prior to being apprehended and placed in removal proceedings by Respondents. Such noncitizens are detained under § 1226(a), unless they are subject to § 1225(b)(1), § 1226(c), or § 1231.

48. The application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner unlawfully mandates their continued detention and violates the INA.

COUNT II
Violation of Due Process

49. Petitioner repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference each and every allegation in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

50. The government may not deprive a person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. U.S. Const. amend. V. "Freedom from imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty that the Clause protects." *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690, 121 S.Ct. 2491, 150 L.Ed.2d 653 (2001).

51. Petitioner has a fundamental interest in liberty and being free from official restraint.

52. The government's detention of Petitioner without a bond redetermination hearing to determine whether he is a flight risk or danger to others violates his right to due process.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioner prays that this Court grant the following relief:

a. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;

b. Issue a writ of habeas corpus requiring that Respondents release Petitioner from custody or, in the alternative, provide Petitioner with a bond hearing pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) within 3 days where the government bears the burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence that Petitioner is a flight risk or danger to the community;

c. Enjoin Respondents from transferring the Petitioner from the jurisdiction of this District pending these proceedings;

d. Declare that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)—and not 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) — is the appropriate statutory provision that governs Petitioner detention and eligibility for bond because he is not a recent arrival "seeking admission" to the United States, and instead was already residing in the United States when he was apprehended and charged as inadmissible for having allegedly entered the United States without inspection;

e. Award Petitioner attorney's fees and costs under the Equal Access to Justice Act ("EAJA"), as amended, 28 U.S.C. § 2412, and on any other basis justified under law; and

f. Grant any other and further relief that this Court deems just and proper.

Dated: November 14, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Michael Drew
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28 U.S.C. § 2242 VERIFICATION STATEMENT

I am submitting this verification on behalf of the Petitioner because I am the Petitioner's attorney. I have either independently confirmed the events described in this Petition and Complaint or discussed the events with Petitioner's wife. On the basis of those discussions and my own investigation, I hereby verify that the statements made in this Petition and Complaint are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

/s/ Michael Drew

Attorney for Petitioner