U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York

610 Federal Plaza
Central Islip, New York 11722

January 12, 2026

By ECF

Honorable Sanket J. Bulsara
United States District Judge
100 Federal Plaza
Central Islip, New York 11722

Re: *Manuel Hernandez Zelada v. Kenneth Genalo et al.*,
Case No. 26-cv-92 (Bulsara, J.)

Dear Judge Bulsara:

This Office represents Respondents Kenneth Genalo,[1] Field Officer Director of New York Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Kristi Noem, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, and Pam Bondi, Attorney General of the United States (collectively, "Respondents") in the above-captioned action. Respondents write in response to Your Honor's January 8, 2026 Order, which directed them to "inform the Court of Petitioner's current location," including "information about any other locations where Petitioner has been held and the dates of any transfers since his initial detention on November 14, 2025," by no later than January 12, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. *See* Docket. Petitioner Manuel Hernandez Zelada[2] has been held in the following locations since his initial detention:

Detention Location	Dates of Detention
Central Islip Holding Facility 535 Federal Plaza Central Islip, New York	November 14, 2025 to November 16, 2025
Delaney Hall Detention Facility Newark, New Jersey	November 16, 2025 to November 27, 2025
Camp East Montana Detention Facility El Paso, Texas	November 27, 2025 to December 15, 2025
Cibola County Correctional Facility Milan, New Mexico	December 15, 2025 to present

[1] Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 25(d), Field Office Director Genalo is automatically substituted for his predecessor, Acting Field Office Director LaDeon Francis.

[2] Immigration and Customs Enforcement's ("ICE") database alternatively lists Petitioner as Manuel Hernandez Zelaya, and his associated A-number as [redacted]. *See* Johnson Decl. ¶ 2.

See Declaration of Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer Kareem Johnson ("Johnson Decl.") ¶¶ 4-8.

In addition to the above detention information, this Office has been informed by ICE that on January 2, 2026, Petitioner requested voluntary departure, and that on January 5, 2026, Petitioner's request for voluntary departure was granted. *See* Johnson Decl. ¶¶ 11-12; Johnson Decl. Exhibits A, B.

Based upon the above information, Respondents respectfully submit that this action should be transferred to the District of New Mexico, as that was the location of Petitioner's physical detention at the time of filing of this action on January 7, 2026. *See Ozturk v. Hyde*, 136 F.4th 382, 390-91 (2d Cir. 2025) (district court properly transferred habeas action to the district in which Ozturk was detained at the time her attorneys filed the petition); *Khalil v. Joyce*, 771 F. Supp. 3d 268, 273 (S.D.N.Y. 2025) (Furman. J.) (holding that the proper venue to file a habeas petition is the district in which the petitioner was detained at the time of filing). If a habeas action is commenced in a district other than the one in which the petitioner was detained at the time the action was commenced, the court in which the action was commenced should transfer the action to the district where the petitioner was detained at the time the action was commenced. *See Ozturk*, 136 F.4th at 340-41 (rejecting challenge to district court's transfer of action to the district where Ozturk was detained at the time the action was commenced). In *Khalil,* 771 F. Supp. 3d at 279, the court transferred that action from the Southern District of New York to the District of New Jersey pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1406(a) because Khalil was detained in New Jersey at the time of the filing of that action. Additionally, recently the Honorable Joanna Seybert *sua sponte* transferred an immigration habeas action to the District of New Jersey because the petitioner was detained in that district at the time the action was commenced. *Quijada Melara v. ICE*, No. 25-cv-7086 (E.D.N.Y.) (Dec. 29, 2025 Electronic Order) (Seybert, J.) (citing *Ozturk*, 136 F.4th at 340 and *United States v. Sternquist*, No. 22-cr-473, 2025 WL 3240234, at *1 (E.D.N.Y. Nov. 20, 2025) (Irizarry, J.)).

Respondents thank the Court for its time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
JOSEPH NOCELLA, JR.
United States Attorney

By: */s/ Thomas R. Price*
Thomas R. Price
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(631) 715-7893
thomas.price@usdoj.gov

Encls

cc: by ECF
All counsel of record