

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
EL PASO DIVISION**

OCANA-CASTILLO, FELIPE

Petitioner,

v.

MARY DE ANDA-YBARRA, Field Office
Director, EL Paso Field Office, Immigration
and Customs Enforcement, in his official
capacity;

KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department
of Homeland Security, in her official capacity;

PAMELA BONDI, U.S. Attorney General, in
her official capacity;

TODD M. LYONS, Acting Director of U.S.
Immigration and Customs Enforcement, in his
official capacity;

WARDEN ERO El Paso Camp East Montana,
in his official capacity,

Respondents.

Case No. 3:26-cv-00107

**PETITION FOR A WRIT OF
HABEAS CORPUS**

INTRODUCTION

1. Petitioner, FELIPE OCANA-CASTILLO is in the physical custody of Respondents at the ERO El Paso Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas. He now faces unlawful detention because the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) of the Department of Justice (DOJ) have erroneously concluded Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).

2. Petitioner has lived in the United States for 27 years. On November 17, 2025 Petitioner was stopped and arrested by LaPorte County, Indiana police for an outstanding warrant for minor traffic violations that have now been dismissed. On November 22, 2025, Mr. Ocana-Castillo was transferred to ICE custody.

3. Mr. Ocana-Castillo has been a hard-working family man since arriving in the United States in 1998. He has been married for 36 years to Daniela, and they have raised three children, [REDACTED]. Mr. Ocana-Castillo has tirelessly provided for his family, while also nurturing his wife through significant health issues, including Type-2 diabetes, making her unable to work. Mr. Ocana-Castillo is also a devoted grandfather to three children born to his daughter [REDACTED] and two born to his son [REDACTED]. Daughter [REDACTED] is currently a student enrolled at [REDACTED] pursuing a nursing career, with her father as the sole source of support. Mr. Ocana-Castillo has deep roots in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago. He has many close friends and extended family members, and he has been a dependable and relied-upon member of his community. He is a dedicated and diligent worker, most recently with a construction company where he has been employed for almost 10 years.

4. Petitioner was placed in removal proceedings, where he is charged with, *inter alia*, having entered the United States without inspection. 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i). He is

represented by counsel in his removal proceedings. Petitioner is eligible for a hearing to redetermine custody and grant a low bond or conditional parole under 8 U.S.C § 1226(a).

5. On July 8, 2025, DHS issued a new policy instructing all Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) employees to consider anyone inadmissible under Section 1182(a)(6)(A)(i)—i.e., those who entered the United States without inspection—to be an “applicant for admission” under Section 1225(b)(2)(A) and therefore subject to mandatory detention. Consistent with this policy, DHS has denied Petitioner release from immigration custody.

6. Petitioner’s detention on this basis violates the plain language of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). Section 1225(b)(2) does not apply to individuals like Petitioner, who entered the United States 27 years ago and who was apprehended hundreds of miles from any border or port of entry. Instead, such individuals are subject to discretionary detention under Section 1226(a), which allows for release on conditional parole or bond. That statute expressly applies to people who, like Petitioner, are charged as inadmissible for having entered the United States without inspection.

7. Respondents’ new legal interpretation is plainly contrary to the statutory text, statutory framework, Congressional intent, decades of agency practice, and decisions of federal courts across the nation, which apply Section 1226(a) to people like Petitioner. Further, Respondents’ 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. On December 18, 2025 the United States District Court Judge for the Central District of California held the July 8, 2025, “Interim Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Applicants for Admission” under the Administrative Procedure Act was “not in accordance with law. 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A).”

8. Accordingly, Petitioner seeks a writ of habeas corpus requiring that he be released, or in the alternative, that he be provided a prompt bond hearing under Section 1226(a).

JURISDICTION

9. Petitioner is in the physical custody of Respondents. Petitioner is detained at ERO El Paso Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas.

10. 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).

11. 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

12. Pursuant to *Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court of Kentucky*, 410 U.S. 484, 493-500 (1973), venue lies in the United States District Court for the WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, EL PASO DIVISION, the judicial district in which Petitioner currently is detained.

13. 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 occurred in the WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, EL PASO DIVISION.

REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. § 2243

14. 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.*

15. 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

16. Petitioner FELIPE OCANA-CASTILLO is a 54-year-old citizen of Mexico who has resided in the United States since approximately 1998. He has been in immigration detention since November 22, 2025.

17. Respondent MARY DE ANDA-YBARRA is the ICE Field Office Director for the El Paso Field Offices. As such, MARY DE ANDA-YBARRA is Petitioner’s immediate custodian and is responsible for Petitioner’s detention and removal. She is named in her official capacity.

18. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. She is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the Immigration and Nationality Act (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.

19. 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 and the immigration court system it operates is a component agency. She is sued in her official capacity.

20. Respondent Todd Lyons is the Acting Director of ICE. As the head of ICE, he is responsible for decisions related to the detention and removal of certain noncitizens, including Petitioner. As such, he is also a legal custodian of Petitioner. He is sued in his official capacity.

21. Respondent WARDEN is the Warden of the ERO El Paso Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas where Petitioner is currently detained. He is an immediate custodian of Petitioner. He is sued in his official capacity.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

22. Petitioner is a 54-year-old national of Mexico. He entered the United States without inspection in 1998 and has lived here ever since. He lived in Chicago, Illinois prior to his detention.

23. As noted *supra*, Mr. Ocana-Castillo is a devoted husband, father and grandfather and has deep roots in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago.

24. On November 22, 2025, Petitioner was transferred by Indiana police to DHS and arrested. Petitioner is now detained at the ERO El Paso Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas.

25. After arresting him, DHS placed Petitioner in removal proceedings before the EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR IMMIGRATION REVIEW EL PASO IMMIGRATION COURT EL PASO, TEXAS pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1229a by filing a Notice to Appear. Ex. A, Notice to Appear. ICE charged Petitioner with, *inter alia*, being inadmissible under U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i) as someone who entered the United States without inspection. *Id.*

26. Petitioner is represented by counsel in his removal proceedings. He is eligible and will apply for 42B cancelation of removal for non permanent residents because he meets the requirements for relief. He has attended all of immigration court hearings.

27. Pursuant to Respondents’ new policy, discussed *infra*, Petitioner remains in mandatory detention. Absent relief from this Court, he faces the prospect of months, or even years, in immigration custody, separated from his family and community without ever receiving an individualized hearing justifying his detention in violation of the INA and Due Process.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

I. Detention Authority and Respondent’s Efforts to Expand Mandatory Detention

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

29. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1226 authorizes the detention of noncitizens “already in the country.” *See Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 289 (2018). Section 1226(a) “sets out the default rule: The Attorney General may issue a warrant for the arrest and detention of a[] [noncitizen] ‘pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States.’” *Id.* at 288 (quoting § 1226(a)). Individuals in Section 1226(a) detention are generally entitled to a bond hearing at the outset of their detention. *See* § 1226(a)(2); 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.19(a), 1236.1(c)(8), (d)(1); *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1247 (W.D. Wash. 2025) (“those detained under Section 1226(a) are entitled to a bond hearing before an [immigration judge] at any time before entry of a final removal order.”).

30. Section 1226(c) “carves out a statutory category” of noncitizens from Section 1226(a) for whom detention is mandatory, comprised of individuals who have committed certain “enumerated ... criminal offenses [or] terrorist activities.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 289 (citing § 1226(c)(1)). Among the individuals carved out and subject to mandatory detention are certain categories of “inadmissible” noncitizens. § 1226(c)(1)(A), (D), (E). Reference to such inadmissible noncitizens makes clear that, by default, people who are applicants for admission

but encountered in the interior are afforded a bond hearing under subsection 1226(a). Courts have recently confirmed this understanding of Section 1226. *See Rodriguez Vazquez*, 779 F. Supp. 3d at 1257 (citing *Shady Grove Orthopedic Assocs., P.A. v. Allstate Ins. Co.*, 559 U.S. 393, 400 (2010)) (“When Congress creates ‘specific exceptions’ to a statute’s applicability, it ‘proves’ that absent those exceptions, the statute generally applies.”); *see also, e.g., Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 1:25-CV-11571-JEK, 2025 WL 1869299, at *6 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025) (“inadmissibility on one of the three grounds specified in Section 1226(c)(1)(E)(i) is not by itself sufficient to except [a noncitizen] from Section 1226(a)’s discretionary detention framework”).

31. Second, the INA provides for mandatory detention of certain categories of noncitizens “seeking entry into the United States” under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 297; *see* § 1225(b) (“Inspection of applicants for admission”).

32. In *Jennings*, the Supreme Court explained that this mandatory 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 inadmissible.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287 (emphasis added). Noncitizens subject to mandatory detention under Section 1225 may not be released except “for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit” under the parole authority provided by 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A). *See id.* at 300.

33. Section 1225 is split into two categories. Section 1225(b)(1) provides for mandatory detention of noncitizens charged with enumerated grounds of inadmissibility *and* placed in expedited removal proceedings. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i). Meanwhile, Section 1225(b)(2) applies only to recently arrived noncitizens seeking entry at a border or port of entry. *See infra* ¶¶ 40-58.

34. Last, the INA also provides for detention of noncitizens who have been ordered removed, including individuals in withholding-only proceedings, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)–(b).

35. This case concerns the detention provisions at §§ 1226(a) and 1225(b)(2).

36. Respondents have recently taken various steps seeking to expand their use of mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2) beyond its plain language.

37. On July 8, 2025, ICE, “in coordination with” DOJ, announced a new policy that rejected well-established understanding of the statutory framework and reversed decades of practice. *See* U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Interim Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Applicants for Admission (July 8, 2025), <https://www.aila.org/ice-memo-interim-guidance-regarding-detention-authority-for-applications-for-admission>.

38. The new policy claims that all persons who entered the United States without inspection shall now be deemed “applicants for admission” under 8 U.S.C. § 1225 and therefore are subject to mandatory detention 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.

39. On September 5, 2025, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) issued a published decision adopting this same position. *See Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). That decision holds that all noncitizens who entered the United States without admission or parole are considered applicants for admission and are ineligible for immigration judge bond hearings.

II. Respondent’s policy on Section 1225(b)(2) is incorrect.

40. Respondent’s policy, that all undocumented noncitizens who entered without inspection are considered applicants for admission and subject to mandatory detention under

Section 1225(b)(2)(A), is incorrect. Instead, the statutory text, the statutory framework, Congressional intent, the longstanding practice of the agency, and the decisions of many federal courts across the nation – including this one – limit Section 1225(b)(2)’s scope to recently arrived noncitizens seeking admission at a border or port of entry.

a. Statutory Text

41. The text of Section 1225, along with its placement in the overall detention scheme of the INA, make clear that the terms “applicant for admission” and “seeking admission” in Section 1225(b)(2) do not include individuals who have entered without inspection and are apprehended when already inside the United States.

42. Section 1225 is titled: “Inspection by immigration officers; expedited removal of inadmissible *arriving* aliens; referral for hearing.” (emphasis added). As courts have recognized, “[t]he added word of ‘arriving’ indicates that the statute governs ‘arriving’ noncitizens, not those present already.” *Beltran Barrera v. Tindall*, No. 3:25-CV-541-RGJ, 2025 WL 2690565, at *4 (W.D. Ky. Sept. 19, 2025) (citing *Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, No. 25-CV-12546, 2025 WL 2609425, at *5 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 9, 2025)). This limitation is particularly clear when compared to Section 1226’s general title: “Apprehension and detention of aliens.”

43. Further, Section 1225(b)(2)’s specific subheading, “Inspection of Other Aliens,” subsection 1225(b)(2)(B)’s mention of “crewm[e]n” and “stowaway[s],” and subsection 1225(b)(2)(C)’s use of the active language “arriving,” reinforce the limited scope of Section 1225(b)(2)’s applicability to those who have recently arrived at a border or port of entry.

44. Finally, the term “seeking” in “seeking admission” “implies action – something that is currently occurring, and in this instance, would most logically occur at the border upon inspection.” *Lopez-Campos*, 2025 WL 2496379, at *6 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025); *see also*

Beltran Barrera, 2025 WL 2690565, at *4. Noncitizens who are present in the country for years are not “seeking admission.” *Lopez-Campos*, at *6; *Beltran Barrera*, at *4.

b. Statutory Framework

45. The statutory framework further supports that Section 1225(b)(2) does not apply to noncitizens, like Petitioner, who have lived in the United States for years and who were apprehended while residing within the United States.

46. The INA’s entire framework is premised on Section 1225 governing detention of “arriving [noncitizens]” while Section 1226 “applies to [noncitizens] already present in the United States.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 288, 301; *see also Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, No. 25 CIV. 5937 (DEH), 2025 WL 2371588, at *8 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025) (“[T]he line historically drawn between sections 1225 and 1226, which makes sense of their text and the overall statutory scheme, is that section 1225 governs detention of non-citizens ‘seeking admission into the country,’ whereas section 1226 governs detention of non-citizens ‘already in the country.’”) (cleaned up) (citing *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 288-89); *Martinez v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2084238, at *8 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025) (“The idea that a different detention scheme would apply to non-citizens ‘already in the country,’ as compared to those ‘seeking admission into the country,’ is consonant with the core logic of our immigration system”) (cleaned up) (citing *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 289).

47. A fundamental principle of statutory construction is that courts must interpret statutes to give meaning to all provisions and avoid reading out or rendering superfluous any single provision. *Corley v. United States*, 556 U.S. 303, 314 (2009) (“one of the most basic interpretive canons . . . [a] statute should be construed so that effect is given to all its provisions,

so that no part will be inoperative or superfluous, void or insignificant[.]”) (cleaned up). The government’s current reading of Section 1225(b)(2) violates this principle.

48. Section 1226(c) includes carve outs for certain categories of inadmissible noncitizens, who would otherwise fall under Section 1226(a), that are instead subject to mandatory detention. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c)(1)(A), (D), (E). The inclusion of these carve outs in Section 1226(c) indicates that, contrary to Respondents’ interpretation, there are noncitizens who have not been admitted and that are not governed by Section 1225’s mandatory detention scheme. Indeed, if the government’s interpretation were correct, it would render these portions of Section 1226(c) superfluous since those same individuals would already be subject to mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2).

49. The recent amendment to Section 1226(c) confirms this statutory framework. Just this year, Congress passed the Laken Riley Act, which added additional categories of Section 1226(a) carve outs that are now subject to mandatory detention under Section 1226(c). Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No. 119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025); 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c)(1)(E). Specifically, the Laken Riley Act mandates the detention of noncitizens who are inadmissible under §§ 1182(a)(6)(A) (noncitizens “present in the United States without being admitted or paroled”), 1182(a)(6)(C) (misrepresentation), or 1182(a)(7) (lacking valid documentation) and who have been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of certain crimes. *Id.* Again, if Section 1225(b)(2) were already meant to subject these groups of inadmissible noncitizens to mandatory detention, it would render this portion of the Laken Riley Act redundant. *See Beltran Barrera*, 2025 WL 2690565, at *4; *Lopez-Campos*, 2025 WL 2496379, at *8.

c. Congressional Intent and Longstanding Agency Practice.

50. Congressional intent and longstanding historical practice underscore Petitioner's reading of the statute.

51. The current detention system has been in place since the passage 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.

52. Following the enactment of the IIRIRA, the Executive Office for Immigration Review drafted new regulations explaining that, in general, people who entered the country without inspection were not considered detained under Section 1225 and that they were instead detained under Section 1226(a) and eligible for bond and bond redetermination. *See* 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997).

53. In the decades that followed, most people who entered without inspection and were apprehended inside the United States were detained under Section 1226(a) and received bond hearings, 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 immigration judge 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 Section 1226(a) simply "restates" the detention authority previously found at Section 1252(a)).

d. Recent Federal Court Decisions Confirming Petitioner's Position.

54. Numerous federal courts have reached conclusions consistent with Petitioner's position. For example, after immigration judges in the Tacoma, Washington, stopped providing bond hearings for persons who entered the United States without inspection, the U.S. District

Court in the Western District of Washington found that such a reading of the INA is likely unlawful and that Section 1226(a), not Section 1225(b), applies to noncitizens who are not apprehended upon arrival to the United States. *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239. Other courts have reached the same conclusion, rejecting Respondent’s erroneous interpretation of the INA both prior to and since ICE implemented its July 8, 2025, interim guidance. *See, e.g., Gomes v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 1869299, at *8; *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238; *Lopez Benitez*, 2025 WL 2371588; *Garcia Jimenez v. Kramer*, No. 4:25-cv-03162-JFB-RCC, 2025 WL 2374223 (D. Neb. Aug. 14, 2025); *Aguilar Maldonado v. Olson*, No. 25-CV-3142 (SRN/SGE), 2025 WL 2374411 (D. Minn. Aug. 15, 2025); *Arrazola-Gonzalez v Noem*, 5:25-cv-01789-ODW-DFM, 2025 WL 2379285 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 2025); *Jacinto v. Trump, et al.*, 4:25-cv-03161-JFB-RCC, 2025 WL 2402271 (D. Neb. August 19, 2025); *Leal-Hernandez v. Noem*, 1:25-cv-02428-JRR, 2025 WL 2430025 (D. Md. Aug. 24, 2025); *Lopez-Campos*, 2025 WL 2496379; *Herrera Torralba v. Knight*, 2:25-cv-03166-RFB-DJA, 2025 WL 2581792 (D. Nev. Sept. 5, 2025); *Doe v. Moniz*, 2025 WL 2576819 (D. Mass. Sept. 5, 2025). *See also, Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2886346 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 7, 2025), 2025 WL 2886346, at *3 (noting that “almost every district court to consider this issue” has rejected the Government’s new interpretation); *Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2496379, at *8 n.5 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025) (collecting twelve such decisions).

55. The BIA’s decision in *Yajure Hurtado* has not slowed the steady flow of decisions rejecting Respondents’ position. *See, e.g., Mosqueda v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2591530 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 8, 2025); *Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2609425; *Sampiao v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2607924 (D. Mass. Sept. 9, 2025); *Aceros v. Kaiser*, No. 25-CV-06924-EMC (EMC), 2025 WL 2637503 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 12, 2025); *Hasan v. Crawford*, No. 1:25-CV-1408 (LMB/IDD), 2025 WL 2682255 (E.D.

Va. Sept. 19, 2025); *Beltran Barrera*, 2025 WL 2690565; *Singh v. Lewis*, 2025 WL 2699219; *Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. CV H-25-3726, 2025 WL 2886346 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 7, 2025); *A.A. v. Olson*, No. 25-cv-03381-JWB-DJF, 2025 WL 2886729 (D. Minn. Oct. 8, 2025); *Alejandro v. Olson*, 1:25-cv-2027, 2025 WL 2896348 (S.D. Ind. Oct. 11, 2025); *Merino v. Ripa*, No. 25-23845-CIV, 2025 WL 2941609 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 15, 2025); *Ochoa v. Noem*, No. 25 CV 10865, 2025 WL 2938779 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 16, 2025); *Miguel v. Noem*, 1:25-cv-11137, 2025 WL 2976480 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 21, 2025); *Loa Caballero v. Baltazar*, No. 25-cv-03120-NYW, 2025 WL 2977650 (D. Colo. Oct. 22, 2025); *Martinez-Elvir v. Olson*, No. 3:25-CV-589-CHB, 2025 WL 3006772 (W.D. Ky. Oct. 27, 2025); *Ayala Amaya v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-16428-ESK, 2025 WL 3033880 (D.N.J. Oct. 30, 2025); *Tumba Huamani v. Francis*, No. 25-CV-8110 (LJL), 2025 WL 3079014 (S.D.N.Y. Nov. 4, 2025); *Reyes Arizmendi v. Noem*, No. 25 C 13041, 2025 WL 3089107 (N.D. Ill. Nov. 5, 2025).

e. The class action decision in *Maldonado Bautista*

56. On November 20, 2025, the court in *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-07873-SSS-BFM (C.D. Cal. Nov. 20, 2025), also rejected the government's position, finding that individuals who entered the United States without inspection are detained under Section 1226(a) and are therefore entitled to a bond hearing. *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, 2025 WL 3288403 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 25, 2025). *Maldonado Bautista* is a nationwide class action, and the court granted class certification on November 25, 2025, applying its earlier summary judgment decision to the now-certified class. *See id.* at *9. On December 18, 2025, upon motion from Petitioners seeking clarification as to the scope of the prior order, the Court entered a final judgment pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 54(b). *See Ex. A.* The Court further clarified that, although the underlying complaint did not challenge *Matter of Yajure*

Hurtado because it was filed before that decision was issued, “*Yajure Hurtado* is no longer controlling: the legal conclusion underlying the decision is no longer tenable.” *Id.* The Court also vacated the July 8, 2025 DHS memo. *Id.*; *see supra* ¶¶ 40-41.

57. The Maldonado Bautista court’s final judgment leaves no room for argument that it found that Petitioner and other class members must be considered for bond release:

In light of this Court’s Order granting Partial Summary Judgment and Class Certification against Respondents in the instant action [Dkt. No. 93], judgment is hereby ENTERED in favor of Petitioners and members of the Bond Eligible Class as follows:

The Court:

1. DECLARES that the Bond Eligible Class members are detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) and are not subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2). 2. DECLARES that, pursuant to Defendants’ regulations, see 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1, 1236.1, and 1003.19, the Bond Eligible Class members are detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), are not subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2), and are entitled to consideration for release on bond by immigration officers and, if not released, a custody redetermination hearing before an immigration judge.
2. DECLARES that, pursuant to Defendants’ regulations, see 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1, 1236.1, and 1003.19, the Bond Eligible Class members are detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), are not subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2), and are entitled to consideration for release on bond by immigration officers and, if not released, a custody redetermination hearing before an immigration judge.

Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, 2025 WL 3678485, at *1 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 18, 2025).

58. Thus, because Petitioner is plainly a member of the nationwide class, he is entitled to a bond hearing under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

59. This does not resolve Petitioner’s claim, however, because the government has already filed a notice of appeal of the Court’s December 18, 2025, decision and further litigation is anticipated. Given that Petitioner has already been detained for more *6 weeks* without a bond hearing, Petitioner still seeks habeas relief from this court.

III. Petitioner's Detention Violates the INA.

60. Petitioner's detention is not authorized under Section 1225(b)(2).

61. As discussed above, mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2) applies only to recently arrived noncitizens seeking admission at a border or port of entry, not individuals who entered without inspection and were later detained inside the country.

62. Here, "there is nothing in the record to suggest that [Petitioner] ever attempted to gain lawful entry." *Lopez-Campos*, 2025 WL 2496379, at *6. Petitioner entered without inspection, never encountered a DHS official, and lived in the United States for **27 years** prior to being detained. In addition, the warrant and Notice of Custody Determination issued by Respondents both cite to Section 1226(a) as the detention authority. In fact, it was not until Petitioner's bond hearing that Respondents claimed the actual basis for [his/her/their] detention was Section 1225(b)(2). Such a post-hoc justification deserves no credit. *Beltran Barrera*, 2025 WL 2690565, at *4; *Singh v. Lewis*, 2025 WL 2699219, at *5; *Lopez-Campos*, 2025 WL 2496379, at *7.] As such, Petitioner is not subject to mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2).

63. Petitioner's detention is not authorized under Section 1226(a), either. As discussed above, Section 1226(a)'s discretionary detention framework requires a bond hearing to make an individualized custody determination based on Petitioner's risk of flight or dangerousness. Here, Respondents have failed to provide such a hearing. Further, there is no information indicating that Petitioner is a flight risk or danger to the community.

64. Lacking any statutory basis for her detention, Respondent must release Petitioner or, in the alternative, promptly hold a bond hearing to determine whether he should remain in custody.

IV. Due Process Clause

65. Noncitizens are entitled to due process of the law under the Fifth Amendment. *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 523 (2003) (quoting *Reno v. Flores*, 507 U.S. 292, 306 (1993)). To determine whether civil detention violates a noncitizen's Fifth Amendment due process rights, courts apply the three-part test in *Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319 (1976).

66. Under *Mathews*, courts weigh the following three factors: 1) "the private interest that will be affected by the official action;" 2) "the risk of an erroneous deprivation of such interest through the procedures used, and the probable value, if any, of additional or substitute procedural safeguards;" and 3) "the Government's interest, including the function involved and the fiscal and administrative burdens that the additional or substitute procedural requirement would entail." 424 U.S. at 335.

a. Private Interest

67. As to the first *Mathews* factor, "[t]he interest in being free from physical detention" is "the most elemental of liberty interests." *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, 542 U.S. 507, 529, 531 (2004). Petitioner has been detained for **50 DAYS** at ERO El Paso Camp East Montana in El Paso, Texas in conditions that are indistinguishable from criminal incarceration. This detention prevents him from seeing his family, going to work to support them, and deprives him of any privacy and freedom of movement.

b. Risk of Erroneous Deprivation

68. As to the second *Mathews* factor, courts must "assess whether the challenged procedure creates a risk of erroneous deprivation of individuals' private rights and the degree to which alternative procedures could ameliorate these risks." *Gunaydin v. Trump*, No. 25-CV-

01151 (JMB/DLM), 2025 WL 1459154, at *8 (D. Minn. May 21, 2025). The current procedures cause an erroneous deprivation of Petitioner's liberty interest in remaining free from detention.

69. As discussed above, the statutory text, statutory framework, Congressional intent, the longstanding practice of the agency, and the decisions of many federal courts across the nation leave no doubt that Section 1225(b)(2) applies only to recently arrived noncitizens seeking entry at a border or port of entry, not noncitizens who entered without inspection and were detained inside the country.

70. Here, Petitioner was not arriving at a border or port of entry when he was detained, nor was he ever seeking admission to the country. Instead, he entered without inspection, never had any encounter with DHS officials, and lived in the United States for 27 years before being detained. As such, Petitioner is not subject to mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2).

71. Therefore, it is clear that the government's current procedure, subjecting Petitioner to mandatory detention under Section 1225(b)(2), creates a substantial risk of erroneous deprivation of Petitioner's interest in being free from arbitrary confinement.

72. Additionally, there are reasonable alternatives available for Respondent to pursue. As discussed above, Section 1226(a) applies to noncitizens facing charges of inadmissibility, including noncitizens like Petitioner who entered without inspection and were later detained while residing inside the country. As such, proper application of the INA's detention scheme allows for the possibility of detaining Petitioner under Section 1226(a) but first requires a bond hearing to make an individualized determination of his risk of flight or dangerousness. Such a hearing has not happened. Without it, the risk of erroneous deprivation of Petitioner's freedom is high. *See Singh v. Lewis*, 2025 WL 2699219, at *9 (finding that the risk of erroneously depriving

the Petitioner of his freedom is high if the Immigration Judge fails to assess his risk of flight or dangerousness.).

c. Government Interest

73. As to the third *Mathews* factor, the government's interest in maintaining the current procedure is minimal here. The new interpretation of Section 1225(b)(2) – that people like Petitioner who have resided in the United States for years are now subject to mandatory detention – flies in the face of the statutory text, statutory framework, Congressional intent, almost three decades of prior practice, and the decisions of federal courts across the nation. Any government interest in public safety or ensuring that Petitioner attends future immigration proceedings would be satisfied through proper application of Section 1226(a), which requires a bond redetermination hearing where an immigration judge will consider Petitioner's individualized facts and circumstances to determine whether he is a danger to the community or a flight risk.

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT I
Violation of the INA

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

75. 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 detained 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. But Respondents' actions here violate § 1226(a) too because, to date, Respondents have refused to consider Petitioner for bond.

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

COUNT II
Violation of Due Process

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

78. 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).

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

80. Petitioner entered the country without inspection, had no contact with any DHS officials, and lived in the United States for 27 years before being detained. Such an individual may only be subject to discretionary detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226, which provides for release on bond.

81. Respondents' 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 immediately release Petitioner or, in the alternative, provide Petitioner with a bond hearing pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) within 14 days;
- c. Enjoin Respondents from moving Petitioner outside the jurisdiction of this Court pending adjudication of this petition;
- d. Declare that Petitioner's continued detention violates the INA and the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment;
- 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 this 20th day of January, 2026

Respectfully submitted,
Frederic C. Goodwill, II

Attorneys for Petitioner

VERIFICATION

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 2242 and 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the facts set forth in the foregoing Petition for Habeas Corpus are true and correct.

Executed this 20th day of January, 2026.

Frederic C. Goodwill, II

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