

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
AUSTIN DIVISION

Juan Pablo HERRERA CORDOBA

Petitioner-Plaintiff,

v.

PAM BONDI,

United States Attorney General;

KRISTI LYNN NOEM,

Secretary of the United States

Department of Homeland Security;

TODD M. LYONS,

Director of United States

Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

MIGUEL VERGARA

Field Office Director

for Detention and Removal, U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement,

CHARLOTTE COLLINS, Warden,

T. Don Hutto Detention Center;

Respondents-Defendants.

Civ. No. 1-26-CV-00238

DHS File Number: 

PETITION
FOR HABEAS CORPUS UNDER 28
U.S.C. § 2241

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PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

This petition challenges the unlawful detention of Petitioner Juan Pablo HERRERA CORDOBA (“Mr. Herrera Cordoba”), a 30 year-old who has a United States Citizen wife and three United States Citizen child, and he has resided in the United States for more than 15 years. On or about January 05, 2026, Petitioner was arrested by immigration officials after he was stopped by a State Trooper for a traffic violation. He has since been held at the T. Don Hutto Detention Center in Taylor, Texas, without a bond hearing. *See* Exh. 1, ICE Locator Search Results. The Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) asserts that Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b), despite Congress’s separate detention framework in 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), which governs interior arrests and provides discretionary bond and immigration-judge (“IJ”) review.

DHS’s novel position—recently endorsed in *Matter of Yajure-Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 220 (B.I.A. 2025)—contradicts the Immigration and Nationality Act’s (INA) text, the canon against surplusage, longstanding administrative practice, and Due Process. It effectively erases section 236(a) of the INA, collapses Congress’s dual-track detention scheme, and imposes categorical detention on long-time residents like Mr. Herrera Cordoba who presents no danger and are not flight risks.

The human consequences are immediate and severe. Mr. Herrera Cordoba **has a United States citizen wife and three United States citizen children**. Since Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s detention, his six-year-old daughter, , **has been struggling in school**. In addition,  is underperforming in her academic classes, she receives special education classes and has a Developmental Delay.

Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s wife, Mrs. Mondragon, has experienced significant mental health deterioration since her husband’s detention. **She has been experiencing PTSD anxiety, emotional distress, and functional impairment**. Mrs. Mondragon experiences anticipatory grief, persistent fear, and emotional dysregulation when contemplating life without her husband, and she is currently taking prescribed medication to manage her anxiety and depression. **He also has an approved I-130 family petition that was approved on November 01, 2023.**

Since Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s detention, Mrs. Mondragon has had to use their savings in order to meet the family’s basic financial needs. However, due to her mental health conditions and caregiving responsibilities, Mrs. Mondragon is unable to maintain a full-time employment or

adequately provide for herself and her daughters without her husband's support. The Constitution, the INA, and basic principles of fairness do not permit this outcome. Petitioners respectfully request immediate release or, at minimum, a prompt custody redetermination under § 236(a).

The Petitioner, Juan Pablo Herrera Cordoba ("Mr. Herrera Cordoba"), respectfully petitions this Honorable Court for a Writ of Habeas Corpus to remedy Petitioner's unlawful detention and attempted removal from the United States by Respondents.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This lawsuit seeks the immediate release of Plaintiff-Petitioner Juan Pablo Herrera Cordoba ("Petitioner"), age 30, from unlawful detention in violation of his constitutional and statutory rights.
2. On or about January 05, 2026, a Texas State Trooper detained Mr. Herrera Cordoba in a traffic stop. He did not have a driver's license but presented a Mexican Consular ID. The Trooper called ICE to the scene. Mr. Herrera Cordoba was taken into immigration custody. He remains in civil detention in custody of ICE at T. Don Hutto Detention Center at Taylor, Texas. Mr. Herrera Cordoba does not have any criminal record or any issues that impact his good moral character.
3. Mr. Herrera Cordoba has lived in the United States for over 15 years. He is the father and sole provider to his United States Citizen wife and three United States Citizen children. Mr. Herrera Cordoba and his family live in Barlett, Texas. He supports his family through his concrete and landscaping business. **His detention is a substantial deprivation and burden that puts Petitioner and his family at risk of losing their housing, vehicles, and medical care without his parental, emotional, and financial support.**
4. **Petitioner has no record of criminal charges.** He was arrested by immigration officials after he was stopped by a Texas State Trooper in the Austin, Texas area on or about January 05, 2026. No ticket was issued.

5. Petitioner's detention became unlawful when Petitioner was not entitled to bond due to the Board of Immigration Appeals published opinion in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025) on September 5, 2025 which rendered pursuing a bond futile for non-citizens that entered the United States without inspection. Mr. Herrera Cordoba entered without inspection in 2009.
6. Petitioner qualifies for Cancellation of removal for certain non-permanent residents pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1229b(b)(1) as he has been physically present in the United States for over 15 years and been a person of good moral character during that period. Moreover, he has a United States Citizen wife and three United States Citizen children upon whom his removal would cause exceptional and extremely unusual hardship.
7. Petitioner respectfully requests this Court grant the instant petition for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 and enjoin Respondent's continued detention of Petitioner to ensure his due process rights and his ability to provide care for his wife and children, who have needs that require Petitioner's presence and support. In the alternative, he respectfully requests the Court order Respondents to show cause why this Petition should not be granted within three days. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2243. His continued detention is an unlawful violation of due process, incorrect interpretation of immigration law, and is *ultra vires*.
8. Petitioner Juan Pablo Herrera Cordoba brings this petition for a writ of habeas corpus to seek enforcement of his rights as members of the Bond Denial Class certified in *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM (C.D. Cal.) Petitioner is in the physical custody of Respondents at the T. DON HUTTO DETENTION CENTER. He now faces unlawful detention because the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) have refused to abide by the declaratory judgment issued on behalf of the certified class in *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*.

9. On November 20, 2025, the district court granted partial summary judgment on behalf of individual plaintiffs and on November 25, 2025, certified a nationwide class and extended declaratory judgment to the certified class. *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 3289861, at *11 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 20, 2025) (order granting partial summary judgment to named Plaintiffs-Petitioners); *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 3288403, at *9 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 25, 2025) (order certifying Plaintiffs-Petitioners' proposed nationwide Bond Eligible Class, incorporating and extending declaratory judgment from Order Granting Petitioners' Motion for Partial Summary Judgment).
10. The declaratory judgment held that the Bond Denial Class members are detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), and thus may not be denied consideration for release on bond under § 1225(b)(2)(A). *Maldonado Bautista*, 2025 WL 3289861, at *11.
11. Nonetheless, the Executive Office for Immigration Review and its subagency the Immigration Court and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have blatantly refused to abide by the declaratory relief and have unlawfully ordered that Petitioner be denied the opportunity to be released on bond.
12. Petitioner Juan Pablo Herrera Cordoba is a member of the Bond Eligible Class, as he:
- does not have lawful status in the United States and is currently detained at the T. DON HUTTO DETENTION CENTER. He was apprehended by immigration authorities on January 05, 2026;
 - entered the United States without inspection over 15 years ago and was not apprehended upon arrival, *cf. id.*; and
 - is not detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c), § 1225(b)(1), or § 1231.
13. After apprehending Petitioner on January 05, 2026, the DHS placed him in removal proceedings pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. DHS has charged Petitioner as being

inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), as someone who entered the United States without inspection.

14. The Court should expeditiously grant this petition.

15. Respondents are bound by the judgment in *Maldonado Bautista*, as it has the full “force and effect of a final judgment.” 28 U.S.C. § 2201(a). Nevertheless, Respondents continue to flagrantly defy the judgment in that case and continue to subject Petitioner to unlawful detention despite his clear entitlement to consideration for release on bond as a Bond Eligible Class member.

16. Immigration judges have informed class members in bond hearings that they have been instructed by “leadership” that the declaratory judgment in *Maldonado Bautista* is not controlling, even with respect to class members, and that instead IJs remain bound to follow the agency’s prior decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).

17. On or about January 05, 2026, a Texas State Trooper detained Mr. Herrera Cordoba, at a traffic stop. He remains in civil detention in custody of ICE at T. Don Hutto Detention Center at Taylor, Texas.

II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

21. Petitioner is detained in civil immigration custody in Williamson County at the T. Don Hutto Detention Center, Taylor, Texas. He has been detained since or about, January 05, 2026. He has no criminal convictions.

22. This action arises under the Constitution of the United States and the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”), 8 U.S.C. § 1101 *et seq.*

23. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 (habeas corpus), 28

U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), and where applicable Article I § 9, cl. 2 of the United States Constitution (Suspension Clause). 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.

24. Venue is proper in the Western District of Texas, Austin Division, under 28 U.S.C. § 1391, because Petitioner is detained in this District and a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claims in this action took place in this District. Venue is also proper under 28 U.S.C. § 2243 because the immediate custodians of Petitioner reside in this District.

III. REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. § 2243, Writ of Habeas Corpus Issuance, Return, Hearing, and Decision

25. The Court either must grant the instant petition for writ of habeas corpus or issue an order to show cause to Respondents, unless Petitioner is not entitled to relief. If the Court issues an order to show cause, Respondents must file a response “within three days” unless this Court permits additional time for good cause, which is not to exceed twenty days. 28 U.S.C. § 2243.

26. 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 writ of habeas corpus, challenging illegality of detention, is reduced to a sham if the trial courts do not act within a reasonable time. *Rhueark v. Wade*, 540 F. 2d 1282, 1283 (5th Cir. 1976); *Jones v. Shell*, 572 F.2d 1278, 1280 (8th Cir. 1978). Due to the nature of this proceeding, Petitioner asks this Court to expedite proceedings in this case as necessary and practicable for justice.

27. The Court should grant the petition for writ of habeas corpus “forthwith,” as the legal issues have already been resolved for class members in Maldonado Bautista.

IV. PARTIES

28. Petitioner is Mr. Herrera Cordoba. He is 30 years old. He was born in Mexico in 1996 and came to the United States in 2009. Prior to his detention, he was living with and supporting his U.S. citizen wife and daughters in Barlett, Texas. Petitioner is the subject of a removal proceeding based upon the charges of being present in the U.S. without being "admitted or paroled, or [having] arrived in the [U.S.] at any time or place other than as designated by the Attorney General" under INA § 212(a)(6)(A)(i), codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i).

29. He has been in civil immigration detention since January 05, 2026.

30. Respondent Pamela Bondi is named in their official capacity as the U.S. She is responsible for the administration and policy of the immigration courts, which resulted in the denying of this noncitizen's attempt to seek a custody redetermination from the U.S. Department of Justice under 8 C.F.R. §1003.19.

31. Respondent Kristi Noem is named in their official capacity as the Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security. DHS is a department of the executive branch of the U.S. government that is tasked with, among other things, administering and enforcing the federal immigration laws. Secretary Noem is ultimately responsible for the actions of ICE; specifically, they are responsible for the administration of the immigration laws pursuant to Section 103(a) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a). Secretary Noem is legally responsible for the Office of the Principle Legal Advisor of ICE, and in any effort to detain and remove the Petitioner and as such is a legal custodian of Petitioner.

32. Respondent Todd M. Lyons is named in their official capacity as the Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. ICE is the agency within DHS that is specifically responsible for managing all aspects of the immigration enforcement process, including immigration detention. ICE is responsible for apprehension, incarceration, and removal of noncitizens from the United States and as such Acting Director Lyons is a legal custodian of Petitioner.

33. Respondent Miguel Vergara is named in their official capacity as the Field Office Director for the San Antonio Field Office of ICE. Director Vergara is responsible for the

enforcement of the immigration laws within this district, and for ensuring that ICE officials follow the agency's policies and procedures. Director Vergara is a legal custodian of Petitioner.

34. Respondent Charlotte Collins is named in their official capacity as the warden of the T. Don Hutto Detention Center. They have immediate physical custody of Petitioner pursuant to an agreement with ICE to detain noncitizens and is a legal custodian of Petitioner.

V. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

35. Mr. Herrera Cordoba was detained by Immigration Officials on January 05, 2026, near Austin, Texas. ICE has held him without bond. Section 236 of the INA is codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1226 and noncitizens held under its authority have a right to have their custody determination reviewed by an IJ. *See id.*
36. Mr. Herrera Cordoba entered without inspection in 2009. A request for immigration bond is futile under Board of Immigration Appeals published opinion in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). Following the interpretation of the aforementioned BIA decision, Immigration Judges do not have jurisdiction to hear the bond request or grant a bond to Petitioner due to being present in the United States without admission.
37. It has been widely reported that ICE internally released "interim guidance" regarding a change in their longstanding interpretation of which noncitizens are eligible for release on bond; specifically, ICE is now arguing that only those already admitted to the U.S. (typically requiring lengthy legal efforts with representation of counsel, such as adjusting status to a legal permanent resident or refugee) are eligible to be released from custody during their removal proceedings, and that all others are subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225, instead of 8 U.S.C. § 1226, and will remain detained with only extremely limited parole options at ICE's discretion. Ex. 1, Interim Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Application for Admission (July 8, 2025). This is a reversal of ICE's established practice of releasing from custody the majority of noncitizens in removal proceedings, who are found not to pose a flight

risk or a danger to the community, on bond.

38. This novel interpretation means that potentially millions noncitizens who entered the United States without inspection (who have not already been formally admitted or paroled) that are contacted by ICE in the interior of the U.S. will be treated as if they were an “arriving alien” at the border and subject to mandatory detention, regardless of how long they have been present in the United States or other equities (such as complete lack of criminal history or U.S. citizen family members including dependent children). ICE will now argue all of these noncitizens are not even entitled to a bond hearing by an IJ on the issue of release from custody during the pendency of removal proceedings.
39. Mr. Herrera Cordoba remains in detention and separated from his family and community. Mr. Herrera Cordoba, nine-year-old daughter, [REDACTED], has been diagnosed with Developmental Delay. In addition, [REDACTED] is underperforming in her academic classes. Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s wife, Mrs. Mondragon, has experienced significant mental health deterioration since her husband’s detention. She has experienced symptoms of PTSD anxiety, emotional distress, and functional impairment. Mrs. Mondragon experiences anticipatory grief, persistent fear, and emotional dysregulation when contemplating life without her husband. Since Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s detention, Mrs. Mondragon has to use their savings in order to meet the family’s basic financial needs. However, due to her mental health conditions and caregiving responsibilities, Mrs. Mondragon is unable to maintain a full-time employment or adequately provide for herself and her daughters without her husband’s support. In addition, Mr. Herrera Cordoba is unable to support and provide for his family because he is detained and unable to continue as a breadwinner. His USC wife is unable to work two fulltime due to the demands of caring for her daughters.
40. Mr. Herrera Cordoba’s continued detention separates him from his family, prohibits his removal defense in many ways, including by making it difficult to communicate with witnesses, gather evidence, and afford legal representation, among other related harms. He remains detained from his family, his counsel, and support system and continues to be subjected to the aforementioned harms.

VI. LEGAL FRAMEWORK: Due Process Clause

41. “It is well established that the Fifth Amendment entitles [noncitizens] to due process of law in deportation proceedings.” *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 523 (2003) (quoting *Reno v. Flores*, 507 U.S. 292, 306 (1993)). “Freedom from imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty that [the Due Process] Clause protects.” *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001).
42. Due Process requires that there be “adequate procedural protections” to ensure that the government’s asserted justification for a noncitizen’s physical confinement “outweighs the ‘individual’s constitutionally protected interest in avoiding physical restraint.’” *Id.* at 690 (quoting *Kansas v. Hendricks*, 521 U.S. 346, 356 (1997)). In the immigration context, the Supreme Court only recognizes two purposes for civil detention: preventing flight and mitigating the risks of danger to the community. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690; *Demore*, 538 U.S. at 528. A noncitizen may only be detained based on these two justifications if they are otherwise statutorily eligible for bond. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690.
43. “The fundamental requirement of due process is the opportunity be heard at a meaningful time and in a meaningful manner.” *Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319, 333 (1976). To determine what process Petitioner is due, this Court should consider (1) the private interest affected by the government action; (2) the risk that current procedures will cause an erroneous deprivation of that private interest, and the extent to which that risk could be reduced by additional safeguards; and (3) the government’s interest in maintaining the current procedures, including the governmental function involved and the fiscal and administrative burdens that the substitute procedural requirement would entail. *Id.* at 335.

A. Immigration and Nationality Act

44. Title 8 of the United States Code, Section 1221 *et seq.*, controls the United States

Government's authority to detain noncitizens during their removal proceedings.

45. The INA authorizes detention for noncitizens under four distinct provisions:

- a. **Discretionary Detention.** 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) generally allows for the detention of noncitizens who are in regular, non-expedited removal proceedings; however, permits those noncitizens who are not subject to mandatory detention to be released on bond or on their own recognizance.
- b. **Mandatory Detention of "Criminal" Noncitizens.** 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c) generally requires the mandatory detention of noncitizens who are removable because of certain criminal or terrorist-related activity after they have been released from criminal incarceration.
- c. **Mandatory Detention of "Applicants for Admission."** 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) generally requires detention for certain noncitizen applicants for admission, such as those noncitizens arriving in the U.S. at a port of entry or other noncitizens who have not been admitted or paroled into the U.S. and are apprehended soon after crossing the border.
- d. **Detention Following Completion of Removal Proceedings.** 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a) generally requires the detention of certain noncitizens who are subject to a final removal order during the 90-day period after the completion of removal proceedings and permits the detention of certain noncitizens beyond that period. *Id.* at § 1231(a)(2), (6).

46. The instant case concerns the detention provisions at §§ 1226(a) and 1225(b). Both detention provisions, §§ 1226(a) and 1225(b), 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).

47. Following 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 § 1225(b) and that they were instead detained under § 1226(a) after an arrest warrant was issued by the Attorney General. See *Inspection and Expedited Removal of Aliens; Detention and Removal of Aliens; Conduct of Removal Proceedings; Asylum Procedures*, 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997) (“Despite being applicants for admission, aliens 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”) (emphasis added).
48. For nearly thirty years, the practice of the government, specifically ICE and Executive Office for Immigration Review, which operate under DHS, was that most individual noncitizens that were apprehended in the interior of the United States after they had been living in the U.S. for more than two years (as opposed to “arriving” at a point of entry, border crossing, or being apprehended near the border and soon after entering without inspection) received a bond hearing. If determined to not be a danger to the community or a flight risk and, as a result, granted a change in custody status, the individuals were released from detention either on their own recognizance or after paying the bond amount set by the IJ in full. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)(2)(A).
49. Recently, ICE has—without warning and without any publicly stated rationale—reversed course and adopted a policy of attempting to treat all individual noncitizens that were not previously admitted to the U.S. that are contacted in the interior of the U.S. at any time after their entry as “arriving” and ineligible for bond regardless of the particularities of their case. As a result, ICE is now ignoring particularities that have historically been highly relevant to determinations whether a noncitizen such remain or custody or be released—such as: when, why, or how they entered the U.S.; whether they have criminal convictions; whether they present a danger to the community or flight risk; whether they have serious medical conditions requiring ongoing care; whether U.S. citizen family members dependent upon them to provide necessary care; or, whether the

- noncitizen's detention is in the community's best interest. ICE now reasons that the mandatory detention provision of § 1225(b)(2)(A) applies to all people who enter without inspection who are alleged to be subject to grounds of inadmissibility at § 1182.
50. As a result of ICE's interpretation and practice change, individual noncitizens, including long-time U.S. community members and even those who have had their particular circumstances reviewed and were ordered to be released upon posting bond by an IJ, continue to be detained by ICE. Here, Petitioner's circumstances were not reviewed because of ICE's and the BIA's erroneous interpretation of the statutory scheme.
51. The government's erroneous interpretation of the INA as it relates to noncitizens subject to mandatory detention defies the plain text of 8 U.S.C. § 1226. The government's assertion is laid out in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*. The government assertion that Petitioner is detained under § 1225—even though he was arrested and detained under § 1226—is meritless. Petitioner came to be in immigration proceedings based on a DHS filing that clearly identified him as subject to detention “pursuant to the authority contained in section 236”; (section 236 of the INA is codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1226.). For decades, § 1225 has applied only to noncitizens “seeking admission into the country”—i.e., new arrivals. *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 289. This contrasts with § 1226, which applies to noncitizens “already in the country.” *Id.* at 289. Petitioner has been in the United States for over 10 years.
52. This new interpretation is now advanced by the government after decades of consistent use to the contrary. The government's position contravenes the plain language of the INA and its regulations and has been consistently rejected by courts. *See, e.g., Gonzalez Guerrero v. Noem*, No. 1:25-CV-01334-RP (W.D. Tex. Oct. 27, 2025) (granting preliminary injunction and vacating the BIA decision for bond denial under *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*) (citing *Buenrostro-Mendez*, 2025 WL 2886346, at *3 (“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.”) (citing *Pizarro Reyes*, 2025 WL 2609425, at *4); *see also Lopez-Arevalo*, 2025 WL 2691828, at *7 (“In recent weeks, courts across the country have held that this new, expansive interpretation of mandatory detention under the INA is either incorrect or likely incorrect.”); *Rodriguez*,

2025 WL 2782499, at *1 & n.3 (W.D. Wash. Sep. 30, 2025) (collecting cases and noting that “[e]very district court to address” the statutory question “has concluded that the government’s position belies the statutory text of the INA, canons of statutory interpretation, legislative history, and longstanding agency practice”); *Belsai D.S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-cv-3682, 2025 WL 2802947, at *6 (D. Minn. Oct. 1, 2025) (joining the “chorus” of courts concluding that § 1226 applies); *Hernandez Ramiro v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-CV-01207-XR (W.D. Tex. Sept. 30, 2025) (granting temporary restraining order and stating “ Respondents pointed to the Board’s determination regarding the applicability of § 1225 for support. But ‘the Court does not find that the [Board]’s alleged change in the interpretation of the subject statutes controls the Court’s authority here.’” *Kostak v. Trump*, No. CV 3:25-1093, 2025 WL 2472136, at *2 (W.D. La. Aug. 27, 2025) (citing *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 395 (2024)). Besides, the Board’s interpretation has been subject to criticism upon judicial review. See *Lopez-Arevelo v. Ripa*, No. EP-25-CV-337-KC, 2025 WL 2691828, at *7 (W.D. Tex. Sept. 22, 2025) (“In recent weeks, courts across the country have held that this new, expansive interpretation of mandatory detention under the INA is either incorrect or likely incorrect.”); *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238; *Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 1:25-cv-11571-JEK, 2025 WL 1869299 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025); *Rodriguez v. Bostock*, No. 3:25-cv-05240-TMC, 2025 WL 1193850 (W.D. Wash. Apr. 24, 2025). See also “More than 100 Judges have ruled against Trump’s admin’s mandatory detention policy” by Kyle Cheney, POLITICO, published October 21, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/10/31/trump-administration-mandatory-detention-deportation-00632086>. (“More than 100 federal judges have now ruled at least 200 times that the Trump administration’s effort to systematically detain immigrants facing possible deportation appeared to violate their rights or was just flatly illegal...” The overwhelming majority of district courts across the country, including this Court, that have considered [the Trump administration’s] new statutory interpretation have found it incorrect and unlawful,” ruled U.S. District Judge Richard Boulware, an appointee of Barack Obama.”). See also *Inspection and Expedited Removal of Aliens*, 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997) (explaining that “[d]espite being applicants for admission, aliens 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”).

53. This new interpretation is inconsistent with the plain language of the INA. First, the government disregards a key phrase in § 1225. “[I]n the case of an alien who is an applicant for admission, if the examining immigration officer determines that an alien *seeking admission* is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted, the alien shall be detained for a proceeding under section 1229a[.]” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) (emphasis added). In other words, mandatory detention applies when “the individual is: (1) an ‘applicant for admission’; (2) ‘seeking admission’; and (3) ‘not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted.’” *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at *2.

54. The “seeking admission” language, “necessarily implies some sort of present tense action.” *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at *6; *see also Matter of MD-C-V-*, 28 I. & N. Dec. 18, 23 (B.I.A. 2020) (“The use of the present progressive tense ‘arriving,’ rather than the past tense ‘arrived,’ implies some temporal or geographic limit ”); *U.S. v. Wilson*, 503 U.S. 329, 333 (1992) (“Congress’ use of verb tense is significant in construing statutes.”).

55. In other words, the plain language of § 1225 applies to immigrants currently seeking admission into the United States at the nation’s border or another point of entry. It does not apply to noncitizens “already present in the United States”—only § 1226 applies in those cases. *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 303.

56. When interpreting a statute, “every clause and word . . . should have meaning.” *United States ex rel. Polansky, M.D. v. Exec. Health Res., Inc.*, 599 U.S. 419, 432 (2023) (internal quotation marks and citation omitted). And “the words of the statute must be read in their context and with a view to their place in the overall statutory scheme.” *Gundy v. United States*, 588 U.S. 128, 141 (2019) (quotation omitted). The government’s position requires the Court to ignore critical provisions of the INA.

57. Second, the government’s interpretation would render newly enacted portions of the INA superfluous. “When Congress amends legislation, courts must presume it intends

its amendment to have real and substantial effect.” *Van Buren v. United States*, 593 U.S. 374, 393 (2021). Congress passed the Laken Riley Act (the “Act”) in January 2025. The Act amended several provisions of the INA, including §§ 1225 and 1226. Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No. 119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025). Relevant here, the Act added a new category of noncitizens subject to mandatory detention under § 1226(c)—those already present in the United States who have also been arrested, charged with, or convicted of certain crimes. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c)(1)(E); 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A). Of course, under the government’s position, these individuals are already subject to mandatory detention under § 1225—rendering the amendment redundant. Likewise, mandatory-detention exceptions under § 1226(c) are meaningful only if there is a default of discretionary detention—and there is, under § 1226(a). *See Rodriguez*, 2025 WL 1193850, at *12.

58. Additionally, “[w]hen Congress adopts a new law against the backdrop of a longstanding administrative construction, the court generally presumes that the new provision works in harmony with what came before.” *Monsalvo v. Bondi*, 604 U.S. ___, 145 S. Ct. 1232, 1242 (2025). Congress adopted the Act against the backdrop of decades of agency practice applying § 1226(a) to immigrants like Petitioner, who are present in the United States but have not been admitted or paroled. *Rodriguez*, 2025 WL 1193850, at *15; *Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at *4; 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997) (“Despite being applicants for admission, aliens who are present without having been admitted or paroled . . . will be eligible for bond and bond redetermination.”).

59. Section 1226(a) applies by default to all persons “pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States.” Removal hearings for noncitizens under 1226(a) are held under § 1229a, which “decid[e] the inadmissibility or deportability of a[] [noncitizen].

60. By contrast, § 1225(b) applies to people arriving at U.S. ports of entry or who recently entered the United States.

61. Accordingly, the mandatory detention provision of § 1225(b)(2) does not apply to Petitioner. Petitioner's continued detention is unlawful.

B. Board of Immigration Appeals

62. It is not necessary for Petitioner to first seek a bond hearing before the immigration judge given that his bond eligibility is foreclosed by *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*. Appealing the immigration judge's decision that he lacks jurisdiction to consider bond is an act in futility. The appeal would go to the same body that issued the erroneous *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* decision.

VII. CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

Violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution

63. Petitioner repeats and incorporates by reference all allegations above as though set forth fully herein.

64. The Due Process Clause asks whether the government's deprivation of a person's life, liberty, or property is justified by a sufficient purpose. Here, there is no question that the government has deprived Petitioner of his liberty.

65. Mr. Herrera Cordoba's continued detention violates his right to substantive and procedural due process guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

66. The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that "[n]o person shall...be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." As a noncitizen who shows well over "two years" physical presence in the United States (he has 10 years), Petitioner is entitled to Due Process Clause protections against deprivation of liberty and property. *See Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 693 ("[T]he Due Process Clause applies to all 'persons' within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent."). Any deprivation of this fundamental liberty interest must be accompanied not only by adequate procedural protections, but also by a "sufficiently strong special justification" to outweigh the significant deprivation of liberty. *Id.* at 690.

67. Respondents have deprived Mr. Herrera Cordoba of his liberty interest protected by the Fifth Amendment by detaining him since January 05, 2026.

68. Mr. Herrera Cordoba's detention is improper because he has been deprived of a bond hearing. A hearing is if anything a right to be heard, and here the immigration judge considered it a foregone conclusion that he was ineligible for bond, without considering the law or entertaining his counsel's arguments. Like the accused in criminal cases, habeas is proper. *See Moore v. Dempsey*, 261 U.S. 86 (1923); *Johnson v. Zerbst*, 304, U.S. 458 (1938); *Burns v. Wilson*, 346 U.S. 137, 154 (1953).

69. Respondents' actions in detaining Mr. Herrera Cordoba without any legal justification violate the Fifth Amendment.

70. The government's detention of Mr. Herrera Cordoba is unjustified. Respondents have not demonstrated that Petitioner needs to be detained. *See Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690 (finding immigration detention must further the twin goals of (1) ensuring the noncitizen's appearance during removal proceedings and (2) preventing danger to the community). There is no credible argument that Petitioner cannot be safely released back to his community and family.

71. For these reasons, Petitioner's detention violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
Violation of Immigration and Nationality Act

72. Petitioner repeats and incorporates by reference all allegations above as though set forth fully herein.

73. Mr. Herrera Cordoba was detained pursuant to authority contained in section 236 of the INA; section 236 is codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1226. Despite this, the government asserts that he is detained subject to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).

74. 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. Mandatory detention 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) and are eligible for release on bond, unless they are subject to § 1225(b)(1), § 1226(c), or § 1231.

75. Respondents have wrongfully adopted a policy and practice of arguing all noncitizens, such as Petitioner, are subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2).

76. The unlawful application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner violates the INA.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

Fifth Amendment – Due Process

Denial of Opportunity to Contest Mis-Inclusion in Mandatory Category of Detention

77. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the paragraphs above.

78. Mr. Herrera Cordoba has a vested liberty interest in preventing his removal because he is eligible for Cancellation of Removal for Certain Non-Legal Permanent Residents and is entitled to pursue that relief outside of detention by showing he is neither a danger to the community nor a flight risk. He is separated now from his U.S. Citizen wife and three U.S. citizen children, notwithstanding the dictates of 8 U.S.C. §1226(a) that he may seek redetermination of his custody status with an IJ and prove he is not a flight risk or danger.

79. For all of the above reasons, Respondents' attempts to detain Petitioner without a meaningful opportunity to be heard violate his Procedural Due Process rights under the Fifth Amendment.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT

80. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the paragraphs above.

81. Respondents' continued efforts to deny his bond violate the INA, Administrative Procedures Act (APA), and the U.S. Constitution.

82. As set forth in Count Two and Three, federal regulations and case law provide the procedure for a respondent in removal proceedings like him to seek a bond determination by an IJ.

83. In being denied the opportunity to return to his family and pursue Cancellation of Removal in a non-detained court setting where he is free to gather the necessary hardship and good moral character evidence, Mr. Herrera Cordoba would be deprived of the right to freedom to lawfully pursue his rights in this civil matter. The Government's "no-review" provisions are a violation of his procedural and substantive due process and without any statutory authority. There is no time-frame or procedure for requesting DHS to itself review its custody decision, and removal proceedings in this case will proceed during that time while Plaintiff remains in custody.

84. The actions by Respondents would improperly alter the substantive rules concerning mandatory custody status without the required notice-and-comment period and would be in violation of the INA and its regulations. These actions by Respondents violate the APA. Under the APA, this Court may hold unlawful and set aside an agency action which is "contrary to constitutional right, power, privilege or immunity." 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(B). The regulations at 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.19(h)(1)(B) and 1003.19(h)(2)(B) providing no review of DHS custody decision for arriving aliens in removal proceedings are in violation of substantive and procedural due process as guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution. It is ultra vires because it exceeds the authority granted ICE by Congress at 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). For these reasons, this Honorable Court should order the immigration judge to conduct a Matter of Joseph hearing to determine whether or not Plaintiff is properly designated an arriving alien subject to mandatory detention during the pendency of his removal proceedings.

**FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION:
STAY OF REMOVAL CLAIM**

85. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the paragraphs above.

86. The denial of a bond hearing, followed by removal of Mr. Herrera Cordoba from the United States would cause him irreversible harm and injury because he is mis-classified by the Government as subject to mandatory detention.

87. The Court should grant the stay of Petitioner's removal to protect his statutory rights under the INA and the APA. In attempting to assert his rights, the Government has railroaded him and deprived him of freedom and liberty to contest his removal while free on bond, or at the very least, of his ability to prove he is not subject to mandatory detention and that he merits release on bond.

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION SUSPENSION CLAUSE CLAIM

88. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the paragraphs above.

89. If 8 U.S.C. § 1252 stripped the Court jurisdiction from this matter, it would be unconstitutional as applied because it would deny Mr. Herrera Cordoba the opportunity for meaningful review of the unlawfulness of his detention and removal.

90. To invoke the Suspension Clause, a petitioner must satisfy a three-factor test: "(1) the citizenship and status of the detainee and the adequacy of the process through which that status determination was made; (2) the nature of the sites where apprehension and then detention took place; and (3) the practical obstacles inherent in resolving the prisoner's entitlement to the writ." *Boumediene v. Bush*, 553 U.S. 723, 766 (2008). Mr. Herrera Cordoba satisfies these three requirements and may invoke the Suspension Clause.

91. First, although Mr. Herrera Cordoba is not a U.S. citizen or resident, **he has lived here for over 15 years**, and he qualifies under the INA to seek Cancellation of Removal, because he has lived here for fifteen continuous years,

because he can show fifteen years' good moral character, and because he can show his U.S. citizen wife and children will suffer exceptional and extremely unusual hardship if he were removed to Mexico. Mr. Herrera Cordoba has significant family connections in the United States, U.S. citizen wife and three U.S. citizen daughter. **He also has a pending I-130 petition that was approved on November 01, 2023.** All of which establishes a substantial legal relationship with the United States.

92. Mr. Herrera Cordoba satisfies the second factor because he was apprehended by DHS and remains detained in the United States.

93. Finally, there are no serious, practical obstacles to resolving this present matter. This Court is equipped to deciding whether Mr. Herrera Cordoba is entitled to the writ.

94. There is no adequate alternative to a habeas petition. The refusal of the immigration court to grant Mr. Herrera Cordoba the right to show he is mis-classified and that he is not subject to mandatory detention, such that he may return to his family and pursue cancellation, without proper notice or due process, deprives his of his constitutional rights. The BIA cannot adequately and expeditiously review these issues.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Violation of the INA:

Request for Relief Pursuant to *Maldonado Bautista*

1. Petitioner repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference each and every allegation in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
2. As a member of the Bond Eligible Class, Petitioner is entitled to consideration for release on bond under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).
3. The order granting partial summary judgment in *Maldonado Bautista* holds that Respondents violate the INA in applying the mandatory detention statute at § 1225(b)(2) to class members.

4. The order granting class certification in *Maldonado Bautista* further orders that “[w]hen considering this determination with the MSJ Order, the Court extends the same declaratory relief granted to Petitioners to the Bond Eligible Class as a whole.”

5. Respondents are parties to *Maldonado Bautista* and bound by the Court’s declaratory judgment, which has the full “force and effect of a final judgment.” 28 U.S.C. § 2201(a).

6. By denying Petitioner a bond hearing under § 1226(a) and asserting that he is subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2), Respondents violate Petitioner’s statutory rights under the INA and the Court’s judgment in *Maldonado Bautista*.

VIII. RELIEF SOUGHT

WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests that this Court:

- (1) Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
- (2) Declare that ICE’s January 05, 2026, apprehension and detention of Mr. Herrera Cordoba was an unlawful exercise of authority because the ICE officer provided no reason that he presents a danger to the community or is flight risk;
- (3) Issue an order directing Respondents to show cause why the writ should not be granted;
- (4) Order Respondents to file with the Court a complete copy of the administrative file from the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security;
- (5) Enjoin ICE from transferring Mr. Herrera Cordoba outside of the Western District of Texas while this matter is pending;
- (6) Grant the writ of habeas corpus ordering Respondents to release Mr. Herrera Cordoba on his own recognizance, parole, or reasonable conditions of

supervision, or order the Respondents to conduct a bond hearing under which it correctly applies the statutes and no longer mis-classifies him as subject to mandatory detention, in the alternative order a hearing under *Matter of Jospeh*;

(7) Grant any other relief that this Court deems just and proper.

PRAYER FOR EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2243, Petitioner respectfully requests expedited consideration. Each day of unlawful detention inflicts irreparable harm on Petitioner and his U.S. citizen wife and child, depriving them of their husband and father's care, stability, and support. Prompt judicial intervention is necessary to protect Petitioner's constitutional rights and his family's well-being.

Iris A. Albizu Rivera (TX Bar #24082611)
P.O. Box 202943
Austin TX 78720
Telephone: (512) 861-5638
Facsimile: (866) 584-6996
Email: iris@albizulaw.com
Attorney for Petitioner

VERIFICATION PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 2242

I represent Petitioner, Juan Pablo Herrera Cordoba, and submit this verification on his behalf.

I hereby verify that the foregoing Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated this 31st day of January 2026.

Iris A. Albizu Rivera (TX Bar #24082611)
P.O. Box 202943
Austin TX 78720
Telephone: (512) 861-5638
Facsimile: (866) 584-6996
Email: iris@albizulaw.com
Attorney for Petitioner

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on January 31, 2026, I caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus and all accompanying exhibits to be served by certified mail, return receipt requested, on the following:

U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas
Attn: Stephanie Rico | Civil Process Clerk
601 N.W. Loop 410, Suite 600 San Antonio, TX 78216

Warden, T. Don Hutto Detention Center
Charlotte Thompson
1001 Welch
Taylor, TX 76574

Service on the United States Attorney constitutes service on all named federal Respondents in this matter, and service has also been made directly on the Warden as Petitioner's immediate custodian.

Dated this 31st day of January, 2025.

Iris A. Albizu Rivera (TX Bar #24082611)
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Attorney for Petitioner

Received Date 06/27/2022		Priority Date 06/27/2022	Case Type I130 - PETITION FOR ALIEN RELATIVE
Notice Date 11/01/2023		Page 1 of 1	Petitioner MONDRAGON PEREZ, DULCE JOHANNA
			Beneficiary HERRERA CORDOBA, JUAN PABLO

MONDRAGON PEREZ, DULCE JOHANNA
3333 SALT LAKE ST
BARTLETT TX 76511

Notice Type: Approval Notice
Section: Husband or wife of U.S Citizen, 201(b) INA

The above petition has been approved. As the petitioner requests, we have sent the petition to the U.S. Department of State National Visa Center (NVC), 32 Rochester Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801-2909. The NVC processes all approved immigrant visa petitions that need consular action, including the collection of necessary forms and documents. It also determines which consular post is appropriate to complete visa processing. The NVC will then transfer the approved petition to the consular post once processing has been completed and an interview has been scheduled at the Embassy or Consulate.

The NVC will contact the beneficiary of this petition with further information about immigrant visa processing steps.

You should allow a minimum of 45 days for U.S. Department of State processing before contacting the NVC. If you have not received any correspondence from NVC within 45 days, you may contact the NVC at <https://nvc.state.gov/inquiry>.

For more information about NVC processing, please visit <https://nvc.state.gov>.

THIS NOTICE IS NOT A VISA AND MAY NOT BE USED IN PLACE OF A VISA.

The approval of this visa petition does not in itself grant any immigration status and does not guarantee that the alien beneficiary will subsequently be found to be eligible for a visa, for admission to the United States, or for an extension, change, or adjustment of status.

NOTICE: Although this application or petition has been approved, USCIS and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security reserve the right to verify this information before and/or after making a decision on your case so we can ensure that you have complied with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and other legal authorities. We may review public information and records, contact others by mail, the internet or phone, conduct site inspections of businesses and residences, or use other methods of verification. We will use the information obtained to determine whether you are eligible for the benefit you seek. If we find any derogatory information, we will follow the law in determining whether to provide you (and the legal representative listed on your Form G-28, if you submitted one) an opportunity to address that information before we make a formal decision on your case or start proceedings.

Please see the additional information on the back. You will be notified separately about any other cases you filed.

USCIS encourages you to sign up for a USCIS online account. To learn more about creating an account and the benefits, go to <https://www.uscis.gov/file-online>.

Vermont Service Center
U.S. CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SVC
38 River Road
Essex Junction VT 05479-0001

USCIS Contact Center: www.uscis.gov/contactcenter

