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8
9 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
10 **SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**
11

12 ZHANG MING QING,

13 Petitioner,

14 v.

15 JEREMY CASEY, et al.,

16 Respondents.
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18
19

Case No.: 26-cv-02920-JO-DEB

**RETURN TO PETITION FOR WRIT
OF HABEAS CORPUS**

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22 **I. INTRODUCTION**

23
24 Petitioner requests that the Court order Petitioner's release from Immigration
25 and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody. This Court lacks jurisdiction because
26 Petitioner's claims are barred by 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g). Moreover, as an applicant for
27 admission to the United States found to have a credible fear of persecution, Petitioner's
28 detention is mandated by 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) until the conclusion of

Petitioner's removal proceedings. Accordingly, the Court should deny Petitioner's request for relief.

II. FACTUAL AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner is a native and citizen of China, who entered the United States without inspection near the Tecate port of entry on November 20, 2025. *See* Exhibit 1 (Form I-213).¹ Petitioner did not then have any valid entry documents to enter the United States. Petitioner was determined to be subject to removal from the United States under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i). *See* Exhibit 2 (Notice to Appear). Petitioner was interviewed by an asylum officer, pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1). *Id.* After receiving a positive credible fear determination from an asylum officer, Petitioner was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA). *Id.* The filing of the NTA initiated removal proceedings, pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, against Petitioner, and those proceedings remain ongoing. Within Petitioner's removal proceedings under § 1229a, Petitioner can apply for relief from removal before an immigration judge (IJ), including asylum under 8 U.S.C. § 1158, withholding of removal under 8 U.S.C. § 1231(b)(3), and relief under the Convention Against Torture.

The Notice to Appear scheduled Petitioner's initial master calendar hearing for January 16, 2026. *See id.* Petitioner's removal proceedings remain pending, and Petitioner's individual merits hearing is scheduled for June 2, 2026. *See* Exhibit 3 (Notice of Internet-Based Hearing Hearing). As a result, there is no administratively final order of removal at this time. Petitioner remains mandatorily detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B).

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¹ The attached exhibits are true copies, with redactions of private information, of documents obtained from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) counsel.

III. STATUTORY BACKGROUND

Section 235 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1225, applies to an “applicant for admission,” defined as an “alien present in the United States who has not been admitted” or “who arrives in the United States.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1). “[A]pplicants for admission fall into one of two categories, those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered by § 1225(b)(2).” *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 287 (2018).

Section 1225(b)(1) applies to arriving aliens and “certain other” aliens “initially determined to be inadmissible due to fraud, misrepresentation, or lack of valid document.” *Id.* (citing 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i)). These aliens are generally subject to expedited removal proceedings. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i). But if “the alien indicates an intention to apply for asylum . . . or a fear of persecution,” immigration officers will refer the alien for a credible fear interview. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(ii). “If the officer determines at the time of the interview that [the] alien has a credible fear of persecution . . . , the alien *shall be detained* for further consideration of the application for asylum.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) (emphasis added). If the alien does not indicate an intent to apply for asylum, does not express a fear of persecution, or is “found not to have such a fear,” they “shall be detained . . . until removed” from the United States. 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (B)(iii)(IV).

IV. ARGUMENT

A. Petitioner’s Claim is Barred Under 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g).

Respondents contend that judicial review over Petitioner’s claim is barred by 28 U.S.C. § 1252(g), which states that “[n]o court shall have jurisdiction to hear any cause or claim by or on behalf of any alien arising from the decision or action by the Attorney General to commence proceedings, adjudicate cases, or execute removal orders.”

1 Here, Petitioner's claims of unlawful detention necessarily arise from the
2 Department of Homeland Security's² decision to commence removal proceedings
3 against Petitioner because that decision unavoidably triggers mandatory detention under
4 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) until the conclusion of Petitioner's removal proceedings.
5 *See, e.g., Wang v. United States*, No. CV 10-0389 SVW (RCx), 2010 WL 11463156, at
6 *6 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 18, 2010) (finding section 1252(g) bars judicial review of false
7 imprisonment claim because the plaintiff's detention arose from the decision to
8 commence removal proceedings, and in turn, the "statute mandating detention during
9 removal proceedings of a person charged as an 'arriving alien.'").

10 As explained by another district court, removal proceedings are commenced
11 when, as occurred here, "the alien is issued a Notice to Appear before an immigration
12 court." *Herrera-Correra v. United States*, No. CV 08-2941 DSF (JCx), 2008 WL
13 11336833, at *3 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 11, 2008. The government "may arrest the alien against
14 whom proceedings are commenced and detain that individual until the conclusion of
15 those proceedings." *Herrera-Correra*, 2008 WL 11336833, at *3. "Thus, an alien's
16 detention throughout this process arises from the [government's] decision to commence
17 proceedings" and review of claims arising from such detention is barred under
18 section 1252(g). *Id.* (citing *Sissoko v. Rocha*, 509 F.3d 947, 949 (9th Cir. 2007)); *see*
19 *also Wang*, 2010 WL 11463156, at *6.

20 Because this habeas petition brings a claim "arising from the decision or action
21 by the [government] to commence proceedings," review of Petitioner's claim is barred
22 under 8 U.S.C § 1252(g). Thus, the Court must dismiss the petition.

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27 ² "In 2002, Congress transferred the Attorney General's immigration enforcement
28 responsibilities to the Secretary of Homeland Security." *Ibarra-Perez v. United States*,
154 F.4th 989, 995 n.2 (9th Cir. 2025).

B. Petitioner is Lawfully Detained Under the INA and the Constitution.

Even if the Court assumed jurisdiction to review Petitioner's claim, the Court must deny Petitioner's habeas petition because Petitioner's detention is statutorily mandated under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) and has not been unconstitutionally prolonged.

1. Petitioner is mandatorily detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1).

Petitioner's claim fails because Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1). Under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1), an "applicant for admission" is defined as an "alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States." As explained above, applicants for admission "fall into one of two categories, those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered by § 1225(b)(2)." *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287. Section 1225(b)(1) – the provision relevant here – applies because Petitioner was found in the United States without proper documents authorizing Petitioner's presence. And that statute mandates detention when an immigration officer determines that the alien has a credible fear of persecution. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) ("If the officer determines at the time of the interview that [the] alien has a credible fear of persecution . . . , the alien *shall be detained* for further consideration of the application for asylum.") (emphasis added); *see also Matter of M-S*, 27 I. & N. Dec. 509, 519 (AG 2019) ("all aliens transferred from expedited to full [removal] proceedings after establishing a credible fear are ineligible for bond").

Petitioner requests that the Court order Petitioner released from ICE custody. But the Supreme Court has rejected such contention, explaining: "Read most naturally, §§ 1225(b)(1) and (b)(2) thus mandate detention of applicants for admission until certain proceedings have concluded. . . . Nothing in the statutory text imposes any limit on the length of detention. And neither § 1225(b)(1) nor § 1225(b)(2) says anything whatsoever about bond hearings." *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 297. Except for temporary parole granted at the discretion of the Attorney General "for urgent humanitarian

1 reasons or significant public benefit” under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5), “there are no *other*
2 circumstances under which aliens detained under § 1225(b) may be released.” *Id.* at 300
3 (emphasis in original).

4 As Petitioner’s removal proceedings are pending, and Petitioner has not been
5 granted temporary parole, section 1225(b)(1)(B) mandates Petitioner’s detention until
6 the proceedings have concluded. *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 297 (“Once those proceedings
7 end, detention under § 1225(b) must end as well.”). Because Petitioner is lawfully
8 detained under section 1225(b)(1)(B) and the statute does not entitle Petitioner to
9 release at this time, Petitioner’s petition must be denied. *See, e.g., Zelaya-Gonzalez v.*
10 *Matuszewski*, No. 23-CV-151 JLS-KSC, 2023 WL 3103811, at *3 (S.D. Cal. April 25,
11 2023) (applying *Jennings* to find that the petitioner had no right to release or a bond
12 hearing).

13 **2. Petitioner’s detention is not unconstitutionally prolonged.**

14 In *Jennings*, the Supreme Court evaluated the proper interpretation of 8 U.S.C.
15 § 1225(b). The Supreme Court stated that, “[r]ead most naturally, [8 U.S.C.]
16 §§ 1225(b)(1) and (b)(2) . . . mandate detention of applicants for admission until certain
17 proceedings have concluded.” *Id.* at 297. In other words, neither 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)
18 nor § 1225(b)(2) “impose[] any limit on the length of detention” and “neither
19 § 1225(b)(1) nor § 1225(b)(2) say[] anything whatsoever about bond hearings.” *Id.* The
20 Supreme Court added that the sole means of release for noncitizens detained pursuant
21 to 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225(b)(1) or (b)(2) prior to removal from the United States is temporary
22 parole at the discretion of the Attorney General under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5). *Id.* at 300
23 (“That express exception to detention implies that there are no *other* circumstances
24 under which aliens detained under [8 U.S.C.] § 1225(b) may be released.”) (emphasis
25 in original). “In sum, [8 U.S.C.] §§ 1225(b)(1) and (b)(2) mandate detention of aliens
26 throughout the completion of applicable proceedings[.]” *Id.* at 302.

27 In *Shaughnessy v. United States ex rel. Mezei*, 345 U.S. 206, 207–09 (1953), a
28 noncitizen in exclusion proceedings filed a habeas petition claiming that their

1 prolonged detention without a hearing violated their constitutional rights. The Supreme
2 Court rejected the petition, concluding that the noncitizen's continued detention did
3 not deprive Petitioner of any due process rights, stating: "[A]n alien on the threshold
4 of initial entry stands on a different footing: 'Whatever the procedure authorized by
5 Congress is, it is due process as far as an alien denied entry is concerned.'" *Id.* at 212
6 (citation omitted).

7 In *Department of Homeland Security v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 138–40
8 (2020), the Supreme Court once again addressed the due process rights of inadmissible
9 arriving noncitizens seeking initial entry into the United States. The Supreme Court
10 stated that such individuals have no due process rights "other than those afforded by
11 statute." *Id.* at 107; *see also id.* at 140 ("[A]n alien in respondent's position has only
12 those rights regarding admission that Congress has provided by statute."). The
13 Supreme Court noted that its determination was supported by "more than a century of
14 precedent." *Id.* at 138 (citing *Nishimura Ekiu v. United States*, 142 U.S. 651, 660
15 (1892); *U.S. ex rel. Knauff v. Shaughnessy*, 338 U.S. 537, 544 (1950); *Mezei*, 345 U.S.
16 at 212; *Landon v. Plasencia*, 459 U.S. 21, 32 (1982)). Because the only process due
17 Petitioner is that afforded under section 1225(b), the Court must reject Petitioner's
18 claim that Petitioner's detention violates the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause
19 and deny the requested relief. *See Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. at 138–40; *Mendoza-*
20 *Linares*, 51 F.4th at 1167; *Rodriguez Diaz v. Garland*, 53 F.4th 1189, 1206 (9th Cir.
21 2022) ("The recognized liberty interests of U.S. citizens and aliens are not coextensive:
22 the Supreme Court has 'firmly and repeatedly endorsed the proposition that Congress
23 may make rules as to aliens that would be unacceptable if applied to citizens.'")
24 (quoting *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 522 (2003)); *Zelaya-Gonzalez*, 2023 WL
25 3103811, at *4 ("Binding Ninth Circuit and Supreme Court precedents are clear that
26 Petitioner lacks any rights beyond those conferred by statute, and no statute entitles
27 Petitioner to a bond hearing.").

28

1 Since the Supreme Court's decision in *Thuraissigiam*, numerous published
2 decisions have acknowledged *Thuraissigiam*'s impact on the precise Fifth Amendment
3 Due Process Clause that Petitioner might have raised in this petition: Does an alien
4 detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1) have a due process right to release or a bond
5 hearing after being detained for a certain period of time? The answer is no. *See*
6 *Mendoza-Linares v. Garland*, No. 21-cv-1169-BEN (AHG), 2024 WL 3316306, *2
7 (S.D. Cal. June 10, 2024) ("[T]he Court finds that Petitioner has no Fifth Amendment
8 right to a bond hearing pending his removal proceedings."); *Zelaya-Gonzalez*, 2023
9 WL 3103811. *3 (S.D. Cal. Apr. 25, 2023) (same); *Rodriguez Figueroa v. Garland*,
10 535 F. Supp. 3d 122, 126–27 (W.D.N.Y. 2021); *Gonzales Garcia v. Rosen*, 513 F.
11 Supp. 3d 329, 336 (W.D.N.Y. 2021); *St. Charles v. Barr*, 514 F. Supp. 3d 570, 579
12 (W.D.N.Y. 2021); *Petgrave v. Aleman*, 529 F. Supp. 3d 665, 667 (S.D. Tex. 2021).

13 Even if the Court infers a constitutional right against prolonged mandatory
14 detention, Petitioner's claim still fails. "In general, as detention continues past a year,
15 courts become extremely wary of permitting continued custody absent a bond hearing."
16 *Sibomana v. LaRose*, No. 22-cv-933-LL-NLS, 2023 WL 3028093, at *4 (S.D. Cal.
17 April 20, 2023) (citation omitted); *see also Durand v. Allen*, No. 3:23-cv-00279-RBM-
18 BGS, 2024 WL 711607, at *5 (S.D. Cal. Feb. 21, 2024) (detained over two-and-a-half
19 years); *Sanchez-Rivera v. Matuszewski*, No. 22-cv-1357-MMA (JLB), 2023 WL
20 139801, at *6 (S.D. Cal. Jan. 9, 2023) (three years); *Yagao v. Figueroa*,
21 No. 17-cv-2224-AJB-MDD, 2019 WL 1429582, at *2 (S.D. Cal. March 29, 2019) (two
22 years). Petitioner's detention falls significantly short of the length courts have found to
23 raise due process concerns.

24 In similar cases, courts in this district have applied the test in *Lopez v. Garland*,
25 631 F. Supp. 3d 870, 879 (E.D. Cal. 2022). *See, e.g., Sanchez-Rivera*, 2023 WL 139801,
26 at *5 ("[W]hile the *Mathews* [*v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319 (1976)] factors may be well-
27 suited to determining whether due process requires a second bond hearing, they are not
28 particularly dispositive of whether prolonged mandatory detention has become

1 unreasonable in a particular case.”); *D.D. v. LaRose, et al.*, Case No. 25-cv-02581-BJC-
2 JLB, ECF No. 10 at 7 (S.D. Cal. Oct. 22, 2025) (considering a similar claim and finding
3 “the three-factor balancing test from *Lopez* . . . provides an appropriate assessment of
4 the possible constitutional implications of Petitioner’s ongoing detention without
5 process.”).

6 Under *Lopez*, to determine whether continued mandatory detention has become
7 unreasonable, “the Court will look to the total length of detention to date, the likely
8 duration of future detention, and the delays in the removal proceedings caused by the
9 petitioner and the government.” 631 F. Supp. 3d at 879.

10 First, Petitioner has been detained for about 6 months. Courts in this district have
11 found detention for much longer periods to be unreasonably prolonged. *See Durand v.*
12 *Allen*, No. 3:23-cv-00279-RBM-BGS, 2024 WL 711607 at *5 (S.D. Cal. Feb. 21,
13 2024) (32 months); *Sibomana*, 2023 WL 3028093, at *4 (19 months); *Sanchez-Rivera*,
14 2023 WL 139801 at *6 (three years); *Kydyrali v. Wolf*, 499 F. Supp. 3d 768, 773 (S.D.
15 Cal. 2020) (27 months); *Yagao*, 2019 WL 1429582, at *1 (42 months). The length of
16 detention “is the most important factor.” *Sanchez-Rivera*, 2023 WL 139801, at *6
17 (citation omitted). And Petitioner’s current detention does not fall within the range
18 those courts have found to be unreasonable. Moreover, the length of Petitioner’s
19 detention, by itself, does not favor granting habeas relief. *See Sadeqi v. LaRose*, No.
20 25-cv-2587-RSH-BJW, 2025 WL 3154520, at *3 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 12, 2025) (“The
21 Court agrees with Respondents that the length of Petitioner’s detention to date—almost
22 12 months—does not by itself, without more, establish prolonged detention in violation
23 of due process.”). Not only does the length of Petitioner’s detention fall comparatively
24 short of the length courts in this district have found to warrant habeas relief, but the
25 other *Lopez* factors do not favor habeas relief either. Second, the likely duration of
26 future detention weighs against Petitioner. Petitioner’s individual merits hearing is
27 scheduled for June 2, 2026. *See* Exhibit 3. After the merits hearing, Petitioner’s path
28

1 to release or removal should be clear. Finally, there is no indication of any delay in the
2 removal proceedings on the part of the government.

3 Balancing the above factors, the record does not support a finding that “detention
4 has become so unreasonable as to require an initial bond hearing,” *Sanchez-Rivera*,
5 2023 WL 139801, at *6, or an order requiring Petitioner’s release.

6 Accordingly, Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention, which does not violate
7 due process. *See Markov v. LaRose*, No. 25-CV-3811 JLS (SBC), 2026 WL 92069 (S.D.
8 Cal. Jan. 13, 2026) (“Petitioner’s length of detention, without more, does not render his
9 detention unreasonable.”); *Duran Romero v. LaRose*, No. 25-cv-3567-AGS-VET, ECF
10 No. 7 (S.D. Cal. Jan. 14, 2026); *Shahin v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-2496-AGS-KSC, ECF No.
11 12 (S.D. Cal. Dec. 23, 2025); *Cordova Cordova*, No. 25-cv-2426-BAS-DDL, ECF No.
12 9 (S.D. Cal. Nov. 14, 2025); *Mendez Ramirez*, 612 F. Supp. 3d at 221; *Gonzalez Aguilar*
13 *v. Wolf*, 448 F. Supp. 3d at 1212; *de la Rosa Espinoza*, 2020 WL 3452967, at *6-8.

14 15 V. CONCLUSION

16 For the reasons stated herein, Respondents respectfully request that the Court
17 dismiss this petition for lack of jurisdiction or deny it on the merits.

18
19 Dated: May 20, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

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