

1 STEPTOE LLP

Michelle S. Kallen (CA SBN 271322)

mkallen@steptoe.com

2 Michel Paradis (NY SBN 4312443) (pro hac vice pending)

mparadis@steptoe.com

3 Jason Wright (VA SBN 68813) (pro hac vice pending)

jwright@steptoe.com

4 Patrick Fields (TX SBN 24146721) (pro hac vice pending)

pfields@steptoe.com

5 1330 Connecticut Ave, NW

Washington DC 20036

6 Tel.: (202) 429-6415

7 Fax: (202) 429-3902

Attorneys for Petitioner

8 REY DENZO KAZEMI

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

11 REY DENZO KAZEMI,

12
13 Petitioner,

14 vs.

15 JEREMY CASEY, in his official capacity
16 as Warden of the Imperial Regional
17 Detention Facility; et al.

18 Respondents.

Case No.: 3:25-cv-01926-DMS-DEB

**PETITIONER REY DENZO
KAZEMI'S REPLY IN SUPPORT OF
HIS MOTION FOR (1)
TEMPORARY RESTRAINING
ORDER AND (2) ORDER TO SHOW
CAUSE RE PRELIMINARY
INJUNCTION**

Judicial Officer: Hon. Dana M. Sabraw
Courtroom number: 13A
Hearing Date/Time: August 6, 2025 at
2:30 p.m.

28 **PETITIONER'S REPLY ISO MOTION FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING
ORDER AND ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE RE PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

Case No. 3:25-cv-01926-DMS-DEB

1 **I. Preliminary Statement**

2 For the past seventeen years, Mr. Kazemi has lived and worked under an
3 Order of Supervision 1) because Respondents determined that he could not be
4 deported to Iran under the Convention Against Torture (“CAT”) and 2) because
5 “there is no significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future.”
6 *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 701 (2001); Kazemi Decl. (Dkt. 2-2) ¶ 6. Those
7 facts were true each time Mr. Kazemi appeared for his annual check-in with ICE
8 under the Order of Supervision. Kazemi Decl. (Dkt. 2-2) ¶ 8. And those facts remain
9 true — and uncontested — today.

10 Respondents contend Mr. Kazemi’s re-detention is lawful under the
11 President’s recent instruction to the Secretary of State to “take all appropriate action
12 to facilitate additional international cooperation” in carrying out third-country
13 removals and a new ICE policy directing officials to “review [the cases of non-
14 detained non-citizens] to determine the viability of removal to a third country and
15 accordingly whether the alien should be re-detained.” Resp. (Dkt 12) at 4-5. But
16 neither the President’s executive order, nor ICE’s directive, mandate that individuals
17 be re-detained *before* their removal to a third country becomes viable. Detention is,
18 by definition, “arbitrary” and “indefinite” if its nature and duration are contingent
19 upon something Respondents might or might not try to do over an unspecified period
20 of time.

21 Crucially, even now, Respondents cannot represent that Mr. Kazemi’s removal
22 is viable. To the contrary, when ICE finally met with Mr. Kazemi nearly a month
23 after his arrest (and only *after* Respondents were on notice of this litigation), ICE
24 informed him that it has nowhere to send him and has, in fact, failed to find removal
25 options for over 80% of similarly situated Iranians. Second Kazemi Decl. ¶¶ 3-7. If
26 “significant likelihood” and “reasonably foreseeable” have any meaning, they must
27 mean better odds than rolling doubles. And under Respondents own regulations, re-

1 detention “to enforce a removal order” is not proper if removal is entirely
2 speculative. 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(l)(2)(iii).

3 More damning than what Mr. Kazemi knew at the time he filed his habeas
4 petition is what ICE told him after it got around to contacting him last week. Not
5 only is there a less than 1-in-5 chance ICE can find a country willing to accept Mr.
6 Kazemi, ICE’s policy is to arrest non-citizens protected under the Convention
7 Against Torture and hold them for six months regardless of whether removal is
8 possible, and only then, after six months, to seek release authority from ICE
9 headquarters in Washington. At its core, Respondents’ position is that ICE can detain
10 individuals for six months on the pretext that it *might* find a third country to which it
11 *might* remove them, and if it does not, it will *possibly* release them, all while
12 reserving the right to re-arrest them upon release to endure the entire Kafka-esq
13 process again.

14 Mr. Kazemi is likely to prevail on the merits because such an arbitrary abuse
15 of ICE’s detention authority violates its own regulations, statutes, and fundamental
16 due process. And Respondents, for their part, do not even attempt to address the
17 authorities cited in Mr. Kazemi’s briefing or explain why this Court should break
18 new ground in its favor. Instead, Respondents repackage template arguments that
19 respond to claims Mr. Kazemi is not making.

20 Lest there be any doubt, Mr. Kazemi is making a single argument. His release
21 from detention is compelled because: 1) ICE has no authority to re-detain an
22 individual who has been released on an Order of Supervision unless doing so is
23 “appropriate to *enforce* a removal order” 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(l)(2)(iii); 2) for such
24 detention to be “appropriate,” there must be a “significant likelihood of removal in
25 the reasonably foreseeable future,” *Zadvaydas*, 533 U.S. at 701; and 3) to lawfully
26 enforce such a removal order, ICE must comply with its own procedural regulations.
27 *United States ex rel. Accardi v. Shaughnessy*, 347 U.S. 260, 267 (1954).

1 Respondents do not dispute these basic principles. Instead, they openly flout
2 them and twist *Zadvydas*' default presumption that more than six-months of
3 detention is presumptively unreasonable into *the reason* Mr. Kazemi's re-detention
4 for at least six months is proper. Under the purported cover of *Zadvydas*, ICE intends
5 to keep Mr. Kazemi detained for as long as possible even though it currently has no
6 ability to remove him and no indication of an imminent ability to remove him.

7 The arbitrariness and illegality of Mr. Kazemi's detention is indisputable. This
8 Court should grant Mr. Kazemi's Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and
9 Order to Show Cause re Preliminary Injunction (Dkt. 2). As set forth in the
10 Memorandum of Law in support of the Motion (Dkt. 2-1), Mr. Kazemi is certain to
11 prevail on the merits, he will suffer irreparable harm if injunctive relief is denied, and
12 the public interest strongly favors his immediate release.

13 **II. Factual developments regarding Mr. Kazemi's detention**

14 **A. Executive Order 14165 and subsequent ICE Directive**

15 Respondents point to Executive Order 14165, issued on January 20, 2025, and
16 a subsequent ICE directive as the moving force behind Mr. Kazemi's sudden
17 detention despite no imminent potential for removal. Together, Respondents say,
18 these documents "encourag[e] the increased use of third-country removals against
19 individuals granted CAT protection" and instruct ICE officers that they "should
20 review the case to determine the viability of removal to a third country and
21 accordingly whether the alien should be re-detained." Resp. (Dkt 12) at 5.
22 Respondents specify — for the first time since detaining Mr. Kazemi nearly a month
23 ago — that, pursuant to these policies, the reason for Mr. Kazemi's re-detention is
24 solely "to execute the removal order by resettling [him] in a third country." *Id.* at 13.
25 Nowhere, however, do Respondents identify any third country or suggest any
26 prospect of identifying a third country.

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1 First, Mr. Kazemi has not received proper notice “of the reasons for
2 revocation,” including the specific basis for revocation and the “specific . . .
3 circumstances to support the[] assertions.” *Perez-Escobar v. Moniz*, No. 25-cv-
4 11781-PBS, 2025 WL 2084102 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025); Kazemi Memo. (Dkt. 2-1)
5 at 10. Respondents do not address this omission or attempt to explain themselves.
6 Instead, they say, “Petitioner and his counsel are [] *well aware* of the reason for
7 Petitioner’s re-detention, namely to execute the removal order by resettling [him] in a
8 third country.” Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 13 (emphasis added).

9 Contrary to Respondents’ representation, until counsel received a copy of their
10 brief over the weekend, Petitioner and his counsel could only speculate as to why
11 Mr. Kazemi’s release was suddenly revoked after almost 20 years. What is more,
12 even now, Respondents fail to explain their authority, citing only in passing the
13 provision of § 241.4(l)(2) that authorizes re-detention when “appropriate to enforce a
14 removal order.” Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 8. Even with such an eleventh-hour rationale in
15 this Court, though, Respondents still provide no specifics as to how they are
16 “enforcing” the order of removal, because as Respondents themselves recognize, Mr.
17 Kazemi does not have travel documents. Nor do Respondents contend that they have
18 anywhere to send him. Second Kazemi Decl. ¶¶ 3-8. Nowhere do Respondents
19 explain how it is “appropriate” to detain Mr. Kazemi pending something they might
20 or might not try to do in the indefinite future.

21 Second, Respondents have still not provided Mr. Kazemi with the “initial
22 informal interview” the regulations require “promptly” upon re-detention.
23 § 241.4(l)(1). Incredibly, Respondents note that the ICE directive under which they
24 detained Mr. Kazemi instructs them to provide this interview *within two days of re-*
25 *detention*. Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 5. On July 30 — some three weeks after Mr. Kazemi
26 was detained and only after he filed suit in this Court — ICE finally dispatched
27 Officer Gonzalez to speak with Mr. Kazemi. *See* Second Kazemi Decl.; *see also*

1 Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 2, 7, 12-14. Far from conducting the § 241.4 interview, Officer
2 Gonzalez merely asked Mr. Kazemi about his background and informed him that
3 ICE intended to detain him until it could find a third county for removal. Second
4 Kazemi Decl. ¶¶ 3-8. Respondents acknowledge Officer Gonzalez’s interaction with
5 Mr. Kazemi, but they do not offer any explanation for how it satisfied § 241.4. Resp.
6 (Dkt. 12) at 2, 7, 12-14.

7 Third, Respondents have not given Mr. Kazemi “an opportunity to respond to
8 the reasons for revocation.” § 241.4(l)(1). The minimum due process requires is an
9 “opportunity to be heard at a meaningful time and in a meaningful manner” in which
10 the non-citizen can “present pertinent information.” *Villa-Anguina v. Holder*, 727
11 F.3d 873, 881 (9th Cir. 2013). ICE’s own regulations require this opportunity to
12 happen “promptly,” which again, ICE’s directive characterizes as *within two days* of
13 re-detention. § 241.4(l)(1); Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 5. Nowhere in their brief, not even
14 while explaining the conversation with Officer Gonzalez, do Respondents assert Mr.
15 Kazemi has had an opportunity to respond to the reasons for revocation. After having
16 spent nearly a month in ICE detention, Mr. Kazemi has still had no opportunity to
17 respond to the reasons for revocation.

18 **B. Mr. Kazemi’s detention violates the Supreme Court’s clear**
19 **directive that immigration detainees may only be held for “a period**
20 **reasonably necessary to bring about the alien’s removal.”**

21 In *Zadvydas*, the Supreme Court held that 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(6) (ICE’s
22 authority for holding Mr. Kazemi) “limits an alien’s . . . detention to a period
23 reasonably necessary to bring about that alien’s removal. . . . It does not permit
24 indefinite detention.” 533 U.S. at 689. Where “there is no significant likelihood of
25 removal in the reasonably foreseeable future,” detention is unlawful. *Id.*

26 Respondents invert *Zadvydas*’ default presumption that more than six-months
27 of detention following an order of removal is presumptively unreasonable into *the*

1 *reason* Mr. Kazemi’s re-detention is proper. Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 12-13. *Zadvydas* held,
2 however, that six-months of detention with no significant likelihood of removal in
3 the reasonably foreseeable future is a presumptive ceiling, not a floor. And indefinite,
4 arbitrary detention past an initial 90-day removal period (which expired long ago in
5 Mr. Kazemi’s case) is not reasonable if there is no significant likelihood of removal
6 in the reasonably foreseeable future. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 701.

7 Respondents are not entitled to a six-month judicial-review-free detention
8 period each time they re-arrest an individual. To hold otherwise would be to create a
9 truly absurd and Kafka-esq process of indefinite detention, under which Respondents
10 may hold an individual for six months, release them for a day, and then re-detain
11 them for another six months. *See also Sied v. Nielsen*, No. 17-cv-06785, 2018 WL
12 1876907, at *6 (N.D. Cal. Apr. 19, 2018) (noting courts around the country “have
13 held that the six-month period does not reset when the government detains an alien . .
14 . releases him from detention, and then re-detains him again.”). Not only would that
15 be precisely the kind of “indefinite” detention *Zadvydas* condemned, but it would
16 also violate the core principle that the law should not be interpreted to “lead to
17 injustice, oppression, or an absurd consequence.” *United States v. Kirby*, 74 U.S.
18 482, 486 (1868).

19 As Officer Gonzalez explained to Mr. Kazemi, ICE apparently intends to keep
20 him for up to 180 days although it has nowhere to send him and cannot find third-
21 country removal options for 80% of Iranians protected by CAT. Second Kazemi
22 Decl. ¶¶ 3-8. Respondents’ brief echoes this, noting “detention is presumptively
23 reasonable up to six months . . . ICE has lawfully re-detained [Mr. Kazemi] . . . and
24 that re-detention occurred less than one month ago.” Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 13. In other
25 words, using the purported cover of the six-month rule, ICE intends to keep Mr.
26 Kazemi detained for as long as possible even though it currently has no ability to
27 remove him, no indication of an imminent ability to remove him, and affirmative

1 knowledge that it will never be able to remove some 80% of similarly situated
2 individuals. Detaining Mr. Kazemi in these conditions is the definition of arbitrary
3 detention that violates § 1231 and due process.

4 Respondents' tortured reading of *Zadvydas* conflicts with their own
5 regulations. The Supreme Court set down *Zadvydas*' six-month rule "for the sake of
6 uniform administration in the federal courts." *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 701. As one
7 federal district court put it, the rule is simply "a tool to 'guide lower court[s].'"
8 *Munoz-Saucedo v. Pittman*, No. 25-2258, 2025 WL 1750346, at *6 (D.N.J. June 24,
9 2025) (alteration in original). "To hold otherwise would condone detention in cases
10 where removal is not reasonably foreseeable or even functionally impossible, as long
11 as it did not exceed six months." *Id.* That is exactly what Respondents claim an
12 entitlement to do here.

13 Additionally, when a non-citizen is released due to no significant likelihood of
14 removal, ICE regulations only permit re-detention when there are "changed
15 circumstances" making removal imminent. 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i). That is, in normal
16 circumstances, ICE's own reading of *Zadvydas* does not give it carte blanche to
17 detain non-citizens when removal is not likely. And Respondents have pointed to no
18 "changed circumstances" here other than an executive order and ICE directive that
19 generally seek to rally ICE to try harder in pursuing third-country removals.

20 **C. Respondents' contention that Mr. Kazemi will not suffer**
21 **irreparable harm because he was previously imprisoned is absurd.**

22 While detained, Mr. Kazemi's business continues to deteriorate, and he is
23 unable to care for his elderly mother, who recently suffered a stroke and lives with
24 and is cared for by Mr. Kazemi. Respondents do not challenge that these are, in fact,
25 significant harms inflicted upon Mr. Kazemi and his family due to his detention.
26 Instead, Respondents suggest this Court should entirely discount such harms, arguing
27 that, though "Petitioner . . . contends that detention adversely impacts his ability to

1 work and care for his mother,” such harms do not matter because they are “the same
2 hardships that he suffered when he served time for his various criminal offenses.
3 Resp. (Dkt. 12) at 15. Not only do Respondents fail to cite authority for their
4 proposition that endured past harms justifies the imposition of current harms, their
5 position defies common sense. Simply because Mr. Kazemi was incarcerated years
6 ago does not mean he suffers no irreparable harm from incarceration now.

7 **IV. Conclusion**

8 Mr. Kazemi is likely to prevail on the merits, and as set forth in the
9 Memorandum of Law in support of his Motion (Dkt. 2-1), he will suffer irreparable
10 harm if injunctive relief is denied, and the public interest strongly favors his
11 immediate release. This Court should grant his Motion without delay.

12
13 **STEPTOE LLP**

Dated: August 4, 2025

/s/Michelle S. Kallen

Michelle S. Kallen

Michel Paradis

Jason Wright

Patrick Fields

Attorneys for Petitioner Rey Denzo Kazemi

STEPTOE LLP

Michelle S. Kallen (CA SBN 271322)

mkallen@steptoe.com

Michel Paradis (NY SBN 4312443) (pro hac vice pending)

mparadis@steptoe.com

Jason Wright (VA SBN 68813) (pro hac vice pending)

jwright@steptoe.com

Patrick Fields (TX SBN 24146721) (pro hac vice pending)

pfields@steptoe.com

1330 Connecticut Ave, NW

Washington DC 20036

Tel.: (202) 429-6415

Fax: (202) 429-3902

Attorneys for Petitioner

REY DENZO KAZEMI

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

REY DENZO KAZEMI,

Petitioner,

vs.

JEREMY CASEY, in his official capacity
as Warden of the Imperial Regional
Detention Facility; et al.

Respondents.

Case No.: 3:25-cv-01926-DMS-DEB

**PETITIONER'S EXHIBIT IN
SUPPORT OF REPLY IN SUPPORT
OF HIS MOTION FOR (1)
TEMPORARY RESTRAINING
ORDER AND (2) ORDER TO SHOW
CAUSE RE PRELIMINARY
INJUNCTION**

Judicial Officer: Hon. Dana M. Sabraw
Courtroom number: 13A
Hearing Date/Time: August 6, 2025 at
2:30 p.m.

INDEX OF EXHIBITS

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Second Declaration of Rey Denzo Kazemi	1

1 STEPTOE LLP
Michelle S. Kallen (CA SBN 271322)
2 mkallen@steptoe.com
Michel Paradis (NY SBN 4312443) (pro hac vice pending)
3 mparadis@steptoe.com
Jason Wright (VA SBN 68813) (pro hac vice pending)
4 jwright@steptoe.com
Patrick Fields (TX SBN 24146721) (pro hac vice pending)
5 pfields@steptoe.com
1330 Connecticut Ave, NW
6 Washington DC 20036
7 Tel.: (202) 429-6415
Fax: (202) 429-3902

8 *Attorneys for Petitioner*
9 REY DENZO KAZEMI

10 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
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16 as Warden of the Imperial Regional
Detention Facility; et al.

17 Respondents.
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19
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21
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Case No.: 3:25-cv-01926-DMS-DEB

**SECOND DECLARATION OF REY
DENZO KAZEMI IN SUPPORT OF
MOTIONS FOR A TEMPORARY
RESTRAINING ORDER AND A
PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

Judicial Officer: Hon. Dana M. Sabraw
Courtroom number: 13A
Hearing Date/Time: August 6, 2025 at
2:30 p.m.

1 I, Rey Denzo Kazemi, hereby declare as follows:

2 1. My name is Rey Denzo Kazemi (f/k/a Reza Zanjani Kazemi). I am over
3 the age of 21, of sound mind, capable of making this Declaration, and personally
4 acquainted with the facts herein stated.

5 2. On July 30, 2025, Officer Adrian Gonzalez, an ICE officer stationed at
6 the San Diego Field Office, Calexico Sub Office, spoke with me regarding my
7 detention and ICE's efforts to remove me from the United States.

8 3. Officer Gonzalez asked me about my background and family
9 connections to Iran. He also informed me that ICE does not intend to remove me to
10 Iran and is currently trying to find a third country to which it can remove me.

11 4. Officer Gonzalez explained that, under ICE policy, ICE will seek to
12 remove me to a third country for 90 days and detain me during these 90 days. If
13 ICE is unable to remove me within 90 days, the ICE field office can request
14 authority from ICE headquarters in Washington D.C. to release me.

15 5. Officer Gonzalez, however, stated that authority to release after 90 days
16 has not been forthcoming from ICE headquarters and that detentions are being
17 extended for another 90 days. In such a case, if ICE cannot find a third country to
18 take me within 90 days, my detention would continue for another 90 days.

19 6. If ICE cannot remove me to a third country within 180 days, Officer
20 Gonzalez explained, the field office will recommend release to ICE headquarters.
21
22

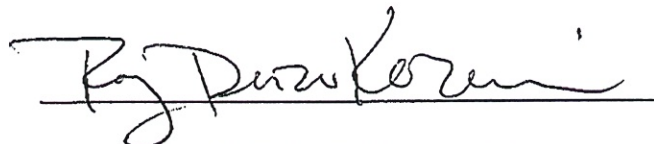
1 7. I asked Officer Gonzalez about ICE's history in securing third countries
2 to accept Iranians. Officer Gonzalez responded that ICE is not able to find a third
3 country for over 80% of Iranians protected by CAT because third countries refuse to
4 take Iranians.

5 8. At this time, I have no indication of being removed or released within
6 180 days from my re-detention on July 10, 2025. As Officer Gonzalez explained,
7 ICE currently has nowhere to send me, and given its history of Iranians protected by
8 CAT, ICE will likely never find anywhere to send me. Despite this, it appears ICE
9 intends to keep me detained for at least 180 days while it seeks a third country to
10 which it can remove me.

11 9. I was previously in ICE custody for approximately two months prior to
12 being released under the 2008 Order of Supervision.

13 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the
14 foregoing is true and correct.
15

16
17 Executed this 4th day of August 2025.

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20 

21 REY DENZO KAZEMI