

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN**

YOHANDER JOSE LEON LOPEZ

Petitioner,

v.

ROBERT LYNCH, Detroit Field Office Director for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, in his official capacity; TODD LYONS, Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, in his official capacity; and KRISTI NOEM, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in her official capacity,

Respondents.

Case No. 1:25-cv-1379

**VERIFIED PETITION FOR WRIT OF  
HABEAS CORPUS AND COMPLAINT  
FOR DECLARATORY AND  
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Petitioner Yohander Jose Leon Lopez, a national of Venezuela, is unlawfully detained in the physical and legal custody of Respondents at the North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin, Michigan.

2. The Petitioner was unlawfully detained by Respondents without cause and without a warrant outside of his home in Chicago, Illinois on or about October 18, 2025, in violation of a consent decree, which precludes warrantless arrests of immigrants within the jurisdiction of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) Chicago Field Office. ICE is an agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”).

3. The Department of Justice’s Executive Office of Immigration Review (“EOIR”) has issued precedential decisions of the Board of Immigration Appeals (“BIA”) that purport to

unlawfully subject the Petitioner to indefinite, mandatory detention in violation of his Due Process rights under the Constitution, and in violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”).

4. Subsequent to his unlawful detention in Chicago, Illinois on October 18, 2025, Petitioner was transferred by the Respondents to the North Lake Processing Center, which ICE operates through a contract with The GEO Group, Inc., a company which operates private, for-profit prisons.

5. At the time of his warrantless arrest and detention, Petitioner had a pending asylum application, **[Exhibit 1, Evidence of Pending Asylum Application]**, a future pending immigration court date of January 15, 2026, **[Exhibit 2, Notice of Preliminary Hearing]**, and a valid and current employment authorization document **[Exhibit 3, Employment Authorization Document]**.

6. The Petitioner has complied with everything required of him by the Government since his initial entry and conditional parole into the United States. It is unclear at this moment why Respondents have subjected the Petitioner to detention; however, in any case, Respondents’ detention of Petitioner is unlawful.

7. Petitioner has no criminal history in the United States or anywhere else in the world and has participated fully and actively in pursuing relief under the laws of this country. Yet on October 18, 2025, on information and belief, Respondents detained the Petitioner without cause and without a warrant outside of his home in violation of the consent decree in *Castañon Nava et al. v. Dep’t of Homeland Security et al.*, No. 18-cv-3757-RRP in the Northern District of Illinois.

8. Counsel for the Petitioner reported the Petitioner’s detention to class counsel on Wednesday, November 5, 2025 as a violation of the consent decree in that ongoing litigation.

9. Respondents have detained the Petitioner based not on his personal circumstances or individualized facts but because of Respondents' incorrect categorical determination that, the Fifth Amendment notwithstanding, noncitizens are not entitled to due process of law.<sup>1</sup>

10. But Respondents cannot evade the law so easily. The U.S. Constitution requires the Respondents provide Petitioner at minimum with the rights available to Petitioner when Petitioner filed an application for asylum after releasing him into the United States and instituting full proceedings in immigration court.

11. To the extent that the Respondents intend to subject the Petitioner to indefinite, mandatory detention throughout the remainder of all his proceedings in the United States based on the BIA's recent precedential decisions in *Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 66, 69 (BIA 2025) (holding that "all noncitizens who fall within the scope of 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1) (arriving aliens) must be detained under that section and are "ineligible for any subsequent release on bond" under § 1226(a)" and to oppose bond before the Immigration Judge (IJ) pursuant to *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I & N Dec. 216, 229 (BIA 2025) (holding that IJs have no jurisdiction to consider bond for persons charged as "arriving aliens" in removal proceedings), Petitioner's detention is unlawful, in violation of his Due Process rights and the INA.

12. Any characterization of Petitioner's status as an "arriving alien" pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) and his detention without bond by ICE, an agency within DHS, is in violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., NBC News, Meet the Press interview of President Donald Trump (May 4, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/trump-administration/read-full-transcript-president-donald-trump-interviewed-meet-press-mod-rcna203514> (in response to a question whether noncitizens deserve due process under the Fifth Amendment, President Trump replied "I don't know. It seems—it might say that, but if you're talking about that, then we'd have to have a million or 2 million or 2 million trials.").

13. Accordingly, to vindicate Petitioner's rights, this Court should grant the instant petition for a writ of habeas corpus. Petitioner asks this Court: (a) to find that Respondents' attempts to detain and transfer Petitioner are arbitrary and capricious and in violation of the law; (b) to immediately issue an order preventing Petitioner's transfer out of this district; and (c) to order either a bond hearing before an immigration judge or to order the Respondent's immediate release from detention, or, in the alternative, to show cause in writing within three (3) days why the writ of habeas corpus and other relief requested in the petition should not be granted.

#### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

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

15. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(5) (habeas corpus), 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA"), 8 U.S.C. §§ 1101–1537, regulations implementing the INA, the Administrative Procedure Act ("APA"), 5 U.S.C. §§ 701–706, and Article I, section 9, clause 2 of the United States Constitution (the Suspension Clause).

16. This Court may grant relief under the habeas corpus statutes, 28 U.S.C. § 2241 et. seq., the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201 et. seq., the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1651, and the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(e)(2).

17. The federal government has waived its sovereign immunity and permitted judicial review of agency action under 5 U.S.C. § 702. In addition, sovereign immunity does not bar claims against federal officials that seek to prevent violations of federal law (rather than provide monetary relief).

18. Venue is proper because Petitioner is detained in Respondents' custody at the North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin, Michigan. The federal district courts have jurisdiction to hear

habeas corpus claims by noncitizens challenging the lawfulness or constitutionality of their immigration detention. *See, e.g., Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 516-17 (2003); *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 687 (2001).

19. Venue is further proper because Respondents are employees, officers, and agencies of the United States, and because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred in the Western District of Michigan.

20. Pursuant to *Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court of Kentucky*, 410 U.S. 484, 493-500 (1973), venue lies in the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan, the judicial district in which the Petitioner is currently detained.

#### **REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2243**

21. Courts have long recognized the significance of the habeas statute in protecting individuals from unlawful detention. The Great Writ has been referred to as “perhaps the most important writ known to the constitutional law of England, 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).

22. There is no statutory exhaustion requirement in 28 U.S.C. § 2241. In the absence of a statutory exhaustion requirement, “prudential” exhaustion may be judicially required. *Island Creek Coal Co. v. Bryan*, 937 F.3d 738, 746 (6th Cir. 2019). Whether or not to require prudential exhaustion falls within this Honorable Court’s sound judicial discretion, provided that such discretionary requirement complies with statutory schemes and the intent of Congress. *See Shearson v. Holder*, 725 F.3d 588, 593-594 (6th Cir. 2013) (internal citation/quotation omitted).

23. The United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit has not yet issued a precedential decision as to whether courts or not should impose administrative exhaustion in the

context of a noncitizen's habeas petition for unlawful mandatory detention. *See, e.g., Jose O. Puerto-Hernandez v. Robert Lynch, et al.*, No. 25-1097, 2025 WL 3012033 (W.D. Mich. Oct. 28, 2025) (internal citations omitted).

24. As noted above, the precedential decisions issued by the BIA in *Matter of Q. Li* and *Matter of Yajure-Hurtado* stand for the proposition that the Petitioner is subject to indefinite, mandatory detention and is ineligible for a bond hearing before an immigration judge.

25. The BIA's precedential decisions "serve as precedents in all proceedings involving the same issue or issues." 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.1(g)(2), (d)(1). Therefore, requiring the Petitioner to seek a bond hearing and, when denied, appeal that denial to the BIA will certainly result in a holding that anyone who is deemed "[a]n alien present in the United States without being admitted or paroled," will be subjected to mandatory detention without bond under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).

26. Moreover, the fundamental question presented by this petition is whether 8 U.S.C. § 1225 or 8 U.S.C. § 1226 applies to the Petitioner's detention, which is a purely legal question of statutory interpretation which would not be impacted by any administrative record developed in immigration court or on appeal to the BIA.

27. This Honorable Court is not bound by and is not required to give deference to any agency interpretation of a statute. *See Loper Bright Enter. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 413 (2024) (holding that federal judges are not required to, and pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (the "APA"), are not to defer to an agency interpretation of the law simply because a statute is ambiguous, as that is the role of the federal courts).

28. Finally, the Petitioner's constitutional challenge to his detention does not require exhaustion. The Sixth Circuit has noted that due process challenges, such as the one raised by

Petitioner here, generally do not require exhaustion because the BIA cannot review constitutional challenges. *See Sterkaj v. Gonzalez*, 439 F.3d 273, 279 (6th Cir. 2006).

29. Thus, requiring prudential exhaustion is a futile exercise, and will only result in the extended, unlawful detention of the Petitioner.

30. The Court must grant the petition for writ of habeas corpus or issue an order to show cause (OSC) to the Respondents “forthwith,” unless the petitioner is not entitled to relief. 28 U.S.C. § 2243. If an OSC is issued, the Court must require Respondents to file a return “within three days unless for good cause additional time, not exceeding twenty days, is allowed.” *Id.*

31. Petitioner is “in custody” for the purpose of § 2241 because Petitioner is arrested and detained by Respondents.

## PARTIES

32. Petitioner Yohander Jose Leon Lopez is a pending applicant for asylum pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1158 and is a citizen and national of Venezuela. Petitioner entered the United States through the southern border and was released on or about September 17, 2023. On August 05, 2024, Petitioner’s asylum application was received by the Immigration Court in Chicago, Illinois. At the time of his unlawful arrest, Petitioner had a pending in-person hearing scheduled at the Chicago Immigration Court on January 15, 2026. Petitioner is present within the Western District of Michigan as of the time of filing this petition, as he is currently detained at the North Lake Processing Facility in Baldwin, Michigan.

33. Respondent Robert Lynch is the Director of the Detroit Field Office of ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations division, a component of the Department of Homeland Security. As such, he is Petitioner’s immediate custodian for purposes of habeas and is responsible

for Petitioner's detention and removal. *See Roman v. Ashcroft*, 340 F.3d 314 (6th Cir. 2003). He is sued in his official capacity.

34. Respondent Todd Lyons is the Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the federal agency responsible for implementing and enforcing the INA, including the detention and removal of noncitizens, and a component agency of the Department of Homeland Security.

35. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. She is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and oversees ICE, which is responsible for Petitioner's detention. Ms. Noem has ultimate custodial authority over Petitioner and is sued in her official capacity.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Asylum and Refugee Law**

36. The Refugee Act of 1980, the cornerstone of the U.S. asylum system, provides a right to apply for asylum to individuals seeking safe haven in the United States. The purpose of the Refugee Act is to enforce the "historic policy of the United States to respond to the urgent needs of persons subject to persecution in their homelands." Refugee Act of 1980, § 101(a), Pub. L. No. 96-212, 94 Stat. 102 (1980).

37. The "motivation for the enactment of the Refugee Act" was the United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, "to which the United States had been bound since 1968." *INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421, 424, 432-33 (1987). The Refugee Act reflects a legislative purpose "to give 'statutory meaning to our national commitment to human rights and humanitarian concerns.'" *Duran v. INS*, 756 F.2d 1338, 1340 n.2 (9th Cir. 1985).

38. The Refugee Act established the right to apply for asylum in the United States and defines the standards for granting asylum. It is codified in various sections of the INA.

39. The INA gives the Attorney General or the Secretary of Homeland Security discretion to grant asylum to noncitizens who satisfy the definition of “refugee.” Under that definition, individuals generally are eligible for asylum if they have experienced past persecution or have a well-founded fear of future persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion and if they are unable or unwilling to return to and avail themselves of the protection of their homeland because of that persecution or fear. 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(42)(A).

40. Although a grant of asylum may be discretionary, the right to apply for asylum is not. The Refugee Act broadly affords a right to apply for asylum to any noncitizen “who is physically present in the United States or who arrives in the United States[.]” 8 U.S.C. § 1158(a)(1).

41. Because of the life-or-death stakes, the statutory right to apply for asylum is robust. The right necessarily includes the right to counsel, at no expense to the government, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1229a(b)(4)(A), § 1362, the right to notice of the right to counsel, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1158(d)(4), and the right to access information in support of an application, *see* § 1158(b)(1)(B) (placing the burden on the applicant to present evidence to establish eligibility.).

42. Noncitizens seeking asylum are guaranteed Due Process under the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. *Reno v. Flores*, 507 U.S. 292, 306 (1993).

43. Noncitizens who are applicants for asylum are entitled to a full hearing in immigration court before they can be removed from the United States. 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. Consistent with due process, noncitizens may seek administrative appellate review before the

Board of Immigration Appeals of removal orders entered against them and judicial review in federal court upon a petition for review. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a) *et seq.*

***Castañon Nava Consent Decree***

44. The Petitioner in this case is a *Castañon Nava* class member.

45. In May 2018, persons arrested by ICE and impacted organizations, including the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (“ICIRR”) and Organized Communities Against Deportation (“OCAD”), challenged ICE’s widespread, indiscriminate immigration sweeps in the Chicago area, which resulted in the collateral arrest of hundreds of individuals through warrantless arrests and pretextual vehicle stops, in *Castañon Nava et al. v. Dep’t of Homeland Security et al.*, No. 18-cv-3757 (N.D. Ill.), arguing that ICE failed to comply with immigration law and the constitution in carrying out these arrests.

46. After the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois denied the government’s motion to dismiss, the parties negotiated a settlement, which was approved on February 8, 2022. The settlement took effect on May 13, 2022 and remains in effect until February 2, 2026, and may be extended given recent violations of the settlement agreement.

47. “Class members” covered by the settlement agreement are persons who have been arrested, or are arrested in the future, without a warrant within the jurisdiction of the ICE Chicago Field Office, consisting of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Missouri, Kentucky, and Kansas, with additional terms of the agreement applying nationwide, such as training and documentation requirements.

48. If a class member is arrested in a manner that violates the settlement in the Chicago Area of Responsibility—which includes in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas, Kentucky, and

Missouri— they may be able to seek individual remedies—including immediate release from detention.

49. Under the settlement agreement, ICE was required to issue a **nationwide policy** regarding warrantless arrests and vehicle stops, share that policy with all ICE officers, and train them on its requirements.

50. Under the policy, ICE **must** document the facts and circumstances surrounding a warrantless arrest or vehicle stop in the individual’s arresting documentation, called an I-213, including whether the individual was arrested without an administrative warrant; the location of the arrest (e.g., place of business, residence, vehicle, or a public area); if arrested at a business, whether the individual is an employee of the business; if arrested at a residence, whether the person resides at that place of residence; ties to the community, if known at the time of arrest, including family, home, or employment; the specific, particularized facts supporting the conclusion that the individual was likely to escape before a warrant could be obtained; and a statement of how the ICE officers identified themselves as ICE and “state[d] that the person is under arrest and the reason for the arrest.” With respect to vehicle stops, ICE must also document specific facts that formed the basis for its reasonable suspicion that a person in the vehicle did not have legal status.

51. On information and belief, the Respondents’ arrest of the Petitioner violated the settlement agreement in Castañon Nava, and the Petitioner’s arrest has been reported to class counsel. Under the terms of the settlement, in the event of a violation and arrest contrary to the terms of the agreement, a class member must be released from ICE custody as soon as practicable, without paying a bond or being subject to conditions of release.

52. Immigration detention should not be used as a punishment and should only be used when, under an individualized determination, a noncitizen is a flight risk because they are unlikely

to appear for immigration court or a danger to the community. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001).

#### **Release and Indefinite, Mandatory Detention**

53. On July 8, 2025, ICE issued interim guidance instructing all ICE employees to consider anyone charged with inadmissibility under § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i)—i.e., those who entered the United States without inspection—to be an “applicant for admission” under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and therefore subject to mandatory detention. The July 8, 2025 DHS policy memorandum states it was issued “in coordination with the Department of Justice (DOJ).”

**[Exhibit 4, July 8, 2025 ICE Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Applications for Admission]**

54. On information and belief, Petitioner’s Notice to Appear charges him with inadmissibility pursuant to INA § 212(a)(6)(A)(i), codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i). Therefore, based on the Respondents’ July 8, 2025 ICE Guidance, the Petitioner is purportedly subject to indefinite, mandatory detention. However, whether or not Respondents are correct turns on what provision of law governs Petitioner’s detention.

55. As this Honorable Court has jurisdiction over this Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus, it must next determine whether the Petitioner’s detention is governed by the mandatory detention provisions in 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) or the discretionary detention provisions in 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

56. Noncitizens detained under Section 1225(b)(2) must remain in custody for the duration of their removal proceedings, while those detained under Section 1226(a) are entitled to a bond hearing before an IJ at any time before entry of a final removal order.” *See Rodriguez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1247 (W.D. Wash. 2025).

57. Since July 8, 2025, Respondents have begun widespread arrests and detentions of persons such as the Petitioner, who entered the U.S. without inspection and have been present for years. Respondents now take the position that persons in Petitioner's situation are "applicants for admission" and therefore subject to indefinite, mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).

58. To the contrary, the Petitioner is detained pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

59. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1) provides that a noncitizen "present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States . . . shall be deemed for purposes of this chapter an applicant for admission." The statute defines an "applicant for admission" as "[a]n 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).

60. The Respondents have argued to various courts around the United States that persons such as the Petitioner are subject to § 1225(b)(2), which provides that, "in 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 of this title." 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A).

61. In other words, § 1225(b)(2)(A) generally requires mandatory detention of certain "applicant[s] for admission" during their removal proceedings. Individuals subject to mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2)(A) may, however, be "temporarily released on parole 'for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.'" *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 288 (2018) (quoting § 1182(d)(5)(A)). This parole "shall not be regarded as an admission" of the noncitizen. 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A).

62. Once the purposes of parole have been served, the noncitizen "shall forthwith return or be returned to the custody from which he was paroled and thereafter his case shall continue to

be dealt with in the same manner as that of any other applicant for admission to the United States.”

*Id.*

63. By contrast, § 1226(a) sets forth “the default rule” for detaining noncitizens “already present in the United States.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 303. Section 1226(a) provides that, “[o]n a warrant issued by the Attorney General, an alien may be arrested and detained pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States.” 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

64. Unlike § 1225(b)(2)(A), noncitizens who fall under § 1226(a) are not subject to mandatory detention. Pending a removal decision, the Attorney General may continue to detain an arrested noncitizen, release them on bond, or release them on conditional parole, unless they fall within certain exceptions involving criminal offenses and terrorist activities. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) (1)-(2), (c).

65. The Respondents have taken the position in courts across the country that § 1226(a), and the possibility of release on bond, only applies to individuals who are present in the country with lawful status but are in removal proceedings. However, section 1226(a) does not contain a requirement of lawful status, and “courts are not free to read into the language [of a statute] what is not there.” *See O’Hara v. Nika Techs., Inc.*, 878 F.3d 470, 475 (4th Cir. 2017).

66. Presumably, the Respondents will take the position that the Petitioner in this case is detained pursuant to § 1225(b)(2) because he entered this country without inspection, making him inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a). This argument fails for several reasons.

67. First, the Respondents’ treatment of the Petitioner since he arrived in the United States supports the conclusion that he is detained pursuant to § 1226(a). The Petitioner entered the country without inspection on April 8, 2022 with his family. Federal authorities simply released

them into the United States. The Respondents have consistently treated the Petitioner as subject to § 1226(a) up to this point.

68. Individuals detained under § 1225(b) may not be released on recognizance; they may only be paroled into the country under § 1182(d)(5)(A) (release on recognizance is a form of “conditional parole” from detention under § 1226 that is distinct from parole under § 1182(d)(5)(A)). *See Martinez v. Hyde*, No. 25-cv-11613, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*3 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025)). That distinction is significant.

69. The INA allows an individual paroled into the United States to physically enter the country subject to a reservation of rights by the Government that it may continue to treat the non-citizen “as if stopped at the border.” *Dep’t of Homeland Sec. v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 139 (2020) On the other hand, conditional parole—including release on recognizance—releases a noncitizen already in the country from domestic detention. *Id.*

70. Individuals paroled into the country are thus in a fundamentally different and less protected position than “those who are within the United States after an entry, irrespective of its legality.” *See Leng May Ma v. Barber*, 357 U.S. 185, 187 (1958)). DHS’s decision to release the Petitioner on recognizance does not support an argument that federal respondents actually intended for him to be paroled into the United States pursuant to § 1182(d)(5)(A).

71. Further, applying § 1225 to all persons who have not been admitted into the United States would conflict with the statute’s broader structure, the Supreme Court’s traditional understanding of the relationship between §§ 1225(b) and 1226(a), and decades of immigration practice. “[O]ne of the most basic . . . canons” of statutory interpretation is that “a statute should be construed so that effect is given to all its provisions, so that no part will be inoperative or

superfluous, void or insignificant.” *Corley v. United States*, 556 U.S. 303, 314 (2009) (quoting *Hibbs v. Winn*, 542 U.S. 88, 101 (2004)) (internal brackets omitted).

72. By contrast, the Respondents’ position that § 1225(b) applies to all persons who have not been admitted into the United States would render multiple provisions of § 1226 superfluous. For instance, § 1226(c)(1)(A), (D), and (E) already require mandatory detention of certain categories of inadmissible noncitizens. Indeed, Congress added § 1226(c)(1)(E)—which requires detention for certain inadmissible noncitizens charged with crimes including burglary, theft, and larceny—just this year through the Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No. 119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025).

73. If § 1225(b) already required mandatory detention of all noncitizens who have not been admitted, these provisions would be meaningless.

74. The Respondents’ theory also conflicts with the Supreme Court’s previous interpretation of the relationship between §§ 1225(b) and 1225(a). In *Jennings*, the Supreme Court explained that § 1225(b) governs noncitizens “seeking admission into the country,” whereas § 1226(a) governs noncitizens “already in the country” who are subject to removal proceedings. *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 289. That interpretation is consistent with the core logic of our immigration system. “[O]ur immigration laws have long made a distinction between those aliens who have come to our shores seeking admission . . . and those who are within the United States after an entry, irrespective of its legality.

75. In the latter instance the Court has recognized additional rights and privileges not extended to those in the former category who are merely ‘on the threshold of initial entry.’” *Leng May Ma*, 357 U.S. at 187 (quoting *Shaughnessy v. United States ex rel. Mezei*, 345 U.S. 206, 212 (1953)); accord *Zadydas*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001) (“The distinction between an alien who has

effected an entry into the United States and one who has never entered runs throughout immigration law.”).

76. Given this precedent, it is doubtful that Congress intended § 1225(b)(2) to apply to individuals like the Petitioner who were detained after being present in the U.S. for an extended period of time, who had not committed any crimes, and who were fully compliant with all requirements to attend ICE check-ins and immigration court hearings.

77. Respondents’ position is at odds with DHS’s own historic understanding of the statute’s meaning. DHS’s longstanding interpretation of § 1226 “like any other interpretive aid—can inform a court’s determination of what the law is.” *Hasan v. Crawford*, No. 1:25-cv-1408, 2025 WL 2682255 at \*9 (E.D. Va. Sept. 19, 2025) (*quoting Loper Bright Enter. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 386 (2024)). “DHS’s long-standing interpretation has been that § 1226(a) applie[d] to those who have crossed the border between ports of entry and are shortly thereafter apprehended.” *Id.* (quoting Transcript of Oral Argument at 44:24–45:2, *Biden v. Texas*, 597 U.S. 785 (2022) (No. 21-954)); *see also Benitez v. Francis*, No. 25-cv-5937, 2025 WL 2371588 at \*8 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025) (observing that DHS’s “novel position would expand § 1225(b) far beyond how it has been enforced historically”).

78. DHS’s historic practice reinforces § 1226(a)’s application to noncitizens in the Petitioner’s position who are arrested well after arriving to this country.

#### **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**

79. Petitioner Leon Lopez, a national and citizen of Venezuela, was a police officer in San Carlos, Venezuela. Due to his opposition to the Maduro government and refusal to follow certain orders, Petitioner started to receive threats from his police supervisors and a “collective.” Collectives, or “colectivos” are groups of individuals historically aligned with the far-left in

Venezuela, which act as enforcers for the Maduro regime, and work with Venezuelan armed forces and the ruling political party, the PSUV. In July 2022, members of a collective came to Petitioner's house and severely beat him and his partner, which led to Petitioner's hospitalization for approximately five months.

80. The threats to Petitioner and his family continued after his hospitalization. The Petitioner could not resign because police officers in Venezuela that wish to resign are charged with treason. Fearing for his life, Petitioner fled to the United States to seek protection under the laws of the United States based on his political opinions disagreeing with the Venezuelan government.

81. Petitioner entered the United States without inspection on or about September 16, 2023. Petitioner surrendered to U.S. Customs and Border Protection ("CBP"), an agency within the DHS. Petitioner was detained for about a day and then released.

82. Petitioner applied for asylum in advance of the 1-year deadline and was scheduled for a Master hearing at the Chicago Immigrant Court on October 16, 2025. **[Exhibit 5, Notice of In-Person Hearing]** After, Petitioner was scheduled for another hearing on January 15, 2026 at the Chicago Immigration Court, and was awaiting this hearing when he was unlawfully detained.

83. As Respondent is now unlawfully detained, his next court hearing has now been cancelled. **[Exhibit 6, EOIR Automated Case Status]**

84. After his entry, the Petitioner relocated to Chicago where he has been living and working until his unlawful detention in Illinois on October 18, 2025. **[Exhibit 7, Driver's License]**

**CLAIMS FOR RELIEF  
COUNT ONE  
Violation of Fifth Amendment Right to Due Process  
Procedural Due Process**

85. Petitioner restates and realleges all paragraphs as if fully set forth here.

86. The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits the federal government from depriving any person of “life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” U.S. Const. Amend. V. Due process protects “all ‘persons’ within the United States, including [non-citizens], whether their presence here is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent.” *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 693.

87. To determine whether a civil detention violates a detainee’s Fifth Amendment procedural due process rights, courts apply the balancing test set forth in *Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319 (1976). *United States v. Silvestre-Gregorio*, 983 F.3d 848, 852 (6th Cir. 2020) (applying the *Mathews v. Eldridge* test in the context of immigration).

88. *Mathews v. Eldridge* requires a court to consider the following three factors: “(1) the private interest that will be affected by the official action; (2) the risk of erroneous deprivation of that interest; and (3) the government’s interest, including the fiscal and administrative burdens that the additional or substitute procedures entail.” *See Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft, et al.*, No. 2:25-cv-12486, 2025 WL 2496379 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025) at \*9 (citing *Mathews*, 424 U.S. at 335).

89. The Petitioner was detained without a warrant, based on no individualized circumstances applicable to him and in violation of the *Castañon Nava* consent decree. Further, the Petitioner was detained based upon the Administration’s novel interpretation of existing law, and without notice or any opportunity to contest the redetermination of his custody. All of the foregoing violates his due process rights.

90. Subjecting the Petitioner to indefinite, mandatory detention on the flimsy legal pretext of the July 8, 2025 ICE guidance violates his due process rights.

**COUNT TWO**

**Violation of the Administrative Procedure Act – 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A), the  
Immigration and Nationality Act – 8 U.S.C. § 1226, and Federal Regulations  
Not in Accordance with Law and in Excess of Statutory Authority  
Unlawful Detention**

91. Petitioner restates and realleges all paragraphs as if fully set forth here.
92. Under the APA, a court shall “hold unlawful and set aside agency action” that is an abuse of discretion. 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A).
93. An action is an abuse of discretion if the agency “entirely failed to consider an important aspect of the problem, offered an explanation for its decision that runs counter to the evidence before the agency, or is so implausible that it could not be ascribed to a difference in view or the product of agency expertise.” *Nat'l Ass'n of Home Builders v. Defs. of Wildlife*, 551 U.S. 644, 658 (2007) (quoting *Motor Vehicle Mfrs. Ass'n of U.S., Inc. v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 463 U.S. 29, 43 (1983)).
94. To survive an APA challenge, the agency must articulate “a satisfactory explanation” for its action, “including a rational connection between the facts found and the choice made.” *Dep't of Com. v. New York*, 139 S. Ct. 2551, 2569 (2019) (citation omitted).
95. By categorically detaining the Petitioner and transferring Petitioner away from the district in which he resides or the district in which he lives without consideration of Petitioner’s individualized facts and circumstances, Respondents have violated the INA, implementing regulations, and the APA.
96. On information and belief, Respondents have made no finding that Petitioner is a danger to the community or a flight risk.
97. By detaining and transferring the Petitioner categorically, Respondents have further abused their discretion because, since the agency made its initial determination to release the

Petitioner into the United States, on information and belief, there have been no changes to Petitioner's facts or circumstances that support detention.

98. Respondents have already considered Petitioner's facts and circumstances and determined that Petitioner was not a flight risk or danger to the community when they initially released him into the United States. On information and belief, there have been no changes to the facts that justify his detention.

**COUNT THREE**  
**Violation of the Administrative Procedure Act – 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A)**  
**Not in Accordance with Law and in Excess of Statutory Authority**  
**Violation of 8 C.F.R. § 239.2(c)**

99. Petitioner restates and realleges all paragraphs as if fully set forth here.

100. Under the APA, a court “shall . . . hold unlawful . . . agency action” that is “not in accordance with law;” “contrary to constitutional right;” “in excess of statutory jurisdiction, authority, or limitations;” or “without observance of procedure required by law.” 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A)-(D).

101. Petitioner does not concede that DHS has the authority to reverse its initial processing choice to parole him pursuant to 1226(a) and redetain him pursuant to 1225(b)(2).

102. Under the APA, an agency must provide “reasoned explanation for its action” and “may not depart from a prior policy *sub silentio* or simply disregard rules that are still on the books.” *FCC v. Fox Television Stations, Inc.*, 556 U.S. 502, 515 (2009). *see also Dep’t of Homeland Sec. v. Regents of the Univ. of California*, 591 U.S. 1, 24-33 (2020) (holding that rescission of immigration policy without considering “particular reliance interests” is arbitrary and capricious in violation of the APA).

## PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests this Court to grant the following:

- a) Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
- b) Issue an Order to Show Cause ordering Respondents to show cause why this Petition should not be granted within three days;
- c) Declare that Petitioner's warrantless arrest and detention without an individualized determination violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment;
- d) Declare that the application of the July 8, 2025 ICE Guidance to Petitioner violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment;
- e) Issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus ordering Respondents to release Petitioner from custody immediately, or, in the alternative, to promptly provide him with a bond hearing before an immigration judge;
- f) Issue an Order prohibiting the Respondents from transferring Petitioner from the district without the court's approval;
- g) Award Petitioner attorney's fees and costs under the Equal Access to Justice Act, and on any other basis justified under law; and
- h) Grant any further relief this Court deems just and proper.

Dated this 5<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025,

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Amy Maldonado  
Amy Maldonado (IL ARDC # 6256961)  
Managing Attorney  
Law Office of Amy Maldonado LLC  
333 Albert Ave., Suite 390  
East Lansing, MI 48823-4351  
Tel. (517) 803-2870  
Fax: (888) 299-3780  
Email: amy@amaldonadolaw.com

s/ Adriana Klemish  
Adriana Klemish (MI Bar No. P86742)  
Associate Attorney  
Law Office of Amy Maldonado LLC  
333 Albert Ave., Suite 390  
East Lansing, MI 48823-4351  
Tel. (517) 803-2870  
Fax: (888) 299-3780  
Email: adriana@amaldonadolaw.com

**VERIFICATION**

On this 5<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I make this verification in lieu of and acting on behalf of Petitioner, Yohander Jose Leon Lopez, because Petitioner is currently detained and because of the urgent nature of the relief requested. I am authorized to make this verification as a member of the legal team representing the Petitioner, Yohander Jose Leon Lopez.

Dated: 11/5/2025

s/ Amy Maldonado

East Lansing, MI

Amy Maldonado  
Law Office of Amy Maldonado LLC  
333 Albert Ave. Ste. 390  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
Telephone: (517) 803-2870  
Fax: (888) 299-3780