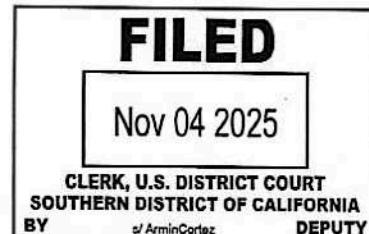


1 **Phuong Van Phan**
2 At [REDACTED]
3 Otay Mesa Detention Center
4 P.O. Box 439049
5 San Diego, CA 92143-9049
6 Pro Se¹



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

15 PHUONG VAN PHAN,

16 CIVIL CASE NO.: 25CV2997 JES KSC

17 Petitioner,

18 v.

19 KRISTI NOEM, Secretary of the
20 Department of Homeland Security,
21 PAMELA JO BONDI, Attorney General,
22 TODD M. LYONS, Acting Director,
23 Immigration and Customs Enforcement,
24 JESUS ROCHA, Acting Field Office
25 Director, San Diego Field Office,
26 CHRISTOPHER LAROSE, Warden at
27 Otay Mesa Detention Center,

28 Respondents.

Notice of motion and memorandum
of law in support of temporary
restraining order

1 Mr. Phan is filing this motion, habeas petition, and all associated documents
2 with the assistance of the Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc. Federal Defenders
3 has consistently used this procedure in seeking appointment for immigration
4 habeas cases.

1 **I. Introduction**
2

3 Petitioner Phuong Van Phan faces immediate irreparable harm:

4 (1) revocation of his release on immigration supervision after eleven years of
5 living peacefully in the community, despite ICE's failure to follow its own
6 revocation procedures; (2) indefinite immigration detention with no
7 individualized, significantly likely prospect of removal to Vietnam in the
8 reasonably foreseeable future; and (3) potential removal to a prison in an
9 unidentified, potentially dangerous third country never considered by an IJ. This
10 Court should grant temporary relief of his release on his pre-existing order of
11 supervision to preserve the status quo.

12 Mr. Phan has spent the last eleven years living free in the community on an
13 order of supervision. Throughout that time, the government has proved unable to
14 remove him to Vietnam. Yet on September 4, 2025, the government re-detained
15 him when he appeared as scheduled at his check-in. ICE gave him no opportunity
16 to contest his re-detention, and did not identify changed circumstances justifying
17 it. ICE does not appear to have a travel document in hand. Worse yet, in the case
18 that ICE still proves unable to remove Mr. Phan to Vietnam, ICE's own policies
19 allow ICE to remove him to a third country never before considered by an IJ, with
20 either 6-to-24 hours' notice or no notice at all.

21 Mr. Phan is facing both unlawful detention and a threat of removal to a
22 dangerous third country without due process. The requested temporary restraining
23 order ("TRO") would preserve the status quo while Petitioner litigates these
24 claims by (1) reinstating Mr. Phan's release on supervision, and (2) prohibiting
25 the government from removing him to a third country without an opportunity to
26 file a motion to reopen with an IJ.

27 In granting this motion, this Court would not break new ground. Courts in
28 this district and around the Ninth Circuit have granted TROs or preliminary

1 injunctions mandating release for post-final-removal-order immigrants like
2 Petitioner. *See, e.g., Sun v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2800037, No. 25-cv-2433-CAB (S.D.
3 Cal. Sept. 30, 2025); *Van Phan v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2770623, No. 25-cv-2334-
4 JES, *3 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 29, 2025); *Truong v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-02597-JES, ECF
5 No. 10 (S.D. Cal. Oct. 10, 2025); *Khambounheuang v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-02575-
6 JO-SBC, ECF No. 12 (S.D. Cal. Oct. 9, 2025); *see also, e.g., Phetsadakone v.*
7 *Scott*, 2025 WL 2579569, at *6 (W.D. Wash. Sept. 5, 2025); *Hoac v. Becerra*, No.
8 2:25-CV-01740-DC-JDP, 2025 WL 1993771, at *7 (E.D. Cal. July 16, 2025);
9 *Phan v. Beccerra*, No. 2:25-CV-01757-DC-JDP, 2025 WL 1993735, at *7 (E.D.
10 Cal. July 16, 2025); *Nguyen v. Scott*, No. 2:25-CV-01398, 2025 WL 2419288, at
11 *29 (W.D. Wash. Aug. 21, 2025). These courts have determined that, for these
12 long-term releasees, liberty is the status quo, and only a return to that status quo
13 can avert irreparable harm.

14 Courts have likewise granted temporary restraining orders preventing third-
15 country removals without due process. *See, e.g., Van Phan v. Noem*, 2025 WL
16 2770623 at *3; *Nguyen Phan v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-2391-BTM, ECF No. 6 (S.D.
17 Cal. Sept. 18, 2025); *Louangmilith v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2881578, No. 25-cv-2502-
18 JES, *4 (S.D. Cal. Oct. 9, 2025); *see also, e.g., J.R. v. Bostock*, 25-cv-01161-
19 JNW, 2025 WL 1810210 (W.D. Wash. Jun. 30, 2025); *Vaskanyan v. Janecka*, 25-
20 cv-01475-MRA-AS, 2025 WL 2014208 (C.D. Cal. Jun. 25, 2025); *Ortega v.*
21 *Kaiser*, 25-cv-05259-JST, 2025 WL 1771438 (N.D. Cal. June 26, 2025); *Hoac v.*
22 *Becerra*, No. 2:25-CV-01740-DC-JDP, 2025 WL 1993771, at *7 (E.D. Cal. July
23 16, 2025); *Phan v. Beccerra*, No. 2:25-CV-01757-DC-JDP, 2025 WL 1993735, at
24 *7 (E.D. Cal. July 16, 2025).

25 Mr. Phan therefore respectfully requests that this Court grant this TRO.

1 **II. Statement of Facts**

2 **A. Mr. Phan is ordered removed, held in ICE custody, and released**
3 **as ICE proves unable to deport him for the next 11 years, until**
4 **he is arrested at his annual ICE check-in.**

5 In 1984, Phuong Van Phan fled Vietnam and entered the United States as a
6 refugee. Declaration of Phuong Van Phan, Exhibit A (“Exh. A”) ¶ 1. He soon
7 obtained a green card. *Id.*

8 In the 1990s and in 2001, Mr. Phan was convicted of car theft. *Id.* at ¶ 2. As
9 a result of these convictions, Mr. Phan was placed in removal proceedings. *Id.* at
10 ¶ 2. An immigration judge ordered him removed on September 4, 2014. *Id.* at ¶ 3.

11 But ICE was not able to effectuate Mr. Phan’s removal to Vietnam. For
12 approximately the next three months, ICE tried and failed to obtain travel
13 documents for him. *Id.* at ¶ 4. Finally, ICE gave up and released him on an order
14 of supervision. *Id.* In the years since his removal order, Mr. Phan has complied
15 with all the conditions of his release and has not been convicted of any other
16 offenses. *Id.* at ¶ 5.

17 On September 4, 2025, ICE officials arrested Mr. Phan during his annual
18 check in appointment. *Id.* at ¶ 6. They did not provide him any notice or give him
19 an interview or an opportunity to contest his detention. *Id.*

20 In 2019, Mr. Phan was in a serious car accident and suffered a traumatic
21 brain injury. As a result, he is supposed to receive regular injections but he has
22 not received them since his detention. *Id.* ¶ 7.

23 **B. The government is carrying out deportations to third countries**
24 **without providing sufficient notice and opportunity to be heard.**

25 When removable immigrants cannot be removed to their home country—
26 including Laotian immigrants—ICE has begun deporting those individuals to
27 third countries without adequate notice or a hearing. As explained in greater detail
28 in Petitioner’s habeas petition, the Administration has reportedly negotiated with
29 countries to have many of these deportees imprisoned in prisons, camps, or other
30 facilities. For example, the government paid El Salvador about \$5 million to

1 imprison more than 200 deported Venezuelans in a maximum-security prison
2 notorious for gross human rights abuses, known as CECOT. Edward Wong et al,
3 *Inside the Global Deal-Making Behind Trump's Mass Deportations*, N.Y. Times,
4 June 25, 2025. In February, Panama and Costa Rica took in hundreds of deportees
5 from countries in Africa and Central Asia and imprisoned them in hotels, a jungle
6 camp, and a detention center. *Id.*; Vanessa Buschschluter, *Costa Rican court*
7 *orders release of migrants deported from U.S.*, BBC (Jun. 25, 2025). On July 4,
8 2025, ICE deported eight men to South Sudan. *See Wong, supra.* On July 15, ICE
9 deported five men to the tiny African nation of Eswatini, where they are
10 reportedly being held in solitary confinement. Gerald Imray, *3 Deported by US*
11 *held in African Prison Despite Completing Sentences, Lawyers Say*, PBS (Sept. 2,
12 2025). Many of these countries are known for human rights abuses or instability.
13 For instance, conditions in South Sudan are so extreme that the U.S. State
14 Department website warns Americans not to travel there, and if they do, to
15 prepare their will, make funeral arrangements, and appoint a hostage-taker
16 negotiator first. *See Wong, supra.*

17 On June 23 and July 3, 2025, in light of procedural arguments regarding the
18 viability of national class-wide relief rather than individual relief, the Supreme
19 Court issued a stay of a class-wide preliminary injunction issued in *D.V.D. v. U.S.*
20 *Department of Homeland Security*, No. CV 25-10676-BEM, 2025 WL 1142968,
21 at *1, 3 (D. Mass. Apr. 18, 2025). That national injunction had required ICE to
22 follow the statutory and constitutional requirements before removing an
23 individual to a third country. *U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec. v. D.V.D.*, 145 S. Ct.
24 2153 (2025) (mem.); *id.*, No. 24A1153, 2025 WL 1832186 (U.S. July 3, 2025).
25 On July 9, 2025, ICE rescinded previous guidance meant to give immigrants a
26 “meaningful opportunity” to assert claims for protection under the Convention
27 Against Torture (CAT) before initiating removal to a third country” like the ones
28 just described. Exh. B to Habeas Petition.

1 Under the new guidance, ICE may remove any immigrant to a third country
2 “without the need for further procedures,” as long as—in the view of the State
3 Department—the United States has received “credible” “assurances” from that
4 country that deportees will not be persecuted or tortured. *Id.* at 1. If a country fails
5 to credibly promise not to persecute or torture releasees, ICE may still remove
6 immigrants there with minimal notice. *Id.* Ordinarily, ICE must provide 24 hours’
7 notice. But “[i]n exigent circumstances,” a removal may take place in as little as
8 six hours, “as long as the alien is provided reasonably means and opportunity to
9 speak with an attorney prior to the removal.” *Id.* Upon serving notice, ICE “will
10 not affirmatively ask whether the alien is afraid of being removed to the country
11 of removal.” *Id.* (emphasis original). Depending on whether immigrants assert a
12 credible fear, they will either be removed or screened by USCIS for withholding
13 or removal or Convention Against Torture (“CAT”) relief within 24 hours. *Id.* If
14 USCIS determines that an individual does not qualify, they will be removed there
15 despite asserting fear. *Id.*

Argument

To obtain a TRO, a plaintiff “must establish that he is likely to succeed on the merits, that he is likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of preliminary relief, that the balance of equities tips in his favor, and that an injunction is in the public interest.” *Winter v. Nat. Res. Def. Council, Inc.*, 555 U.S. 7, 20 (2008); *Stuhlbarg Int'l Sales Co. v. John D. Brush & Co.*, 240 F.3d 832, 839-40 & n.7 (9th Cir. 2001) (noting that a TRO and preliminary injunction involve “substantially identical” analysis). A “variant[] of the same standard” is the “sliding scale”: “if a plaintiff can only show that there are ‘serious questions going to the merits—a lesser showing than likelihood of success on the merits—then a preliminary injunction may still issue if the balance of hardships tips sharply in the plaintiff’s favor, and the other two *Winter* factors are satisfied.” *Immigrant Defenders Law Center v. Noem*, 145 F.4th 972, 986 (9th Cir. 2025)

1 (internal quotation marks omitted). Under this approach, the four *Winter* elements
2 are “balanced, so that a stronger showing of one element may offset a weaker
3 showing of another.” *All. for the Wild Rockies v. Cottrell*, 632 F.3d 1127, 1131
4 (9th Cir. 2011). A TRO may be granted where there are ““serious questions going
5 to the merits’ and a hardship balance. . . tips sharply toward the plaintiff,” and so
6 long as the other *Winter* factors are met. *Id.* at 1132.

7 Here, this Court should issue a temporary restraining order and an
8 injunction because “immediate and irreparable injury . . . or damage” is occurring
9 and will continue in the absence of an order. Fed. R. Civ. P. 65(b). Not only have
10 Respondents re-detained Petitioner in violation of his due process, statutory, and
11 regulatory rights. ICE policy also allows them to remove him to a third country in
12 violation of his due process, statutory, and regulatory rights. This Court should
13 order Petitioner’s release and enjoin removal to a third country.

14 I. **Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits, or at a minimum, raises
15 serious merits questions.**

16 A. **Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits of his claim that ICE
17 violated its own regulations.**

18 The regulations set forth the procedures for someone who, like Petitioner, is
19 re-detained following a period of release. Under 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(l), ICE may re-
20 detain an immigrant on supervision only with an interview and a chance to contest
21 a re-detention. When an immigrant is specifically released after giving good
22 reason why they cannot be removed, additional regulations apply: ICE may
23 revoke a noncitizen’s release and return them to ICE custody due to failure to
24 comply with conditions of release, 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(1), or if, “on account of
25 changed circumstances,” a noncitizen likely can be removed in the reasonably
26 foreseeable future. *Id.* § 241.13(i)(2).

27 The regulations further provide noncitizens with a chance to contest a re-
28 detention decision. ICE must “notif[y] [the person] of the reasons for revocation

1 of his or her release.” *Id.* § 241.13(i)(3). ICE must then “conduct an initial
2 informal interview promptly” after re-detention “to afford the alien an opportunity
3 to respond to the reasons for revocation stated in the notification.” *Id.* During the
4 interview, the person “may submit any evidence or information” showing that the
5 prerequisites to re-detention have not been met, and the interviewer must evaluate
6 “any contested facts.” *Id.*

7 ICE is required to follow its own regulations. *United States ex rel. Accardi*
8 v. *Shaughnessy*, 347 U.S. 260, 268 (1954); *see Alcaraz v. INS*, 384 F.3d 1150,
9 1162 (9th Cir. 2004) (“The legal proposition that agencies may be required to
10 abide by certain internal policies is well-established.”). A court may review a re-
11 detention decision for compliance with the regulations. *See Phan v. Becerra*, No.
12 2:25-CV-01757, 2025 WL 1993735, at *3 (E.D. Cal. July 16, 2025); *Nguyen v.*
13 *Hyde*, No. 25-cv-11470-MJJ, 2025 WL 1725791, at *3 (D. Mass. June 20, 2025)
14 (citing *Kong v. United States*, 62 F.4th 608, 620 (1st Cir. 2023)).

15 None of the prerequisites to detention apply here. Since ICE last tried to
16 deport him in 2004, Petitioner has not violated the conditions of his release. And
17 there are no changed circumstances that justify re-detaining him. ICE already
18 tried—and failed—to remove Petitioner and has given Petitioner no indication
19 that agents have a travel document in hand for him. Of course, ICE may be
20 planning to renew their request for a travel document from Vietnam. But absent
21 any evidence for “why obtaining a travel document is more likely this time
22 around[,] Respondents’ intent to eventually complete a travel document request
23 for Petitioner does not constitute a changed circumstance.” *Hoac v. Becerra*, No.
24 2:25-CV-01740-DC-JDP, 2025 WL 1993771, at *4 (E.D. Cal. July 16, 2025)
25 (citing *Liu v. Carter*, No. 25-3036-JWL, 2025 WL 1696526, at *2 (D. Kan. June
26 17, 2025)). Nor has Petitioner received an interview where he was able to respond
27 to the purported “reasons” for his revocation.
28

1 “[B]ecause officials did not properly revoke petitioner’s release pursuant to
2 the applicable regulations,” this Court will likely find that “petitioner is entitled to
3 his release” on an order of supervision. *Liu*, 2025 WL 1696526, at *3.

4 **C. Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits of his claim that his**
5 **detention violates *Zadvydas*.**

6 In *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678 (2001), the Supreme Court considered
7 a problem affecting people like Mr. Phan: Federal law requires ICE to detain an
8 immigrant during the “removal period,” which typically spans the first 90 days
9 after the immigrant is ordered removed. 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)-(2). And after that
10 90-day removal period expires, ICE may detain the migrant while continuing to
11 try to remove them. *Id.* § 1231(a)(6). If that subsection were understood to allow
12 for “indefinite, perhaps permanent, detention,” it would pose “a serious
13 constitutional threat.” *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 699. In *Zadvydas*, the Supreme Court
14 avoided the constitutional concern by interpreting § 1231(a)(6) to incorporate
15 implicit limits. *Id.* at 689.

16 As an initial matter, *Zadvydas* held that detention is “presumptively
17 reasonable” for at least six months after the removal order becomes final. *Id.* at
18 701. This acts as a kind of grace period for effectuating removals. Following the
19 six-month grace period, courts must use a burden-shifting framework to decide
20 whether detention remains authorized. First, the petitioner must prove that there is
21 “good reason to believe that there is no significant likelihood of removal in the
22 reasonably foreseeable future.” *Id.*

23 If he does so, the burden shifts to “the Government [to] respond with
24 evidence sufficient to rebut that showing.” *Id.* Ultimately, then, the burden of
25 proof rests with the government: The government must prove that there is a
26 “significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future,” or the
27 immigrant must be released. *Id.*

28

1 Here, Petitioner was ordered removed more than six months ago, as his
2 removal order became final in 2014. Phan Dec. at ¶ 3. Thus, it is clear that the
3 *Zadvydas* grace period has ended.

4 There is also strong evidence that there is no “significant likelihood of
5 removal in the reasonably foreseeable future.” *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 701.
6 Vietnam refused to accept Mr. Phan during the three months he was detained in
7 2014. Phan Dec. at ¶ 4, 5. Nothing has changed since the last time ICE attempted
8 to deport him. And to date, there is no indication that ICE has obtained a travel
9 document.

10 Finally, Petitioner’s criminal history cannot change this equation. Not only
11 has Petitioner proved that he poses no danger or flight risk, *Zadvydas* also
12 squarely prohibits ICE from indefinitely detaining immigrants because they pose
13 risks of danger or flight. 533 U.S. at 684–91.

14 Thus, this Court will likely find that Petitioner warrants *Zadvydas* relief.

15

16 **D. Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits of his claim that he is
17 entitled to adequate notice and an opportunity to be heard prior
to any third country removal.**

18 Finally, Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits of his claim that he
19 may not be removed to a third country absent adequate notice and an opportunity
20 to be heard. U.S. law enshrines protections against dangerous and life-threatening
21 removal decisions. By statute, the government is prohibited from removing an
22 immigrant to any third country where a person may be persecuted or tortured, a
23 form of protection known as withholding of removal. *See* 8 U.S.C.
24 § 1231(b)(3)(A). The government “may not remove [a noncitizen] to a country if
25 the Attorney General decides that the [noncitizen’s] life or freedom would be
26 threatened in that country because of the [noncitizen’s] race, religion, nationality,
27 membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” *Id.*; *see also* 8
28 C.F.R. §§ 208.16, 1208.16. Withholding of removal is a mandatory protection.

1 Similarly, Congress codified protections in the CAT prohibiting the
2 government from removing a person to a country where they would be tortured.
3 *See* FARRA 2681-822 (codified as 8 U.S.C. § 1231 note) (“It shall be the policy
4 of the United States not to expel, extradite, or otherwise effect the involuntary
5 return of any person to a country in which there are substantial grounds for
6 believing the person would be in danger of being subjected to torture, regardless
7 of whether the person is physically present in the United States.”); 28 C.F.R.
8 § 200.1; *id.* §§ 208.16-208.18, 1208.16-1208.18.

9 To comport with due process, the government must provide notice of third
10 country removal and an opportunity to respond. Due process requires “written
11 notice of the country being designated” and “the statutory basis for the
12 designation, i.e., the applicable subsection of § 1231(b)(2).” *Aden v. Nielsen*, 409
13 F. Supp. 3d 998, 1019 (W.D. Wash. 2019); *accord D.V.D. v. U.S. Dep’t of*
14 *Homeland Sec.*, No. 25-cv-10676-BEM, 2025 WL 1453640, at *1 (D. Mass. May
15 21, 2025); *Andriasian v. INS*, 180 F.3d 1033, 1041 (9th Cir. 1999).

16 Due process also requires “ask[ing] the noncitizen whether he or she fears
17 persecution or harm upon removal to the designated country and memorialize in
18 writing the noncitizen’s response. This requirement ensures DHS will obtain the
19 necessary information from the noncitizen to comply with section 1231(b)(3) and
20 avoids [a dispute about what was said].” *Aden*, 409 F. Supp. 3d at 1019. “Failing
21 to notify individuals who are subject to deportation that they have the right to
22 apply for asylum in the United States and for withholding of deportation to the
23 country to which they will be deported violates both INS regulations and the
24 constitutional right to due process.” *Andriasian*, 180 F.3d at 1041.

25 If the noncitizen claims fear, measures must be taken to ensure that the
26 noncitizen can seek asylum, withholding, and relief under CAT before an
27 immigration judge in reopened removal proceedings. The amount and type of
28 notice must be “sufficient” to ensure that “given [a noncitizen’s] capacities and

1 circumstances, he would have a reasonable opportunity to raise and pursue his
2 claim for withholding of deportation.” *Aden*, 409 F. Supp. 3d at 1009
3 (citing *Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319, 349 (1976) and *Kossov v. I.N.S.*, 132
4 F.3d 405, 408 (7th Cir. 1998)); *cf. D.V.D.*; 2025 WL 1453640, at *1 (requiring a
5 minimum of 15 days’ notice). “[L]ast minute” notice of the country of removal
6 will not suffice, *Andriasan*, 180 F.3d at 1041; *accord Najjar v. Lynch*, 630 Fed.
7 App’x 724 (9th Cir. 2016), and for good reason: To have a meaningful
8 opportunity to apply for fear-based protection, immigrants must have time to
9 prepare and present relevant arguments and evidence. Merely telling a person
10 where they may be sent, without giving them a chance to look into country
11 conditions, does not give them a meaningful chance to determine whether and
12 why they have a credible fear.

13 Respondents’ third country removal program skips over these statutory and
14 constitutional procedural protections. According to ICE’s July 7 guidance,
15 individuals can be removed to third countries “without the need for further
16 procedures,” so long as “the [U.S.] has received diplomatic assurances.” Exh. B to
17 Habeas Petition at 1. Petitioner is likely to succeed on the merits of his claim on
18 this fact alone, because the policy instructs officers to provide no notice or
19 opportunity to be heard. The same is true of the minimal procedures ICE offers
20 when no diplomatic assurances are present. The policy provides no meaningful
21 notice (6-24 hours), instructs officers *not* to ask about fear, and provides no actual
22 opportunity to see counsel and prepare a fear-based claim (6-24 hours), let alone
23 reopen removal proceedings.

24 Faced with similar arguments, several courts have recently granted
25 individual TROs against removal to third countries. *See J.R.*, 2025 WL 1810210;
26 *Vaskanyan*, 2025 WL 2014208; *Ortega*, 2025 WL 1771438; *Hoac*, 2025 WL
27 1993771, at *7; *Phan*, 2025 WL 1993735, at *7.
28

1 **III. Petitioner will suffer irreparable harm absent injunctive relief.**

2 Petitioner also meets the second factor, irreparable harm. “It is well
3 established that the deprivation of constitutional rights ‘unquestionably constitutes
4 irreparable injury.’” *Melendres v. Arpaio*, 695 F.3d 990, 1002 (9th Cir. 2012)
5 (quoting *Elrod v. Burns*, 427 U.S. 347, 373 (1976)). Where the “alleged
6 deprivation of a constitutional right is involved, most courts hold that no further
7 showing of irreparable injury is necessary.” *Warsoldier v. Woodford*, 418 F.3d
8 989, 1001-02 (9th Cir. 2005) (quoting 11A Charles Alan Wright et al., *Federal*
9 *Practice and Procedure*, § 2948.1 (2d ed. 2004)).

10 Here, the potential irreparable harm to Petitioner is even more concrete.
11 “Unlawful detention certainly constitutes ‘extreme or very serious damage, and
12 that damage is not compensable in damages.’” *Hernandez v. Sessions*, 872 F.3d
13 976, 999 (9th Cir. 2017). Third-country deportations pose that risk and more.
14 Recent third-country deportees have been held, indefinitely and without charge, in
15 hazardous foreign prisons. *See* Wong et al., *supra*. They have been subjected to
16 solitary confinement. *See* Imray, *supra*. They have been removed to countries so
17 unstable that the U.S. government recommends making a will and appointing a
18 hostage negotiator before traveling to them. *See* Wong, *supra*. These and other
19 threats to Petitioner’s health and life independently constitute irreparable harm.
20

21 **IV. The balance of hardships and the public interest weigh heavily in
22 petitioner’s favor.**

23 The final two factors for a TRO—the balance of hardships and public
24 interest—“merge when the Government is the opposing party.” *Nken v. Holder*,
25 556 U.S. 418, 435 (2009). That balance tips decidedly in Petitioner’s favor. On
26 the one hand, the government “cannot reasonably assert that it is harmed in any
27 legally cognizable sense” by being compelled to follow the law. *Zepeda v. I.N.S.*,
28 753 F.2d 719, 727 (9th Cir. 1983). Moreover, it is always in the public interest to
 prevent violations of the U.S. Constitution and ensure the rule of law. *See Nken*,

1 556 U.S. at 436 (describing public interest in preventing noncitizens “from being
2 wrongfully removed, particularly to countries where they are likely to face
3 substantial harm”); *Moreno Galvez v. Cuccinelli*, 387 F. Supp. 3d 1208, 1218
4 (W.D. Wash. 2019) (when government’s treatment “is inconsistent with federal
5 law, . . . the balance of hardships and public interest factors weigh in favor of a
6 preliminary injunction.”). On the other hand, Petitioner faces weighty hardships:
7 unlawful, indefinite detention and removal to a third country where he is likely to
8 suffer imprisonment or serious harm. The balance of equities thus favors
9 preventing the violation of “requirements of federal law,” *Arizona Dream Act*
10 *Coal. v. Brewer*, 757 F.3d 1053, 1069 (9th Cir. 2014), by granting emergency
11 relief to protect against unlawful detention and unlawful third country removal.

12 **V. Petitioner gave the government notice of this TRO, and the TRO should
remain in place throughout habeas litigation.**

13 Upon filing this motion, proposed counsel emailed Janet Cabral, from the
14 United States Attorney’s Office, notice of this request for a temporary restraining
15 and all the filings associated with it. Additionally, Petitioner requests that this
16 TRO and injunction remain in place until the habeas petition is decided. Fed. R.
17 Civ. Pro. 65(b)(2). Good cause exists, because the same considerations will
18 continue to warrant injunctive relief throughout this litigation, and habeas
19 petitions must be adjudicated promptly. *See In re Habeas Corpus Cases*, 216
20 F.R.D. 52 (E.D.N.Y. 2003). A proposed order is attached.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

Conclusion

For those reasons, Petitioner requests that this Court issue a temporary restraining order.

DATED: 11-1-25

Respectfully submitted,

Phuong Van Phan

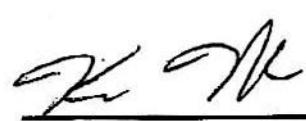
Petitioner

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned, caused to be served the within Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order by email to:

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of California
Civil Division
880 Front Street
Suite 6253
San Diego, CA 92101

Date: 11-4-25



Kara Hartzler