

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA
LAFAYETTE DIVISION**

CESAR CHAVEZ ROMERO,

Petitioner,

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official capacity
as President of the United States;

KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as
Secretary of the Department of Homeland
Security,

PAMELA BONDI, in her official capacity
as Attorney General of the United States;

TODD LYONS, in his official capacity as
Acting Director and Senior Official
Performing the Duties of the Director of
U.S. Immigration and Customs
Enforcement;

BRIAN ACUNA, in his official capacity as
Director of the New Orleans Field Office of
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement,
Enforcement and Removal Operations;

BRYAN PATTERSON, in his official
capacity as warden of Pine Prairie ICE
Processing Center;

Respondents

Case No.: _____

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

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. Petitioner, Cesar Chavez Romero (“Petitioner”), brings this Verified Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus and Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (“Petition”) pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241; the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1651; the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) and regulations thereunder; the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”), 5 U.S.C. § 701, and Article I, Section 9, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution (“Suspension Clause”) and the Fourth and Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

2. In December 2012, the Petitioner crossed the US/Mexico border without inspection. Petitioner was previously in removal proceedings and was ordered removed on October 4, 2024. A timely-filed appeal of his removal order has been pending before the Board of Immigration Appeals since October of 2024. On September 22, 2025, ICE detained him and has since sent him to the Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center in Pine Prairie, Louisiana.

3. The BIA published *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* which held that all noncitizens who enter without inspection are subject to mandatory detention under INA § 235(b)(2). 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). At Petitioner’s bond hearing before the Oakdale Immigration Court on September 24, 2025, the Immigration Judge held that the Petitioner is ineligible for bond pursuant to *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*.

PARTIES

4. Petitioner is a 32-year-old male from Guatemala. He is detained in the Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center, located at 1133 Hampton Dupre Rd, Pine Prairie, LA 70576.

5. Respondent Donald J. Trump is named in his official capacity as President of the United States. In this role, he is ultimately responsible for the policies and actions of the executive branch, including those of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

6. Respondent Kristi Noem is named in her capacity as the Secretary of Homeland Security in

the United States Department of Homeland Security. In this capacity, she is responsible for the administration of the immigration laws pursuant to Section 103(a) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a); routinely transacts business in the Western District of Louisiana, and is legally responsible for pursuing Petitioner's detention and removal; and as such is the legal custodian of Petitioner.

7. Respondent Pamela Bondi is named in her official capacity as the Attorney General of the United States. In this capacity, she is responsible for the administration of the immigration laws as exercised by the Executive Office for Immigration Review, pursuant to INA § 103(g), 8 U.S.C. § 1103(g), routinely transacts business in the Western District of Louisiana, is legally responsible for administering Petitioner's removal proceedings and the standards used in those proceedings.

8. Respondent Brian Acuna is named in his official capacity as Acting News Orleans Field Office Director for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. In this capacity, he is responsible for the administration of the immigration laws pursuant to Section 103(a) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a); routinely transacts business in the Western District of Louisiana, and is legally responsible for pursuing Petitioner's detention and removal; and as such is the legal custodian of Petitioner.

9. Upon information and belief, Respondent Bryan Patterson is employed as Warden of the Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center where Petitioner is detained. He has immediate physical custody of Petitioner. He is sued in his official capacity.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

10. This action arises under the Constitution of the United States, the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA"), 8 U.S.C. § 1101 et seq., 8 U.S.C. § 1231; and the Administrative Procedure Act ("APA"), 5 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

11. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this Petition pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, 28 U.S.C. § 1331, and Article I, § 9, cl. 2 of the United States Constitution; the All Writs Act, 28

U.S.C. § 1651; the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C § 701; and for injunctive relief pursuant to the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201.

12. Federal district courts have jurisdiction to hear habeas claims by noncitizens challenging DHS' conduct. *See, e.g., Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 687 (2001).

13. Federal courts have jurisdiction to hear habeas petitions, because “absent suspension, the writ of habeas corpus remains available to every individual detained within the United States.” *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, 542 U.S. 507, 525 (2004) (plurality opinion of O’Connor, J.); U.S. Const.art. I, § 9, cl. 2 (“The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended . . .”); 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(3) (stating federal courts may grant the writ to any person “in custody in violation of the Constitution or laws or treaties of the United States”).

14. The Suspension Clause saves this Court’s jurisdiction and ability to hear Petitioner’s claims. Although the Respondents will likely argue that 8 U.S.C. § 1252 strips the Court of jurisdiction, as applied, the statute unconstitutionally suspends the habeas writ by failing to provide an adequate alternative forum for review. *Boumediene v. Bush*, 553 U.S. 723, 736, 771 (2008) (determining first whether the statute “denies the federal courts jurisdiction,” and then whether the statute “avoids the Suspension Clause mandate” by providing “adequate substitute procedures for habeas corpus”); *see also Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, 548 U.S. 557, 575 (2006) (tracing the requirement of an “unmistakably clear statement” at least as far back as *Ex parte Yerger*, 75 U.S. 85, 104-05 (1868)). Thus, this Court retains residual habeas jurisdiction as the lack of an adequate alternative forum to meaningfully seek review would amount to a suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, such that the statutes would need to be read to permit Petitioner’s claims to avoid a constitutional violation.

15. At its historical core, the writ of habeas corpus has served as a means of reviewing the legality of executive encroachment on liberty, and it is in that context that its protections have been strongest. *See I.N.S. v. St. Cyr*, 533 U.S. 289, 301 (2001). These protections extend fully to

noncitizens subject to an order of removal. *Id.*; *see also* Gerard L. Neuman, Habeas Corpus, Executive Detention, and the Removal of Aliens, 98 Colum. L. Rev. 961, 1044 (1998) (“[H]istorical precedents beginning shortly after 1787 and reaching to the present confirm the applicability of the writ of habeas corpus to the detention involved in the physical removal of aliens from the United States. These precedents include opinions . . . denying the power of Congress to eliminate judicial inquiry.”).

16. The right to seek habeas corpus relief is fundamental to the Constitution’s scheme of ordered liberty. Habeas corpus is “a writ employed to bring a person before a court, most frequently to ensure that the party’s imprisonment or detention is not illegal.” *Boumediene*, 553 U.S. at 737 (quoting Black’s Law Dictionary 728 (8th ed. 2004)). Blackstone called it “the most celebrated writ in English law,” 3 Blackstone’s Commentaries 129 (1791), and deemed the Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 “the bulwark of the British Constitution.” 4 Blackstone’s Commentaries 438 (1791).

17. In the penultimate Federalist Paper, Alexander Hamilton praised the establishment of the writ as a defense against “the favorite and most formidable instruments of tyranny.” The Federalist No. 84, p. 251 (R.M. Hutchins ed. 1952). Indeed, the “great writ of liberty”, *see Darr v. Burford*, 339 U.S. 200, 225 (1950) (Frankfurter, J., dissenting), is “the only common-law writ to be explicitly mentioned” in the Constitution. *Hamdi*, 542 U.S. at 558 (Scalia, J., dissenting) (citing U.S. Const. Art. I, § 9, cl. 2.).

18. The U.S. Constitution followed its English counterpart in permitting legislative suspension of the writ in extreme circumstances. In England, “the parliament only, or legislative power, whenever it sees proper, [could] authorize the crown, by suspending the habeas corpus act for a short and limited time, to imprison suspected persons without giving any reason for so doing.” 1 Blackstone’s Commentaries 132 (1791).

19. The United States Constitution, however, does not permit suspension of the writ “whenever

[the legislature] sees proper,” but rather guarantees in the Suspension Clause that “The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, The Suspension Clause provides that “[t]he Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.” U.S. Const. art. I, § 9, cl. 2. “[B]ecause of that Clause, some ‘judicial intervention in deportation cases’ is unquestionably ‘required by the Constitution.’” *St. Cyr*, 533 U.S. at 300 (quoting *Heikkila v. Barber*, 345 U.S. 229, 235 (1953)). For a statute to limit the writ, it “must overcome both the strong presumption in favor of judicial review of administrative action and the longstanding rule requiring a clear statement of congressional intent to repeal habeas jurisdiction.” *St. Cyr*, 533 U.S. at 298 (footnote omitted). Congress can strip jurisdiction without violating the Suspension Clause only where it provides “a collateral remedy which is neither inadequate nor ineffective to test the legality of a person’s detention.” *Swain v. Pressley*, 430 U.S. 372, 381 (1977); *see also Boumediene*, 553 U.S. at 779.

20. “[I]f an otherwise acceptable construction of a statute would raise serious constitutional problems, and [] an alternative interpretation of the statute is fairly possible, [courts] are obligated to construe the statute to avoid such problems.” *St. Cyr*, 533 U.S. at 299-300. “Indeed, it is an elementary rule in construing acts of Congress that every reasonable construction must be resorted to, in order to save a statute from unconstitutionality.” *Skilling v. United States*, 561 U.S. 358, 406, (2010).

21. Courts have found that the Suspension Clause protects Petitioner’s rights to habeas relief because of the inadequacy of the motion to reopen process, *See Sean B. v. McAleenan*, 412 F. Supp. 3d 472, 490 (D.N.J. 2019) (“I am most moved here by the constitutional necessity of a stay under the Suspension Clause, *see supra*, and the likelihood of a violation of Petitioner’s procedural and constitutional rights if it is not granted. Petitioner may or may not prevail before the BIA or the Court of Appeals; the Constitution requires, however, that his opportunity to put his case be

preserved); *Sukwanputra v. Barr*, No. 19-3965, 2019 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 159558, at *7-8 (E.D. Pa. Sep. 19, 2019); *Compere v. Nielsen*, 2019 DNH 017, 358 F. Supp. 3d 170, 182, (D.N.H. Jan. 24, 2019); *Siahaan v. Madrigal*, No. PWG-20-02618, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 184193 (D. Md. Oct. 5, 2020); *Devitri v. Cronen*, 289 F. Supp. 3d 294 (D. Mass. Feb. 1, 2018); *Ibrahim v. Acosta*, No. 17-cv-24574, 2018 WL 582520, at *5-6 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 26, 2018); *Jimenez v. Nielsen*, 334 F.Supp.3d 370, 381-82 (D. Mass. 2018). Other courts have found that it was necessary to apply the canon of constitutional avoidance to avoid ruling on the Suspension Clause issues raised. *S.N.C. v. Sessions*, No. 18 CIV. 7680 (LGS), 2018 WL 6175902, at *3 (S.D.N.Y. Nov. 26, 2018); *Sied v. Nielson*, No. 17-cv-06785, 2018 WL 1142202, at *31-67 (N.D. Cal. Mar. 2, 2018).

EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

22. No statutory exhaustion requirement applies to a petition challenging immigration detention under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. *See, e.g., Montano v. Texas*, 867 F.3d 540, 542 (5th Cir. 2017) (“Unlike 28 U.S.C. § 2254, Section 2241’s text does not require exhaustion.”); *Robinson v. Wade*, 686 F.2d 298, 303 n.8 (5th Cir. 1982) (“[S]ection 2241 contains no statutory requirement of exhaustion like that found in section 2254(b) . . .”).

23. Petitioner’s claims—that his detention is unconstitutional because it contravenes the protections of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments—are unrelated to any legitimate governmental purpose and therefore are not subject to any statutory requirement of administrative exhaustion, and thus, exhaustion is not a jurisdictional prerequisite. *See McCarthy v. Madigan*, 503 U.S. 140, 144 (1992). To the extent that any prudential considerations might lead the Court to consider requiring exhaustion as a matter of discretion, the Supreme Court has recognized that courts should not require exhaustion where there is an “unreasonable or indefinite timeframe for administrative action.” *Id.* at 147. Exhaustion is thus not appropriate where the petitioner “may suffer irreparable harm if unable to secure immediate judicial consideration of [her] claim.” *Id.* Because Petitioner is

in detention, wherein each moment of his unconstitutional incarceration implicates irreparable harm, only this Court can consider his claim.

24. Finally, the inevitable denial of an appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals of Petitioner's bond denial or denial of future requests for bond on the grounds of "mandatory detention" pursuant to *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* demonstrate that there are no meaningful and genuine administrative remedies or opportunities for Petitioner to challenge his detention. See *Beharry v. Ashcroft*, 329 F.3d 51, 62 (2d Cir. 2003) (Sotomayor, J.) (as amended) (judicial exhaustion may be excused when "available remedies provide no genuine opportunity for adequate relief" or exhaustion "would be futile").

STATEMENT OF FACTS

25. In December 2012, the Petitioner crossed the US/Mexico border.

26. Petitioner was previously in removal proceedings and was ordered removed on October 4, 2024. A timely-filed appeal of his removal order has been pending before the Board of Immigration Appeals since October of 2024.

27. On September 12, 2025, ICE detained Petitioner en route to his employment and eventually sent him to the Pine Prairie ICE Processing Center in Pine Prairie.

28. On September 24, 2025, an Immigration Judge at the Oakdale Immigration Court held that it lacked jurisdiction to assess Petitioner's request for bond on the basis that he is subject to mandatory detention pursuant to *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

PETITIONER IS NOT DETAINED PURSUANT TO INA § 235(b)

29. Recently, the BIA has vacated and overruled decades of analysis regarding what statutory detention scheme for people who have entered without inspection. In *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, the BIA held that all noncitizens who enter without inspection are subject to mandatory detention under

INA § 235(b)(2). 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). It created a sweeping new rule that strips most noncitizens who entered without inspection of the right to seek bond from an IJ, regardless of how long they have been residing in the country and where they were apprehended by immigration authorities. In the interest of judicial economy, the Plaintiff chooses to address this hypothetical argument, in the event that DHS chooses to ignore decades of legal analysis regarding statutory interpretation in favor of *Matter of Yajure Hurtado, supra*.

30. The INA prescribes three basic forms of detention for noncitizens in removal proceedings. First, INA § 236 authorizes the detention of noncitizens in standard non-expedited removal proceedings before an IJ. *See* INA § 236; 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. Individuals in INA § 236(a) detention are entitled to a bond hearing at the outset of their detention, *see* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.19(a), 1236.1(d), while noncitizens who have been arrested, charged with, or convicted of certain crimes are subject to mandatory detention, *see* INA § 236(c). Second, the INA provides for mandatory detention of noncitizens subject to expedited removal under INA § 235(b)(1) and for other recent arrivals seeking admission referred to under INA § 235(b)(2). Finally, the Act also provides for detention of noncitizens who have been previously ordered removed, including individuals in withholding-only proceedings, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)–(b).

31. The detention provisions at INA § 236(a) and § 235(b)(2) were enacted as part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (“IIRIRA”) of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104–208, Div. C, §§ 302–03, 110 Stat. 3009–546, 3009–582 to 3009–583, 3009–585. Section 236(c) was most recently amended earlier this year by the LRA, Pub. L. No. 119–1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025).

32. Following the enactment of the IIRIRA, the Executive Office of Immigration Review drafted new regulations explaining that, in general, people who entered the country without inspection were not considered detained under INA § 235 and that they were instead detained under INA § 236(a). *See* Inspection and Expedited Removal of Aliens; Detention and Removal of Aliens;

Conduct of Removal Proceedings; Asylum Procedures, 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997). In the decades that followed, most noncitizens who entered without inspection—unless they were subject to some other detention authority—received bond hearings. This practice was also consistent with the practice prior the enactment of the IIRIRA, in which noncitizens who were not deemed “arriving” were entitled to a custody hearing before an IJ or other hearing officer. See 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a) (1994); *see also* H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 229 (1996) (noting that § 1226(a) simply “restates” the detention authority previously found at § 1252(a)).

33. On July 8, 2025, DHS issued a memo to all employees of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) stating that “[t]his message serves as notice that DHS, in coordination with the Department of Justice (DOJ), has revisited its legal position on detention and release authorities. DHS has determined that section 235 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), rather than section 236, is the applicable immigration detention authority for all applicants for admission. The following interim guidance is intended to ensure immediate and consistent application of the Department’s legal interpretation while additional operational guidance is developed.” The memo further stated DHS’ new position with regard to custody determinations as follows:

An “applicant for admission” is an alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States, whether or not at a designated port of arrival. INA § 235(a)(1). **Effective immediately, it is the position of DHS that such aliens are subject to detention under INA § 235(b) and may not be released from ICE custody except by INA § 212(d)(5) parole.** These aliens are also ineligible for a custody redetermination hearing (“bond hearing”) before an immigration judge and may not be released for the duration of their removal proceedings absent a parole by DHS. For custody purposes, these aliens are now treated in the same manner that “arriving aliens” have historically been treated. **The only aliens eligible for a custody determination and release on recognizance, bond, or other conditions under INA § 236(a) during removal proceedings are aliens admitted to the United States and chargeable with deportability under INA § 237, with the exception of those subject to mandatory detention under INA § 236(c).**

Moving forward, ICE will not issue Form I-286, Notice of Custody Determination, to

applicants for admission because Form I-286 applies by its terms only to custody determinations under INA § 236 and part 236 of Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations. With a limited exception for certain habeas petitioners, on which the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA) will individually advise, if Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) previously conducted a custody determination for an applicant for admission still detained in ICE custody, ERO will affirmatively cancel the Form I-286.

See <https://www.aila.org/ice-memo-interim-guidance-regarding-detention-authority-for-applications-for-admission> (emphasis added).

34. As a result, according to DHS all noncitizens who have entered the United States without inspection and are subject to the grounds of inadmissibility, including long-time U.S. residents, are now considered to be subject to mandatory detention under INA § 235(b) and ineligible for release on bond. Conversely, according to DHS “[t]he only aliens eligible for a custody determination and release on recognizance, bond, or other conditions under INA § 236(a) during removal proceedings are aliens admitted to the United States and chargeable with deportability under INA § 237, with the exception of those subject to mandatory detention under INA § 236(c).” *Id.*

35. The plain text of INA § 236 demonstrates that it, not INA § 235(b), applies to Petitioner’s detention. See 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) (providing for arrest and detention of aliens pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States). The Fifth Circuit recognizes that § 1226(a) “applies to aliens who have already entered the United States” and is the “default rule” governing their arrest and detention pending removal. *Texas v. United States*, 21 F.4th 205, 222-23 (5th Cir. 2021). As the Supreme Court has remarked, INA § 236(a) “sets out the default rule: The Attorney General may issue a warrant for the arrest and detention of a[] [noncitizen] ‘pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States.’” *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 288 (2018) (quoting INA § 236(a)). Section 236(c) carves out a statutory category of noncitizens for whom detention is mandatory, consisting of individuals who have committed certain “enumerated . . . criminal offenses [or] terrorist activities.” INA § 236(c).

Among the individuals carved out and subject to mandatory detention are certain categories of “inadmissible” noncitizens. *See* INA § 236(c)(1)(A), (D), (E). This is in stark contrast with mandatory detention provision under INA § 235(b)(2), which “supplement[s] § [236’s] detention scheme.” *Diaz*, 53 F.4th at 1197. Section 235(b) “applies primarily to [noncitizens] seeking entry into the United States (‘applicants for admission’ in the language of the statute).” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 297; *see* INA § 235(b) (entitled “Inspection of applicants for admission”). September 1, 2023 BIA Decision (The BIA remanded the case so that the respondent may receive a custody redetermination hearing before the Immigration Judge. Noting that “respondent last entered the United States without being admitted or paroled” and holding that “we are unaware of any precedent stating that an Immigration Judge lacks authority to redetermine the custody conditions of a respondent in removal proceedings under the circumstances here.”).

36. The BIA’s decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* is not binding on this Court, and this Court “must exercise independent judgment in determining the meaning of statutory provisions.” *Loper Bright Enters. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 394 (2024).

37. The District Court in the Western District of Louisiana has consistently found that individuals similarly situated to Petitioner are not subject to mandatory detention under section 1225 and instead are subject to detention under Section 1226 and therefore entitled to a bond hearing. *See Kostak v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2472136 (W.D. La. Aug. 27, 2025) (Court held “Petitioner will likely succeed on the merits that the determination that her detention is mandatory under Section 1225 was erroneous and that she is entitled to a bond hearing under Section 1226(a)”. The Court granted the Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction). *See also Lopez Santos v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2642278 (W.D. La. Sept. 11, 2025)(Court held that “Petitioner is not subject to mandatory detention under § 1225 and instead is subject to detention under § 1226(a) and is entitled to a bond hearing”).

38. The BIA’s decision is further contrary to the approach of many federal districts courts to interpreting 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225 and 1226. *See Doe v. Moniz*, 2025 WL 2576819 (D. Mass. Sept. 5, 2025) (finding that detaining the petitioner without bond violated his due process rights, and because he had been residing in the United States for some time, he was not “seeking admission” when he was detained, so section 1225 did not apply to him); *Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, 2025 WL 2371588 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025) (concluding that the plain language and structure of the statute support the conclusion that the mandatory detention provision of § 1225, which applies to noncitizens “seeking admission,” did not apply to the noncitizen petitioner who had never been lawfully admitted but had been residing in the United States for over two years, and holding that the petitioner was excused from the administrative exhaustion requirement because he had no genuine opportunity for adequate relief and raised a substantial constitutional question); *Leal-Hernandez v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2430025 (D. Md. Aug. 24, 2025) (rejecting the government’s statutory construction and finding that the petitioner, who had been present in the United States for more than 20 years at the time of his arrest, is not an “arriving alien” and is therefore subject to § 1226(a), under which he should be released on bond); *Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2609425 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 9, 2025) (disagreeing with BIA’s analysis in *Yajure Hurtado*). *See also Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2496379 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025); *Carmona-Lorenzo v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2531521 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025); *O.E. v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2466670 (D. Minn. Aug. 27, 2025); *Jacinto v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2402271 (D. Neb. Aug. 19, 2025); *Caicedo Hinestroza v. Kaiser*, 2025 WL 2606983 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 9, 2025); *Cuevas Guzman v. Andrews*, 2025 WL 2617256 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 9, 2025); *Vasquez Garcia et al. v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2549431 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 3, 2025); *Arrazola-Gonzalez v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2379285 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 2025); *Rosado v. Figueroa*, 2025 WL 2337099 (D. Ariz. Aug. 11, 2025).

39. In *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, a district court in the Western District of Washington

preliminarily enjoined the Executive Office for Immigration Review (“EOIR”) in Tacoma, Washington from denying bond pursuant to INA § 235(b). 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239 (W.D. Wash. 2025).

40. More recently, on July 28, 2025, a court in the Central District of California issued a preliminary injunction enjoining DHS from continuing to detain similarly situated noncitizens unless they are provided with an individualized bond hearing. *Lazaro Maldonado Bautista et al. v. Ernesto Santacruz Jr. et al.*, No. 5:25-cv-01873-SSS-BFM (C.D. Cal. filed 2025) (noting that INA § 235 does not apply to noncitizens who entered without inspection or parole).

41. Thus, the plain text of INA § 236(a) applies to noncitizens like Petitioner. The fact that INA § 236(a) is the default rule for arrest and detention and that section (c) carves out exceptions further demonstrates that the discretionary bond procedures apply to noncitizens like Petitioner who are present without being admitted or paroled and have not been implicated in any crimes set forth in subsection (c). The Supreme Court has held that when Congress creates “specific exceptions” to a statute’s applicability, it “proves” that absent those exceptions, the statute generally applies. *See Shady Grove Orthopedic Assocs., P.A. v. Allstate Ins. Co.*, 559 U.S. 393, 400 (2010).

42. The recent enactment of LRA further supports this finding. The Act added language to INA § 236(c) that directly references people who have entered without inspection or who are present without authorization. *See Laken Riley Act*, Pub. L. No. 119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025). Pursuant to these amendments, noncitizens charged as inadmissible under INA § 212(a)(6)(A) (the inadmissibility ground for entry without inspection) or INA § (a)(7)(A) (the inadmissibility ground for lacking valid documentation to enter the United States) and who have been arrested, charged with, or convicted of new certain crimes (not previously covered by INA § 236(c)) are now subject to § 1226(c)’s mandatory detention provisions. *See* INA § 236(c)(1)(E). By including such individuals under INA § 236(c), Congress reaffirmed that § 236(a) covers noncitizens who are not

subject to section (c) but are charged as removable under § 212(a)(6)(A) or 212(a)(7). *Gieg v. Howarth*, 244 F.3d 775, 776 (9th Cir. 2001) (“[w]hen Congress acts to amend a statute, [courts] presume it intends its amendment to have real and substantial effect.”).

43. If INA § 236(a) did not apply to Petitioner—like DHS contends—vast portions of the INA § 236 would be rendered meaningless. This is because DHS contends that noncitizens like Respondent who entered without inspection are really “applicants for admission” and therefore subject to mandatory detention under INA § 235(b)(2). “In construing a statute, a court should give effect, if possible, to every word and every provision Congress used.” *Asadi v. G.E. Energy United States, L.L.C.*, 720 F.3d 620, 622 (5th Cir. 2013).

44. It is noteworthy that “[w]hen Congress adopts a new law against the backdrop of a longstanding administrative construction,” courts “generally presume[] the new provision should be understood to work in harmony with what has come before.” *Monsalvo Velazquez v. Bondi*, 145 S. Ct. 1232, 1242 (2025) (internal quotation marks omitted). Here, DHS’ sudden reversal—particularly after Congress just recently amended INA § 236 to include the LRA provisions—further undermines the Department’s argument that the detention authority for noncitizens like Respondent lies under INA § 235(b) instead of INA § 236(a).

45. As noted above, DHS’ new position contends that Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under INA § 235(b)(A) because he is an “applicant for admission.” But INA § 235(b)(A) concerns a completely different category of noncitizens. In *Jennings*, the Supreme Court discussed INA § 235 as part of a process that “generally begins at the Nation’s borders and ports of entry, where the Government must determine whether a [noncitizen] seeking to enter the country is admissible.” 583 U.S. at 287. As for INA § 236, Jennings described it as governing “the process of arresting and detaining” noncitizens who are living “inside the United States” but “may still be removed,” including noncitizens “who were inadmissible at the time of entry.” *Id.* at 288. The

Court then summarized the distinction as follows: “In sum, U.S. immigration law authorizes the Government to detain certain [noncitizens] seeking admission into the country under §§ [235](b)(1) and (b)(2). It also authorizes the Government to detain certain [noncitizens] already in the country pending the outcome of removal proceedings under §§ [236](a) and (c).” *Id.* at 289 (emphasis added); *see also Dep’t of Homeland Sec. v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 140 (2020) (a noncitizen “who tries to enter the country illegally is treated as an applicant for admission . . . and a [noncitizen] who is detained shortly after unlawful entry cannot be said to have effected an entry” (emphasis added) (cleaned up)).

46. DHS’ newfound position misconstrues the phrase “applicant for admission” to suggest that every person, other than those who have been admitted, are subject to mandatory detention. INA § 235(a)(1) defines an “applicant for admission” as a person who is “present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States.” INA § 235(a)(1). According to DHS, INA § 235(b)(1) generally applies to arriving aliens and INA § 235(b)(2) serves as a broader catchall provision for all applicants for admission not covered by INA § 235(b)(1). In other words, DHS argues that every noncitizen who entered without parole or inspection is an “applicant for admission” pursuant to § 235(a)(1) and is therefore subject to mandatory detention. However, INA § 235(b)(2)(A) states in full that: Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), 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. *Id.* (emphasis added).

47. Thus, for section 235(b)(2)(A) to apply, several conditions must be met—in particular, an “examining immigration officer” must determine that the individual is: (1) an “applicant for admission”; (2) “seeking admission”; and (3) “not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted.” DHS’ position conveniently overlooks these conditions and treats “applicants for

admission” the same as those “seeking admission.” The phrase “seeking admission” is undefined in the statute but necessarily implies some sort of present-tense action. *See Matter of M-D-C-V-*, 28 I. & N. Dec. 18, 23 (BIA 2020) (“The ‘use of the present progressive, like use of the present participle, denotes an ongoing process.’” (quoting *Al Otro Lado v. Wolf*, 952 F.3d 999, 1011-12 (9th Cir. 2020))). Indeed, only those who take affirmative acts, like submitting an “application for admission,” are those that can be said to be “seeking admission” within § 235(b)(2)(A).

48. By limiting (b)(2) to those “seeking admission,” Congress confirmed that it did not intend to sweep into this section individuals like Petitioner who have already entered and are now residing in the United States. *See Marques v. Lynch*, 834 F.3d 549, 562 (5th Cir. 2016) (holding that the documentation requirements of 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(7) apply only to an ‘application for admission’ and not to an alien previously validly admitted who later adjusts status). Accordingly, INA § 235(b)(2)’s reference to ‘applicants for admission’ must be read in their context and with a view to their place in the overall statutory scheme, consistent with the Fifth Circuit’s understanding of “application for admission” as the “application for admission into the United States” rather than visa issuance only. *See id.* at 558 (quoting 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(4)).”

49. The Board’s recent decision in *Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 66 (BIA 2025) reinforces this position. The Board held that a noncitizen who was apprehended “approximately 5.4 miles away from a designated port of entry and 100 yards north of the border” was detained under INA § 235(b) and not INA § 236(a). *Id.* at 67. In other words, the noncitizen was apprehended upon arrival. The Board then explained that such persons are properly treated as “arriv[ing] in the United States,” given that they are “detained shortly after unlawful entry,” and “[are] apprehended’ just inside ‘the southern border, and not at a point of entry, on the same day [they] crossed into the United States.’” *Id.* at 68 (quoting *Matter of M-D-C-V-*, 28 I. & N. Dec. 18, 23 (BIA 2020)). Notably, the Board’s decision supports the argument that INA § 236(a) “applies to [noncitizens]

already present in the United States,” while INA § 235(b) “applies primarily to [noncitizens] seeking entry into the United States and authorizes DHS to detain a[] [noncitizen] without a warrant at the border.” *Id.* at 70 (internal quotation marks omitted).

50. The broader statutory structure of immigration detention authority also demonstrates the inapplicability of INA § 235(b) to Petitioner’s case. *See King*, 576 U.S. at 492 (explaining that an act’s “broader structure” can be a useful tool “to determine [a statute’s] meaning.”); *see also Biden v. Texas*, 597 U.S. 785, 799–800 (2022) (looking to statutory structure to inform interpretation of INA provision). This is particularly true where “a provision . . . may seem ambiguous in isolation.” *United Sav. Ass’n of Tex. v. Timbers of Inwood Forest Associates, Ltd.*, 484 U.S. 365, 371 (1988). In such situations, the statute’s meaning “is often clarified by the remainder of the statutory scheme . . . because only one of the permissible meanings produces a substantive effect that is compatible with the rest of the law.” *Id.*

51. The broader text of INA § 235 reinforces this understanding of the two sections’ structure and application. INA § 235 concerns “expedited removal of inadmissible arriving [noncitizens].” INA § 235 (emphasis added). Paragraph (b)(1) encompasses only the “inspection” of certain “arriving” noncitizens and other recent entrants the Attorney General designates, and only those who are “inadmissible” for having misrepresented information to an inspecting officer or for lacking documents to enter the United States. Paragraph (b)(2) is similarly limited to people applying for admission when they arrive in the United States. The title explains that this paragraph addresses the “[i]nspection of other [noncitizens],” i.e., those noncitizens who are “seeking admission,” but whom (b)(1) does not address. *Id.* § 235(b)(2), (b)(2)(A).

52. By limiting (b)(2) to those “seeking admission,” Congress confirmed that it did not intend to sweep into this section individuals like Respondent who have already entered and are now residing in the United States. Otherwise, the language “seeking admission” in INA § 235(b)(2)

serve no purpose, as the statute specifies that it is addressing a person who is both an “applicant for admission” and who is determined to be “seeking admission.” *Id.*

53. Furthermore, subparagraph (b)(2)(C) addresses the “[t]reatment of [noncitizens] arriving from contiguous territory,” i.e., “the case of [a noncitizen] . . . who is arriving on land.” INA § 235(b)(2)(C). This language further underscores Congress’s temporal requirements in INA § 235 and focus on those who are arriving into the United States. Similarly, the title of § 235 refers to the “inspection” of “inadmissible arriving” noncitizens. *See, e.g., Dubin v. United States*, 599 U.S. 110, 120–21 (2023) (relying on section title to help construe statute).

54. Finally, the entire statute is premised on the idea that an inspection occurs near the border and shortly after arrival, as the statute repeatedly refers to “examining immigration officer[s],” INA § 235(b)(2)(A), (b)(4), and sets out procedures for “inspection[s]” of people “arriving in the United States,” *Id.* § 235(a)(3), (b)(1), (b)(2), (d).

55. It is no surprise that *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* has been rejected by numerous District Courts. 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).

56. The Court possesses jurisdiction to release Petitioner on bond or, in the alternative, release on his own recognizance, pursuant to INA § 236(a).

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT ONE

Violation of 8 U.S.C. 1226(a) and Associated Regulations

57. Petitioner realleges and incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations included in the above-numbered paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

58. Petitioner may be detained, if at all, pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a).

59. Under § 1226(a) and its associated regulations, Petitioner must be released or provided with a bond hearing. *See* 8 C.F.R. 236.1(d) & 1003.19(a)-(f).

60. Petitioner's continuing detention is therefore unlawful.

COUNT TWO
Violation of Fifth Amendment Right to Due Process
(Failure to Provide Bond Hearing Under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a))

61. Petitioner realleges and incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations included in the above-numbered paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

62. Because Petitioner was arrested inside the United States and is subject to detention, if at all, under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution requires that Petitioner receives a bond hearing with strong procedural protections. *See Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 41; *Doe*, 11 F.4th at 2; *Brito*, 22 F.4th at 256-57.

63. Petitioner has not been, and will not be, provided with a bond hearing as required by law.

64. Petitioner's continuing detention is therefore unlawful.

COUNT THREE
Violation of Fifth Amendment Right to Due Process
(Failure to Provide an Individualized Hearing for Domestic Civil Detention)

65. Petitioner realleges and incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations included in the above-numbered paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

66. "In our society liberty is the norm, and detention prior to trial or without trial is the carefully limited exception." *United States v. Salerno*, 481 U.S. 739, 755 (1987).

67. The Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause specifically forbids the Government to "deprive[]" any "person . . . of . . . liberty . . . without due process of law." U.S. CONST. amend. V.

68. "[T]he Due Process Clause applies to all 'persons' within the United States, including aliens, whether their presence is lawful, unlawful, temporary, or permanent." *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 693 (2001); *see Shaughnessy v. United States ex rel. Mezei*, 345 U.S. 206, 212 (1953) ("[A]liens who have once passed through our gates, even illegally, may be expelled only after proceedings conforming to traditional standards of fairness encompassed in due process of

law”); *cf. Department of Homeland Security v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 139-40 (2020) (holding noncitizens due process rights were limited where the person was not residing in the United States, but rather had been arrested 25 yards into U.S. territory, apparently moments after he crossed the border while he was still “on the threshold”).

69. “Freedom from imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty” protected by the Due Process Clause. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. 678 at (2001).

70. The Supreme Court has thus “repeatedly recognized that civil commitment for any purpose constitutes a significant deprivation of liberty that requires due process protection,” including an individualized detention hearing. *Addington v. Texas*, 441 U.S. 418, 425 (1979) (collecting cases); *see also Salerno*, 481 U.S. at 755 (requiring individualized hearing and strong procedural protections for detention of people charged with federal crimes); *Foucha v. Louisiana*, 504 U.S. 71, 81-83 (1992) (same for civil commitment for mental illness); *Kansas v. Hendricks*, 521 U.S. 346, 357 (1997) (same for commitment of sex offenders).

71. Petitioner was arrested inside the United States and is being held without being provided any individualized detention hearing

72. Petitioner’s continuing detention is therefore unlawful, regardless of what statute might apply to purportedly authorize such detention.

COUNT FOUR
Violation of Fifth Amendment Right to Due Process (Substantive Due Process)

73. Petitioner realleges and incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations included in the above-numbered paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

74. Because Petitioner is not being provided a bond hearing, the government is not taking any steps to effectuate its substantive obligation to ensure that immigration detention bears a

“reasonable relation” to the purposes of immigration detention (i.e., the prevention of flight and danger to the community during the pendency of removal proceedings) and is not impermissibly punitive. *See Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690; *Demore*, 538 U.S. at 532-33 (Kennedy, J., concurring).

75. Petitioner’s detention is therefore unlawful, regardless of what statute might apply to purportedly authorize such detention.

COUNT FIVE

Violation of Fourth Amendment Protections Against Unreasonable Seizures

76. Petitioner realleges and incorporates by reference all of the aforementioned allegations included in the above-numbered paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

77. The Fourth Amendment protection against “unreasonable searches and seizures” is a protection against “arrest without probable cause.” *Club Retro, L.L.C. v. Hilton*, 568 F.3d 181, 206 (5th Cir. 2009).

78. Petitioner was arrested by federal immigration agents without justification.

79. The government lacked any information of changed or exigent circumstances that would justify Petitioner’s sudden detention at the time of arrest.

80. His arrest was therefore an unreasonable seizure that violated his right to be secure in his person.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioner prays that this Court grant the following relief:

1. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
2. Issue an order prohibiting Respondents from transferring Petitioner outside of this judicial district during the pendency of these habeas proceedings;
3. Declare that Respondents’ determination that Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention is unconstitutional because he is subject to Section 1226(a) proceedings, not the expedited

removal proceedings applicable to Section 1225(b).

4. Issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus and order Petitioner's immediate release because he is neither a flight risk, nor a danger to the community, and therefore cannot be incarcerated in immigration detention;
5. Award Petitioner his costs and reasonable attorneys' fees in this action as provided for by the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412; and,
6. Grant such further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: November 10, 2025

/s/ David J. Rozas
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Respectfully submitted,

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COUNSEL FOR PETITIONER
** Pro hac vice application forthcoming*

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

I am submitting this verification on behalf of the Petitioner because I am one of the Petitioner's attorneys. I have discussed with the Petitioner's legal team the events described in this Petition. On the basis of those discussions, on information and belief, I hereby verify that the factual statements made in the attached Verified Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: Baton Rouge, LA
November 10, 2025

By: /s/ David Rozas
David J. Rozas, Esq
COUNSEL FOR PETITIONER