

1 ADAM GORDON  
United States Attorney  
2 TOM MERRITT  
Washington State Bar No. 27723  
3 Assistant U.S. Attorney  
Office of the U.S. Attorney  
4 880 Front Street, Room 6293  
San Diego, CA 92101-8893  
5 Telephone: (619) 546-7632  
Facsimile: (619) 546-7751  
6 Email: thomas.merritt@usdoj.gov

7 Attorneys for Respondents

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

11 JUAN PABLO OCHOA CORREA,

12 Petitioner,

13 v.

14 DANIEL BRIGHTMAN, et al.,

15 Respondents.  
16

Case No.: 25-cv-3491-TWR-AHG

**RESPONDENTS' RETURN TO  
HABEAS PETITION**

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1 I. Introduction and Summary of Argument

2 Petitioner has filed a habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241. Petitioner is  
3 currently in removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a and is charged with  
4 inadmissibility under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), as an alien present in the United  
5 States who has not been admitted or paroled. Accordingly, Petitioner is mandatorily  
6 detained in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody pursuant to 8 U.S.C.  
7 § 1225(b)(2)(A).

8 On September 5, 2025, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) ruled on this  
9 issue in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). After detailed  
10 analysis, the BIA determined that based on the plain language of section 235(b)(2)(A)  
11 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), Immigration Judges  
12 lack authority to hear bond requests or to grant bond to noncitizens who are present in  
13 the United States without admission. Other district courts have followed the BIA’s  
14 approach. *See, e.g., Valencia v. Chestnut*, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 3205133 (E.D.  
15 Cal. Nov. 17, 2025); *Alonzo v. Noem*, --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 3208284 (E.D. Cal.  
16 Nov. 17, 2025); *Cabanas v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-cv-04830, 2025 WL 3171331 (S.D. Tex.  
17 Nov. 13, 2025); *Altamirano Ramos v. Lyons*, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 3199872  
18 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 12, 2025); *Mejia Olalde v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-00168-JMD, 2025 WL  
19 313942 (E.D. Mo. Nov. 10, 2025); *Silva Oliveira v. Patterson*, No. 6:25-cv-01463,  
20 2025 WL 3095972 (W.D. La. Nov. 4, 2025); *Barrios Sandoval v. Acuna*, No. 6:25-cv-  
21 01467, 2025 WL 3048926 (W.D. La. Oct. 31, 2025); *Cirrus Rojas v. Olson*, No. 25-  
22 cv-1437-bhl, 2025 WL 3033967 (E.D. Wis. Oct. 30, 2025); *Vargas Lopez v. Trump*, -  
23 -- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 2780351 (D. Neb. Sept. 30, 2025); *Chavez v. Noem*, --- F.  
24 Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 2730228 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 24, 2025); *Pena v. Hyde*, No. 25-  
25 11983-NMG, 2025 WL 2108913 (D. Mass. July 28, 2025).

26 Based on the arguments below, the Court should deny any requests for relief and  
27 dismiss the petition.

28

1 **II. Statutory Background**

2 **A. Individuals Seeking Admission to the United States**

3 For over a century, this country’s immigration laws have authorized immigration  
4 officials to charge noncitizens as removable from the country, arrest those subject to  
5 removal, and detain them during removal proceedings. *See Abel v. United States*, 362  
6 U.S. 217, 232–37 (1960). “The rule has been clear for decades: ‘[d]etention during  
7 deportation proceedings [i]s ... constitutionally valid.’” *Banyee v. Garland*, 115 F.4th  
8 928 (8th Cir. 2024) (quoting *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 523 (2003)), *rehearing by*  
9 *panel and en banc denied*, *Banyee v. Bondi*, No. 22-2252, 2025 WL 837914 (8th Cir.  
10 Mar. 18, 2025); *see Carlson v. Landon*, 342 U.S. 524, 538 (1952) (“Detention is  
11 necessarily a part of this deportation procedure.”); *Demore*, 538 U.S. at 523 n.7 (“In  
12 fact, prior to 1907 there was no provision permitting bail for *any* aliens during the  
13 pendency of their deportation proceedings.”) (emphasis in original). The Supreme  
14 Court even recognized that removal proceedings “‘would be [in] vain if those accused  
15 could not be held in custody pending the inquiry into their true character.’” *Demore*,  
16 538 U.S. at 523 (quoting *Wong Wing v. United States*, 163 U.S. 228, 235 (1896)).  
17 Over the century, Congress has enacted a multi-layered statutory scheme for the civil  
18 detention of aliens pending a decision on removal, during the administrative and  
19 judicial review of removal orders, and in preparation for removal. *See generally* 8  
20 U.S.C. §§ 1225, 1226, 1231. It is the interplay between these statutes that is at issue  
21 here.

22 **B. Detention Under 8 U.S.C. § 1225**

23 “To implement its immigration policy, the Government must be able to decide  
24 (1) who may enter the country and (2) who may stay here after entering.” *Jennings v.*  
25 *Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 286 (2018). Section 1225 governs inspection, the initial step  
26 in this process, *id.*, stating that all “applicants for admission . . . shall be inspected by  
27 immigration officers.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(3). The statute—in a provision entitled  
28 “ALIENS TREATED AS APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION”—dictates who “shall be

1 deemed for purposes of this chapter an applicant for admission,” defining that term to  
2 encompass *both* an alien “present in the United States who has not been admitted *or*  
3 [one] who arrives in the United States . . . .” *Id.* § 1225(a)(1) (emphasis added). Section  
4 1225(b) governs the inspection procedures applicable to all applicants for admission.  
5 They “fall into one of two categories, those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered  
6 by § 1225(b)(2).” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287.

7 Section 1225(b)(1) applies to arriving aliens and “certain other” aliens “initially  
8 determined to be inadmissible due to fraud, misrepresentation, or lack of valid  
9 documentation.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287; 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (iii). These  
10 aliens are generally subject to expedited removal proceedings. *See* 8 U.S.C. §  
11 1225(b)(1)(A)(i). But if the alien “indicates an intention to apply for asylum . . . or a  
12 fear of persecution,” immigration officers will refer the alien for a credible fear  
13 interview. *Id.* § 1225(b)(1)(A)(ii). An alien “with a credible fear of persecution” is  
14 “detained for further consideration of the application for asylum.” *Id.*  
15 § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii). If the alien does not indicate an intent to apply for asylum, express  
16 a fear of persecution, or is “found not to have such a fear,” they are detained until  
17 removed from the United States. *Id.* §§ 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (B)(iii)(IV).

18 Section 1225(b)(2) is “broader” and “serves as a catchall provision.” *Jennings*,  
19 583 U.S. at 287. It “applies to all applicants for admission not covered by §  
20 1225(b)(1).” *Id.* Under § 1225(b)(2), an alien “who is an applicant for admission” shall  
21 be detained for a removal proceeding “if the examining immigration officer determines  
22 that [the] alien seeking admission is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be  
23 admitted.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A); *see Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216,  
24 220 (BIA 2025) (“[A]liens who are present in the United States without admission are  
25 applicants for admission as defined under section 235(b)(2)(A) of the INA, 8 U.S.C.  
26 § 1225(b)(2)(A), and must be detained for the duration of their removal proceedings.”);  
27 *Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I&N Dec. 66, 68 (BIA 2025) (“for aliens arriving in and seeking  
28 admission into the United States who are placed directly in full removal proceedings,

1 section 235(b)(2)(A) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), mandates detention ‘until  
2 removal proceedings have concluded.’”) (citing *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 299). However,  
3 DHS has the sole discretionary authority to temporarily release on parole “any alien  
4 applying for admission to the United States” on a “case-by-case basis for urgent  
5 humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.” *Id.* § 1182(d)(5)(A); see *Biden v.*  
6 *Texas*, 597 U.S. 785, 806 (2022).

7 **C. Detention Under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)**

8 Section 1226 provides for arrest and detention “pending a decision on whether  
9 the alien is to be removed from the United States.” 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). Under § 1226(a),  
10 the government may detain an alien during his removal proceedings, release him on  
11 bond, or release him on conditional parole. By regulation, immigration officers can  
12 release an alien who demonstrates that he “would not pose a danger to property or  
13 persons” and “is likely to appear for any future proceeding.” 8 C.F.R. § 236.1(c)(8).  
14 An alien can also request a custody redetermination (i.e., a bond hearing) by an IJ at  
15 any time before a final order of removal is issued. See 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); 8 C.F.R. §§  
16 236.1(d)(1), 1236.1(d)(1), 1003.19.

17 At a custody redetermination, the IJ may continue detention or release the alien  
18 on bond or conditional parole. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); 8 C.F.R. § 1236.1(d)(1). IJs have  
19 broad discretion in deciding whether to release an alien on bond. *In re Guerra*, 24 I&N  
20 Dec. 37, 39-40 (BIA 2006) (listing nine factors for IJs to consider). But regardless of  
21 the factors IJs consider, an alien “who presents a danger to persons or property should  
22 not be released during the pendency of removal proceedings.” *Id.* at 38.

23 Section 1226(a) does not grant “any *right* to release on bond.” *Matter of D-J-*,  
24 23 I&N Dec. at 575 (citing *Carlson v. Landon*, 342 U.S. 524, 534 (1952) (emphasis in  
25 original). Nor does it address the applicable burden of proof or particular factors that  
26 must be considered. See generally 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). Rather, it grants DHS and the  
27 Attorney General broad discretionary authority to determine, after arrest, whether to  
28 detain or release an alien during his or her removal proceedings. See *id.* If, after the

1 bond hearing, either party disagrees with the decision of the IJ, that party may appeal  
2 the decision to the BIA. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1(d)(3), 1003.19(f), 1003.38, 1236.1(d)(3).

3 Included within the Attorney General and DHS’s discretionary authority are  
4 limits on the delegation to the immigration court. Under 8 C.F.R.  
5 § 1003.19(h)(2)(i)(B), the IJ does not have authority to redetermine the conditions of  
6 custody imposed by DHS for any arriving alien. The regulations also include a  
7 provision that allows DHS to invoke an automatic stay of any decision by an IJ to  
8 release an individual on bond when DHS files an appeal of the custody redetermination.  
9 8 C.F.R. § 1003.19(i)(2) (“The decision whether or not to file [an automatic stay] is  
10 subject to the discretion of the Secretary.”).

11 **D. Review Before the Board of Immigration Appeals**

12 The BIA is an appellate body within the Executive Office for Immigration  
13 Review (EOIR) and possesses delegated authority from the Attorney General. 8 C.F.R.  
14 §§ 1003.1(a)(1), (d)(1). The BIA is “charged with the review of those administrative  
15 adjudications under the [INA] that the Attorney General may by regulation assign to  
16 it,” including IJ custody determinations. 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.1(d)(1), 236.1, 1236.1. The  
17 BIA not only resolves particular disputes before it, but is also directed to, “through  
18 precedent decisions, [] provide clear and uniform guidance to DHS, the immigration  
19 judges, and the general public on the proper interpretation and administration of the  
20 [INA] and its implementing regulations.” *Id.* § 1003.1(d)(1). Decisions rendered by the  
21 BIA are final, except for those reviewed by the Attorney General. 8 C.F.R. §  
22 1003.1(d)(7).

23 If an automatic stay of a custody decision is invoked by DHS, regulations require  
24 the BIA to track the progress of the custody appeal “to avoid unnecessary delays in  
25 completing the record for decision.” 8 C.F.R. § 1003.6(c)(3). The stay lapses in 90  
26 days, unless the detainee seeks an extension of time to brief the custody appeal, 8  
27 C.F.R. § 1003.6(c)(4), or unless DHS seeks, and the BIA grants, a discretionary stay.  
28 8 C.F.R. § 1003.6(c)(5).

1 If the BIA denies DHS’s custody appeal, the automatic stay remains in effect for  
2 five business days. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.6(d). DHS may, during that five-day period, refer  
3 the case to the Attorney General under 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(h)(1) for consideration. *Id.*  
4 Upon referral to the Attorney General, the release is stayed for 15 business days while  
5 the case is considered. The Attorney General may extend the stay of release upon  
6 motion by DHS. *Id.*

### 7 III. Argument

#### 8 A. Claims and Requested Relief Jurisdictionally Barred

9 Petitioner bears the burden of establishing that this Court has subject matter  
10 jurisdiction over asserted claims. *See Ass’n of Am. Med. Coll. v. United States*, 217  
11 F.3d 770, 778-79 (9th Cir. 2000); *Finley v. United States*, 490 U.S. 545, 547-48 (1989).

12 In general, courts lack jurisdiction to review a decision to commence or  
13 adjudicate removal proceedings or execute removal orders. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g)  
14 (“[N]o court shall have jurisdiction to hear any cause or claim by or on behalf of any  
15 alien arising from the decision or action by the Attorney General to commence  
16 proceedings, adjudicate cases, or execute removal orders.”); *Reno v. Am.-Arab Anti-*  
17 *Discrimination Comm.*, 525 U.S. 471, 483 (1999) (“There was good reason for  
18 Congress to focus special attention upon, and make special provision for, judicial  
19 review of the Attorney General’s discrete acts of ‘commenc[ing] proceedings,  
20 adjudicat[ing] cases, [and] execut[ing] removal orders’—which represent the initiation  
21 or prosecution of various stages in the deportation process.”); *Limpin v. United States*,  
22 828 Fed. App’x 429 (9th Cir. 2020) (holding district court properly dismissed under 8  
23 U.S.C. § 1252(g) “because claims stemming from the decision to arrest and detain an  
24 alien at the commencement of removal proceedings are not within any court’s  
25 jurisdiction”). In other words, § 1252(g) removes district court jurisdiction over “three  
26 discrete actions that the Attorney General may take: her ‘decision or action’ to  
27 ‘commence proceedings, adjudicate cases, or execute removal orders.’” *Reno*, 525 U.S.  
28 at 482 (emphasis removed). Congress has explicitly foreclosed district court

1 jurisdiction over claims that necessarily arise “from the decision or action by the  
2 Attorney General to commence proceedings [and] adjudicate cases . . . .” 8 U.S.C. §  
3 1252(g).

4 Section 1252(g) also bars district courts from hearing challenges to the method  
5 by which the government chooses to commence removal proceedings, including the  
6 decision to detain an alien pending removal. *See Alvarez v. ICE*, 818 F.3d 1194, 1203  
7 (11th Cir. 2016) (“By its plain terms, [§ 1252(g)] bars us from questioning ICE’s  
8 discretionary decisions to commence removal” and bars review of “ICE’s decision to  
9 take [plaintiff] into custody and to detain him during his removal proceedings”).

10 Other courts have held, “[f]or the purposes of § 1252, the Attorney General  
11 commences proceedings against an alien when the alien is issued a Notice to Appear  
12 before an immigration court.” *Herrera-Correra v. United States*, No. 08-2941 DSF  
13 (JCx), 2008 WL 11336833, at \*3 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 11, 2008). “The Attorney General  
14 may arrest the alien against whom proceedings are commenced and detain that  
15 individual until the conclusion of those proceedings.” *Id.* at \*3. “Thus, an alien’s  
16 detention throughout this process arises from the Attorney General’s decision to  
17 commence proceedings” and review of claims arising from such detention is barred  
18 under § 1252(g). *Id.* (citing *Sissoko v. Rocha*, 509 F.3d 947, 949 (9th Cir. 2007)); *Wang*  
19 *v. United States*, No. CV-10-0389 SVW (RCx), 2010 WL 11463156, at \*6 (C.D. Cal.  
20 Aug. 8, 2018); 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g).

21 Moreover, under 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9), “[j]udicial review of all questions of law  
22 and fact . . . arising from any action taken or proceeding brought to remove an alien  
23 from the United States under this subchapter shall be available only in judicial review  
24 of a final order under this section.” (emphasis added). Further, judicial review of a final  
25 order is available only through “a petition for review filed with an appropriate court of  
26 appeals.” 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(5). The Supreme Court has made clear that § 1252(b)(9)  
27 is “the unmistakable ‘zipper’ clause,” channeling “judicial review of all” “decisions  
28 and actions leading up to or consequent upon final orders of deportation,” including

1 “non-final order[s],” into proceedings before a court of appeals. *Reno*, 525 U.S. at 483,  
2 485; *see J.E.F.M. v. Lynch*, 837 F.3d 1026, 1031 (9th Cir. 2016) (noting § 1252(b)(9)  
3 is “breathhtaking in scope and vise-like in grip and therefore swallows up virtually all  
4 claims that are tied to removal proceedings”). “Taken together, § 1252(a)(5) and  
5 § 1252(b)(9) mean that *any* issue—whether legal or factual—arising from *any*  
6 removal-related activity can be reviewed *only* through the [petition for review] PFR  
7 process.” *J.E.F.M.*, 837 F.3d at 1031 (emphasis in original) (“[W]hile these sections  
8 limit *how* immigrants can challenge their removal proceedings, they are not  
9 jurisdiction-stripping statutes that, by their terms, foreclose *all* judicial review of  
10 agency actions. Instead, the provisions channel judicial review over final orders of  
11 removal to the courts of appeal.”) (emphasis in original); *see id.* at 1035 (“§§ 1252(a)(5)  
12 and [(b)(9)] channel review of all claims, including policies-and-practices challenges .  
13 . . . whenever they ‘arise from’ removal proceedings”).

14 Critically, “1252(b)(9) is a judicial channeling provision, not a claim-barring  
15 one.” *Aguilar v. ICE*, 510 F.3d 1, 11 (1st Cir. 2007). Indeed, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(2)(D)  
16 provides that “[n]othing . . . in any other provision of this chapter . . . shall be construed  
17 as precluding review of constitutional claims or questions of law raised upon a petition  
18 for review filed with an appropriate court of appeals in accordance with this section.”  
19 *See also Ajlani v. Chertoff*, 545 F.3d 229, 235 (2d Cir. 2008) (“[J]urisdiction to review  
20 such claims is vested exclusively in the courts of appeals[.]”). The petition-for-review  
21 process before the court of appeals ensures that noncitizens have a proper forum for  
22 claims arising from their immigration proceedings and “receive their day in court.”  
23 *J.E.F.M.*, 837 F.3d at 1031–32 (internal quotations omitted); *see also Rosario v.*  
24 *Holder*, 627 F.3d 58, 61 (2d Cir. 2010) (“The REAL ID Act of 2005 amended the [INA]  
25 to obviate . . . Suspension Clause concerns” by permitting judicial review of  
26 “nondiscretionary” BIA determinations and “all constitutional claims or questions of  
27 law.”). These provisions divest district courts of jurisdiction to review both direct and  
28 indirect challenges to removal orders, including decisions to detain for purposes of

1 removal or for proceedings. *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95 (section 1252(b)(9)  
2 includes challenges to the “decision to detain [an alien] in the first place or to seek  
3 removal”).

4 In evaluating the reach of subsections (a)(5) and (b)(9), the Second Circuit has  
5 explained that jurisdiction turns on the substance of the relief sought. *Delgado v.*  
6 *Quarantillo*, 643 F.3d 52, 55 (2d Cir. 2011). Those provisions divest district courts of  
7 jurisdiction to review both direct and indirect challenges to removal orders, including  
8 decisions to detain for purposes of removal or for proceedings. *See Jennings*, 583 U.S.  
9 at 294–95 (section 1252(b)(9) includes challenges to the “decision to detain [an alien]  
10 in the first place or to seek removal[.]”). Here, Petitioner challenges the government’s  
11 decision and action to detain, which arises from DHS’s decision to commence removal  
12 proceedings, and is thus an “action taken . . . to remove [him/her] from the United  
13 States.” *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9); *see also, e.g., Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95;  
14 *Velasco Lopez v. Decker*, 978 F.3d 842, 850 (2d Cir. 2020) (finding that 8 U.S.C. §  
15 1226(e) did not bar review in that case because the petitioner did not challenge “his  
16 initial detention”); *Saadulloev v. Garland*, No. 3:23-CV-00106, 2024 WL 1076106, at  
17 \*3 (W.D. Pa. Mar. 12, 2024) (recognizing that there is no judicial review of the  
18 threshold detention decision, which flows from the government’s decision to  
19 “commence proceedings”).

20 Accordingly, this Court lacks jurisdiction over this petition under 8 U.S.C.  
21 § 1252.<sup>1</sup> *See Acxel S.Q.D.C. v. Bondi*, No. 25-3348 (PAM/DLM), 2025 WL 2617973  
22 (D. Minn. Sept. 9, 2025).

23  
24 <sup>1</sup> On an alternative basis, the Court should ensure Petitioner properly exhausts  
25 administrative remedies. The Ninth Circuit requires that “habeas petitioners exhaust  
26 available judicial and administrative remedies before seeking relief under § 2241.”  
27 *Castro-Cortez v. INS*, 239 F.3d 1037, 1047 (9th Cir. 2001). “When a petitioner does  
28 not exhaust administrative remedies, a district court ordinarily should either dismiss  
the petition without prejudice or stay the proceedings until the petitioner has exhausted  
remedies, unless exhaustion is excused.” *Leonardo v. Crawford*, 646 F.3d 1157, 1160  
(9th Cir. 2011); *see also Alvarado v. Holder*, 759 F.3d 1121, 1127 n.5 (9th Cir. 2014)  
(issue exhaustion is a jurisdictional requirement); *Tijani v. Holder*, 628 F.3d 1071,

1 **B. Petitioner is Lawfully Detained**

2 Petitioner’s claims for alleged statutory and constitutional violations fail because  
3 Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225.

4 Based on the plain language of the statute, Petitioner’s detention is governed by  
5 § 1225. Section 1225(b)(2)(A) requires mandatory detention of “an alien who is *an*  
6 *applicant for admission*, if the examining immigration officer determines that an alien  
7 seeking admission is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted[.]” *Chavez*  
8 *v. Noem*, No. 3:25-cv-02325, 2025 WL 2730228, at \*4 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 24, 2025)  
9 (quoting 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A)) (emphasis in original). Section 1225(a)(1)  
10 “expressly defines that ‘[a]n alien present in the United States who has not been  
11 admitted ... shall be deemed for purposes of this Act *an applicant for admission*.’” *Id.*  
12 (quoting 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1)) (emphasis in original). As recognized by another  
13 district court in this Circuit, “the [Supreme] Court’s introductory language is quite  
14 clear: “[A]n alien who ‘arrives in the United States,’ or ‘is present’ in this country but  
15 ‘has not been admitted,’ is treated as ‘an applicant for admission.’” *Alonzo v. Noem*,  
16 2025 WL 3208284, at \*4 (quoting *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287). Here, Petitioner is an  
17 “alien present in the United States who has not been admitted.” Thus, as found by the  
18 district courts in *Chavez v. Noem*, *Altamirano Ramos v. Lyons*, and *Valencia v.*  
19 *Chestnut*, and as mandated by the plain language of the statute, Petitioner is an  
20 “applicant for admission” and subject to the mandatory detention provisions of  
21 § 1225(b)(2).

22 When the plain text of a statute is clear, “that meaning is controlling” and courts  
23 “need not examine legislative history.” *Washington v. Chimei Innolux Corp.*, 659 F.3d  
24 842, 848 (9th Cir. 2011). But to the extent legislative history is relevant here, nothing  
25 “refutes the plain language” of § 1225. *Suzlon Energy Ltd. v. Microsoft Corp.*, 671 F.3d  
26 726, 730 (9th Cir. 2011). Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and  
27 \_\_\_\_\_  
28 1080 (9th Cir. 2010) (no jurisdiction to review legal claims not presented in the  
petitioner’s administrative proceedings before the BIA).

1 Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) to correct “an anomaly whereby  
2 immigrants who were attempting to lawfully enter the United States were in a worse  
3 position than persons who had crossed the border unlawfully.” *Torres v. Barr*, 976 F.3d  
4 918, 928 (9th Cir. 2020) (en banc), *declined to extend by, United States v. Gambino-*  
5 *Ruiz*, 91 F.4th 981 (9th Cir. 2024); *see Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. at 223-  
6 34 (citing H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 225 (1996)). It “intended to replace certain  
7 aspects of the [then] current ‘entry doctrine,’ under which illegal aliens who have  
8 entered the United States without inspection gain equities and privileges in immigration  
9 proceedings that are not available to aliens who present themselves for inspection at a  
10 port of entry.” *Id.* (quoting H.R. Rep. 104-469, pt. 1, at 225).

11 “The entry fiction doctrine flows from the principle that the ‘power to admit or  
12 exclude aliens is a sovereign prerogative,’ and ‘the Constitution gives the political  
13 department of the government plenary authority to decide which aliens to admit.’”  
14 *Altamirano Ramos v. Lyons*, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 3199872, at \*7 (C.D. Cal.  
15 Nov. 12, 2025) (quoting *Dep’t of Homeland Sec. v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 139  
16 (2020) (quotations omitted)). Such plenary power includes the “power to set  
17 procedures to be followed in determining whether an alien should be admitted.”  
18 *Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. at 139. “The entry fiction doctrine protects that sovereign  
19 prerogative, which ‘would be meaningless if it became inoperative as soon as an  
20 arriving alien set foot on U.S. soil.’” *Altamirano Ramos*, 2025 WL 3199872, at \*7  
21 (quoting *Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. at 139). Within this context, the Supreme Court has  
22 explained, “[w]hen an alien arrives at a port of entry—for example, an internation  
23 airport—the alien is on U.S. soil, but the alien is not considered to have entered the  
24 country.” *Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. at 139. Such is true even in situations where an alien  
25 is “paroled elsewhere in the country *for years* pending removal.” *Id.* (emphasis added).  
26 The Supreme Court has recognized that those individuals are treated “as if stopped at  
27 the border.” *Id.* “The same must be true” of an “applicant for admission” who enters  
28 into the United States unlawfully. *Id.* at 140.

1 A contrary interpretation would put aliens who “crossed the border unlawfully”  
2 in a better position than those “who present themselves for inspection at a port of  
3 entry.” *Id.* Aliens who presented at a port of entry would be subject to mandatory  
4 detention under § 1225, but those who crossed illegally would be eligible for a bond  
5 under § 1226(a). *See Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. at 225 (“The House  
6 Judiciary Committee Report makes clear that Congress intended to eliminate the prior  
7 statutory scheme that provided aliens who entered the United States without inspection  
8 more procedural and substantive rights than those who presented themselves to  
9 authorities for inspection.”). The Court should “‘refuse to interpret the INA in a way  
10 that would in effect repeal that statutory fix’ intended by Congress in enacting the  
11 IIRIRA.” *Chavez*, 2025 WL 2730228, at \*4 (quoting *Gambino-Ruiz*, 91 F.4th at 990).

12 The plain language of § 1225(b)(2) does not contradict nor render § 1226(a)  
13 superfluous. Section 1226(a) provides the detention authority for the significant group  
14 of aliens who are *not* “applicants for admission” subject to § 1225(b)(2)(A)—  
15 specifically, aliens who have been admitted to the United States but are now removable.  
16 *RadLAX Gateway Hotel, LLC v. Amalgamated Bank*, 566 U.S. 639, 645 (2012) (“the  
17 specific governs the general”). For example, the detention of any of the millions of  
18 aliens who have overstayed their visas are governed by § 1226(a), because those aliens  
19 (unlike Petitioner) *were* lawfully admitted to the United States.

20 Moreover, in *Chavez v. Noem*, the district court noted that § 1226(a) “‘generally  
21 governs the process of arresting and detaining’ certain aliens, namely ‘aliens who were  
22 inadmissible at the time of entry *or who have been convicted of certain criminal*  
23 *offenses since admission.*’” *Chavez*, 2025 WL 2730228, at \*5 (quoting *Jennings*, 583  
24 U.S. at 288) (emphasis in original). In turn, individuals who have not been charged  
25 with specific crimes listed in § 1226(c) are still subject to the discretionary detention  
26 provisions of § 1226(a) *as determined by the Attorney General*. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)  
27 (“*On a warrant issued by the Attorney General*, an alien may be arrested and detained  
28 pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States.”)

1 (emphasis added). Therefore, heeding the plain language of § 1225(b)(2) has no effect  
2 on § 1226(a). Similarly, the application of § 1225’s explicit definition of “applicants  
3 for admission” does not render the addition of § 1226(c) by the Riley Laken Act  
4 superfluous. Once again correctly determined by the district court in *Chavez v. Noem*,  
5 the addition of § 1226(c) simply removed the Attorney General’s detention discretion  
6 for aliens charged with specific crimes. 2025 WL 2730228, at \*5; *see also Valencia v.*  
7 *Chestnut*, 2025 WL 3205133, at \*4 (concluding the same).

8 One of the most basic interpretative canons instructs that a “statute should be  
9 construed so that effect is given to all its provisions.” *See Corley v. United States*, 556  
10 U.S. 303, 314 (2009) (cleaned up). If Congress did not want § 1225(b)(2)(A) to apply  
11 to “applicants for admission,” then it would not have included the phrase “applicants  
12 for admission” in the subsection. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A); *see also Corley*, 556  
13 U.S. at 314.

14 Finally, the phrase “alien seeking admission” does not limit the scope of  
15 § 1225(b)(2)(A). The BIA has long recognized that “many people who are not *actually*  
16 requesting permission to enter the United States in the ordinary sense are nevertheless  
17 deemed to be ‘seeking admission’ under the immigration laws.” *Matter of Lemus-Losa*,  
18 25 I&N Dec. 734, 743 (BIA 2012) (emphasis in original). Statutory language “is known  
19 by the company it keeps.” *Marquez-Reyes v. Garland*, 36 F.4th 1195, 1202 (9th Cir.  
20 2022) (quoting *McDonnell v. United States*, 579 U.S. 550, 569 (2016)). The phrase  
21 “seeking admission” in § 1225(b)(2)(A) must be read in the context of the definition of  
22 “applicant for admission” in § 1225(a)(1). Applicants for admission are both those  
23 individuals present without admission and those who arrive in the United States. *See* 8  
24 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1). Both are understood to be “seeking admission” under §  
25 1225(a)(1). *See Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. at 221; *Lemus-Losa*, 25 I&N  
26 Dec. at 743. Congress made that clear in § 1225(a)(3), which requires all aliens “who  
27 are applicants for admission or otherwise seeking admission” to be inspected by  
28 immigration officers. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(3). The word “or” here “introduce[s] an

1 appositive—a word or phrase that is synonymous with what precedes it (“Vienna or  
2 Wien,’ ‘Batman or the Caped Crusader’).” *United States v. Woods*, 571 U.S. 31, 45  
3 (2013). Further, § 1225(a)(5) provides that “[a]n applicant for admission may be  
4 required to state under oath any information sought by an immigration officer regarding  
5 the purposes and intentions of the applicant in seeking admission to the United States.”  
6 The reasonable import of this particular phrasing is that one who is an applicant for  
7 admission is considered to be “seeking admission” under the statute.

8       Because Petitioner is properly detained under § 1225, Petitioner cannot show  
9 entitlement to relief. Respondents acknowledge that courts in this district have recently  
10 rejected similar arguments in other similar habeas matters. “But ‘[w]hat governs the  
11 case is the text of the statute, not what other district courts have concluded.” *Valencia*,  
12 2025 WL 3205133 at \*6 (quoting *Mejia Olalde*, 2025 WL 3131942, at \*2). Indeed,  
13 “[u]nder the plain terms of Section 1225(a)(1), [petitioner] is ‘deemed’ an applicant for  
14 admission[,]” and “[o]f all the statutory terms at issue, this is perhaps the most  
15 straightforward.” *Rojas v. Olson*, 2025 WL 3033967 at \*8.

16       Respondents maintain that Petitioner is properly subject to mandatory detention  
17 under § 1225 and dismissal is proper. To the extent the Court finds this Petitioner  
18 subject to detention authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), Respondents’ position is that  
19 the proper remedy would be directing a bond hearing under § 1226(a), to be held within  
20 fourteen (14) days. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(e) (“No court may set aside any action or  
21 decision by the Attorney General under this section regarding the detention or release  
22 of any alien or the grant, revocation, or denial of bond or parole.”); *Jennings v.*  
23 *Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 295 (2018) (“As we have previously explained, § 1226(e)  
24 precludes an alien from ‘challeng[ing] a “discretionary judgment” by the Attorney  
25 General or a “decision” that the Attorney General has made regarding his detention or  
26 release.’ But § 1226(e) does not preclude ‘challenges [to] the statutory framework that  
27 permits [the alien’s] detention without bail.’”); 8 U.S.C. § 1226(b) (“The Attorney  
28 General at any time may revoke a bond or parole authorized under subsection (a),

1 rearrest the alien under the original warrant, and detain the alien.”).

2 **C. The *Bautista* Case Does Not Grant Petitioner Relief**

3 The court in *Bautista* granted class certification and partial summary judgment  
4 for the plaintiffs in that case, but the court’s orders did not enter any declaratory  
5 judgment as to the nationwide class. *See* Partial MSJ Ruling at 17 (granting motion for  
6 partial summary judgment but not ordering any relief); *see also* Class Cert. Ruling at  
7 15 (granting motion for class certification but ordering only that class be certified,  
8 Petitioners be appointed class representatives, Petitioners’ counsel be appointed class  
9 counsel, ordering a joint status report and setting status conference);<sup>2</sup> Proposed Order  
10 (proposing specific declaratory relief that the Court did not enter). The *Bautista* court  
11 also expressly declined to enter final judgment as to the claims at issue in the motion  
12 for partial summary judgment under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 54(b). *See* Partial  
13 MSJ Ruling at 17. Rather, the Court set a January 9, 2026, joint status report deadline  
14 and January 16, 2026, status conference indicating that the Court intends to address the  
15 question of final relief at a later date. Class Cert. Ruling at 15.

16 Absent an entry of final judgment on the entire case, or a certification of partial  
17 final judgment under Rule 54(b), there is no declaratory judgment. The partial summary  
18 judgment ruling does not operate as a “judgment” because it is not an appealable order  
19 and “does not end the action as to any of the claims or parties and may be revised at  
20 any time before the entry of a judgment adjudicating all the claims and all the parties’  
21 rights and liabilities.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 54(a), (b). Thus, there is no class-wide judgment,  
22 let alone any final judgment that could have preclusive effect as to class members.

23 To be proper, a declaratory judgment must have preclusive effect: “Without  
24 preclusive effect, a declaratory judgment is little more than an advisory opinion.”  
25 *Haaland v. Brackeen*, 599 U.S. 255, 293 (2023); *see also Wells v. Johnson*, 150 F.4th

26  
27 <sup>2</sup> Respondents acknowledge that the *Bautista* court stated, but did not order, “When  
28 considering this determination with the MSJ Order, the [c]ourt extends the same  
declaratory relief granted to Petitioners to the Bond Eligible Class as a whole.” Class  
Cert. Ruling at 14.

1 289, 301 (4th Cir. 2025) (stating that the only reason a proper declaratory judgment  
2 does not violate Article III’s requirements is because it has preclusive effect between  
3 the parties); *Headwaters Inc. v. U.S. Forest Serv.*, 399 F.3d 1047, 1051 (9th Cir. 2005).  
4 And preclusive effect cannot be obtained without sufficient finality. *B & B Hardware,*  
5 *Inc. v. Hargis Indus., Inc.*, 575 U.S. 138, 148 (2015) (citing Restatement (Second) of  
6 Judgments § 27, p. 250 (1980), for the general rule that an issue must be determined  
7 by a “valid and final judgment” for preclusion to apply); *Luben Indus., Inc. v. United*  
8 *States*, 707 F.2d 1037, 1040 (9th Cir. 1983) (affirming district court decision not to  
9 apply preclusive effect to an interlocutory decision that “could not have been the  
10 subject of an appeal at the time”); Restatement (Second) of Judgments § 28, p. 273  
11 (1980) Restatement (Second) of Judgments § 27, p. 250 (1980) (issue preclusion does  
12 not apply when the “party against whom preclusion is sought could not, as a matter of  
13 law, have obtained review of the judgment in the initial action”; *id.* at cmt. a (“[T]he  
14 availability of review for the correction of errors has become critical to the application  
15 of preclusion doctrine.”)).

16 Accordingly, as the *Bautista* court has declined to enter a class-wide judgment,  
17 there is currently no declaratory relief, let alone relief with preclusive effect on  
18 *Maldonado Bautista* class members’ claims concerning the proper interpretation of 8  
19 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A)’s mandatory detention provision.

20 Respondents note, however, that the situation appears to be evolving. On December 4,  
21 2025, the *Bautista* Petitioners submitted a filing seeking reconsideration and  
22 clarification before the *Bautista* court.

#### 23 IV. CONCLUSION

24 For the foregoing reasons, Respondents respectfully request that the Court  
25 dismiss this action.

26 DATED: December 17, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

27 ADAM GORDON  
28 United States Attorney

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*s/ Tom Merritt*  
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TOM MERRITT  
Assistant United States Attorney  
Attorneys for Respondents