

1 TIMOTHY COURCHAIINE
 2 United States Attorney
 District of Arizona
 3 LINDSEY E. GILMAN
 4 Assistant U.S. Attorney
 Arizona State Bar No. 034003
 5 Two Renaissance Square
 40 North Central Avenue, Suite 1800
 6 Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4449
 7 Telephone: (602) 514-7500
 Facsimile: (602) 514-7760
 8 Email: Lindsey.Gilman@usdoj.gov
 9 *Attorneys for Respondents*

10 **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
 11 **FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA**

12 Ulises Poxtan Avendano,
 13
 14 **Petitioner,**
 15
 16 v.
 17 Luis Rosa Jr., et al.,
 18
 19 **Respondents.**

No. CV-25-04742-PHX- SHD (JZB)
**RESPONSE TO PETITION FOR
 WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS**

AND

**RESPONSE TO ORDER SHOW
 CAUSE**

19 Respondents, by and through undersigned counsel, hereby respond to the Petition
 20 for Writ of Habeas Corpus (Doc. 1) and the Court’s Order to Show Cause (Doc. 6).

21 **I. INTRODUCTION.**

22 Respondents respectfully preserve their legal position that Petitioner is an applicant
 23 for admission as defined by 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1) because he has never been lawfully
 24 admitted to the United States, and that he is therefore subject to mandatory detention under
 25 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2). Respondents, however, acknowledge that its legal position has been
 26 squarely rejected in *Echevarria v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2821282 (D. Ariz. 2025). Respondents
 27 also acknowledge that the District Court in the Central District of California recently
 28 certified a Rule 23(b)(2) class, that Respondents concede includes Petitioner, and entered

1 judgement finding that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), and not 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2), governs the
2 detention of class members. *Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, 2025
3 WL 3288403 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 25, 2025). Critically, however, the Court in *Bautista* has yet
4 to order class wide relief in the form of bond hearings for all class members, and the
5 declaratory judgement that *Bautista* entered on behalf of the class is now on appeal.
6 Accordingly, while the holding in *Bautista* is not preclusive on this Court, should this Court
7 agree with the reasoning of the Court in *Bautista*, and conclude that Petitioner is properly
8 detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), and therefore entitled to a bond hearing, this Court would
9 still need to enter an order that Respondent's provide Petitioner with a bond hearing.

10 II. ECHEVARRIA.

11 Respondents are aware of the Court's decision in this District rejecting
12 Respondents' position in *Echevarria v. Bondi*, No. 2:25-cv-03252-PHX-DWL, 2025 WL
13 2821282 (D. Ariz. Oct. 3, 2025), but respectfully maintain that Petitioner falls within the
14 definition of an "applicant for admission" warranting mandatory detention as the removal
15 process unfolds. Respondents respectfully maintain that an alien is an "applicant for
16 admission" until an immigration official has inspected that person and determined that he
17 or she is admissible into the United States. In *Echevarria*, the Court determined that the
18 phrase "alien seeking admission" in 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) implies a present-tense
19 nature to the desire for admission, such that an alien who is already present in the United
20 States cannot be "seeking admission":

21
22 "The word "seeking" is the present participle of the verb "seek." It thus has
23 a temporal element—Petitioner must have been in the process of seeking
admission at the time of the inspection.

24 It is hard to see how Petitioner could be deemed to have been "seeking"
25 admission at the time of the encounter on July 2, 2025. By that point,
26 Petitioner had already been present in the United States for 24 years, having
27 arrived and entered in 2001. Moreover, under Respondents' interpretation of
28 § 1225(a)(1), Petitioner became an "applicant for admission" in 2001, upon
his arrival and entry. Implicit in Respondents' position, then, is that
Petitioner somehow existed in a perpetual state of "seeking" admission

1 during the 24-year period between when he first became an “applicant for
2 admission” in 2001, by virtue of his entry into the country, and when he was
3 encountered and inspected by an immigration officer in 2025.”

4 *Echevarria*, 2025 WL 2821282, at *6 (internal citations omitted).

5 However, this analysis fails to consider other pieces of statutory context.
6 Respondents respectfully argue that the phrase “applicants for admission” carves out a
7 subset of those who are “seeking admission.” For example, elsewhere in section 1225, the
8 statute says that “[a]ll aliens who are applicants for admission or otherwise seeking
9 admission or readmission to or transit through the United States shall be inspected by
10 immigration officers.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(3) (emphasis added). In other words, 8 U.S.C. §
11 1225(a)(3) shows that an alien may be “seeking admission” either by being an “applicant
12 for admission,” or in some different way. As discussed earlier, the phrase “applicant for
13 admission” unambiguously includes aliens who have already entered the United States. “In
14 all but the most unusual situations, a single use of a statutory phrase must have a fixed
15 meaning.” *See Cochise Consultancy, Inc. v. United States ex rel. Hunt*, 587 U.S. 262, 268
16 (2019) (referring to *Ratzlaf v. United States*, 510 U.S. 135, 143 (1994)). “We therefore
17 avoid interpretations that would ‘attribute different meanings to the same phrase.’” *Id.*
18 (quoting *Reno v. Bossier Par. Sch. Bd.*, 528 U. S. 320, 329 (2000)). Thus, the *Echevarria*
19 decision is not supported by the overall text of the statute, and Respondents respectfully
20 request the Court reach a different result in this case.

21 Respondents also direct the Court’s attention to a decision issued on September 30,
22 2025, in the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska: *Vargas Lopez v.*
23 *Trump*, No. 8:25CV526, 2025 WL 2780351 (D. Neb. Sept. 30, 2025). In that case, the
24 Court denied a similar habeas petition brought by an alien who entered the United States
25 in 2013 and held that the petitioner was properly detained under § 1225(b)(2) as an alien
26 within the “catchall” scope of § 1225(b)(2) subject to detention without possibility of
27 release on bond through § 1229a removal proceedings. 2025 WL 2780351, at *6-9. The
28 Court noted that illegally remaining in the country for years did not mean the petitioner,

1 who “wish[ed] to stay in this country,” was suddenly not an “applicant for admission.” *Id.*
2 at *9. Additionally, “even if Vargas Lopez might fall within the scope of § 1226(a), he
3 certainly fits within the language of § 1225(b)(2) as well.” *Id.*

4 The *Vargas Lopez* decision also noted the “overlapping relationship between §
5 1225(b) and § 1226(a) is not only consistent with the plain language of the two provisions
6 but consistent with the interpretation of the two provisions under *Jennings*.” *Id.* The Court
7 determined that § 1226 does not contain language limiting its application “to aliens already
8 present in the United States.” *Id.* (comparing *Jennings*’ statements that United States
9 immigration law “authorizes the Government to detain certain aliens already in the country
10 pending the outcome of removal proceedings under §§ 1226(a) and (c)[,]” and that “§ 1226
11 applies to aliens already present in the United States[,]” 583 U.S. at 289 (first quote) and
12 303 (second quote), with 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) (containing no reference to aliens “present”
13 or “already present” in the United States) and 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c) (containing no reference
14 to “criminal aliens” “present” or “already present” in the United States). The Court
15 determined that “references to ‘aliens’ in § 1226 must be read to mean ‘alien[s] present in
16 the United States who ha[ve] not been admitted’ within the meaning of § 1225(a)(1) and
17 within at least the ‘catchall provision that applies to all applicants for admission not
18 covered by § 1225(b)(1) in § 1225(b)(2).” 2025 WL2780351, at * 9 (citing *Jennings*, 583
19 U.S. at 287).

20 The Southern District of California also denied a temporary restraining order sought
21 by an alien who was detained under § 1225(b)(2) despite having been present in the United
22 States for years. *See Chavez v. Noem*, --F. Supp. 3d --, No. 3:25-cv-02325-CAB, 2025 WL
23 2730228 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 24, 2025). The Court noted, among other arguments, that “Section
24 1225(a)(1) expressly defines that ‘[a]n alien present in the United States who has not been
25 admitted . . . shall be deemed for purposes of this Act an applicant for admission.” *Id.* at
26 *4 (quoting 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1)) (emphasis in original). The Court reasoned that,
27 “Petitioners do not contest that they are ‘alien[s] present in the United States who ha[ve]not
28 been admitted.’ By the plain language of § 1225(a)(1), then, Petitioners are ‘applicants for

1 admission' and thus subject to the mandatory detention provisions of 'applicants for
2 admission' under § 1225(b)(2)." *Id.* (cleaned up). *See also Rojas v. Olson*, No. 25-CV-
3 1437-BHL, 2025 WL 3033967, at *1 (E.D. Wis. Oct. 30, 2025); *Sandoval v. Acuna*, No.
4 6:25-CV-01467, 2025 WL 3048926 (W.D. La. Oct. 31, 2025); *Oliveira v. Patterson*, No.
5 6:25-CV-01463, 2025 WL 3095972 (W.D. La. Nov. 4, 2025); *Mejia Olalde v. Noem*, No.
6 1:25-CV-00168-JMD, 2025 WL 3131942 (E.D. Mo. Nov. 10, 2025); *Garibay-Robledo v.*
7 *Noem*, 1:25-cv-00177 (N.D. Tex. 2025); *Cabanas v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-04830, 2025 WL
8 3171331 (S.D. Tex. Nov. 13, 2025); *Altamirano Ramos v. Lyons*, No. 2:25-CV-09785-
9 SVW-AJR, 2025 WL 3199872 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 12, 2025); *Alonzo v. Noem*, No. 1:25-CV-
10 01519 WBS SCR, 2025 WL 3208284, at *1 (E.D. Cal. Nov. 17, 2025).

11 **III. BAUTISTA.**

12 Petitioner appears to be a member of the Bond Eligible Class certified in *Bautista v.*
13 *Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, -- F.R.D. --, 2025 WL 3288403, at *9 (C.D. Cal.
14 Nov. 25, 2025). On December 18, 2025, the *Bautista* Court entered final judgment finding
15 that section 1226(a), not section 1225(b)(2) governs the detention of the Bond Eligible
16 Class. *See Bautista*, ECF No. 94. A notice of appeal was then filed by the *Bautista*
17 respondents on December 18, 2025. *See Bautista*, ECF No. 95.

18 The *Bautista* Court has not yet ordered anything beyond declaratory relief, such as
19 ordering bond hearings for the certified class members. It has only extended its previous
20 finding that section 1226(a) rather than section 1225(b)(2) governs the named Plaintiff's
21 claims to the entire class, entering a final judgment from which the Government has
22 appealed.

23 The Court may consider in its discretion whether to dismiss the petition so that
24 Petitioner can pursue his rights as a *Bautista* class member pursuant to that class action since
25 it was filed first in time. Doc. 4. If, however, this Court is not inclined to do so for the
26 reasons indicated in the Order, and it determines that a bond hearing is warranted under
27 section 1226(a), consistent with the reasoning in *Bautista* and *Echevarria*, the Court will
28 still need to enter an order that a bond hearing be provided.

1 **IV. CONCLUSION.**

2 In light of the above, Respondents respectfully request the Court deny Petitioner's
3 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus. If the Court grants the Petition, the Court should order
4 that Petitioner be given a bond hearing by the immigration court, rather than direct
5 Petitioner's immediate release from immigration detention.

6
7 Petitioner appears to be a member of the Bond Eligible Class certified in *Bautista*
8 *v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, -- F.R.D. --, 2025 WL 3288403, at *9 (C.D.
9 Cal. Nov. 25, 2025). On December 18, 2025, the *Bautista* court entered final judgment as
10 to the Bond Eligible Class. *See Bautista*, ECF No. 94. A notice of appeal was then filed by
11 the *Bautista* respondent on December 18, 2025. *See Bautista*, ECF No. 95.

12 Accordingly, Respondents acknowledge that Petitioner's claim in this action as to
13 his entitlement to a bond hearing appears to be subject to the *Bautista* judgment and to any
14 applicable appellate proceedings relating to it. To the extent Petitioner seeks an order
15 requiring such a bond hearing here, it should be consistent with what courts in this district
16 have generally ordered in similar cases, which is to require such a hearing be held within
17 seven (7) to ten (10) days. However, because federal offices will be closed on January 1,
18 Respondents respectfully request that the Court, if it orders a hearing, extend the deadline
19 to conduct the hearing to account for the upcoming closure of federal offices.

20 Respectfully submitted on December 30, 2025.

21
22 TIMOTHY COURCHINE
23 United States Attorney
24 District of Arizona

25 /s/ Lindsey E. Gilman
26 LINDSEY E. GILMAN
27 Assistant United States Attorney
28 *Attorneys for Respondents*