

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

Phong Due Nguyen,

Case No.: 25-CV-6181

Petitioner

v.

**VERIFIED PETITION FOR WRIT OF  
HABEAS CORPUS**

Pamela Bondi, Attorney General; Kristi  
Noem, Secretary of Homeland Security;  
Todd M. Lyons, Senior Official  
Performing the Duties of the Director of  
U.S. Immigration & Customs  
Enforcement; Marcos Charles, Acting  
Executive Associate Director for  
Enforcement and Removal Operations;  
Bret Bradford, Field Office Director for  
Enforcement and Removal Operations;  
U.S. Immigration & Customs  
Enforcement; U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security; Martin Frink, Warden  
of Houston Processing Center.

**EXPEDITED HANDLING  
REQUESTED PURSUANT TO 28  
U.S.C. § 1657**

Respondents.

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Respondents are detaining Petitioner, Phong Due Nguyen (██████████), in violation of law.
2. Petitioner is a citizen of Vietnam who entered the United States in or around 1979 as a refugee; he was admitted after inspection by an immigration official and subsequently became a lawful permanent resident of the United States. Petitioner is subject to the 2020 Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between Vietnam and

the United States relating to repatriation of pre-1995 Vietnamese immigrants. *See generally Tran v. Scott*, No. 2:25-cv-01886-TMC-BAT, 2025 WL 2898638, at \*2 (W.D. Wash. Oct. 12, 2025).

3. Petitioner was ordered removed from the United States on April 12, 2000. It is believed both parties waived appeal, rendering the order administratively final on that date.
4. At some point after he was ordered removed, Petitioner was placed on an Order of Supervision (“OOS”) pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 241.5 and 8 C.F.R. § 241.13 due to evidence in Petitioner’s file that demonstrated there was no significant likelihood of his removal to Vietnam in the reasonably foreseeable future.
5. Petitioner was unlawfully detained in violation of 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(g), (i)(2)-(3) on October 8, 2025 while attending a regularly scheduled ICE check-in.
6. Petitioner does not recall if he was detained for any length of time prior to October 8, 2025 after having received an administratively final order of removal. He is therefore unable to plead that he has previously served more than six months in post-order civil detention. However, it is not necessary for Petitioner to wait six months to file this petition because the government redetained Petitioner in violation of the laws and constitution of the United States stemming from the absence of changed circumstances demonstrating a significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future. 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2)-(3). *See Abuelhawa v. Noem*, No. 4:25-CV-04128, 2025 WL 2937692, at \*8-9 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 16, 2025); *Phong Van Do v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05643, ECF No. 10 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 18, 2025); *Bon*

*Van Nguyen v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05827, ECF No. 11 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 19, 2025).

7. If Respondents are in possession of information that demonstrates Petitioner was previously detained by immigration authorities after having received a final order of removal, he incorporates that information by reference from Respondents' forthcoming evidentiary filings. Assuming *arguendo* Petitioner was previously detained in post-order civil confinement, he alleges that his prior period(s) of post-order civil detention must be aggregated with his current period of post-order civil detention for purposes of giving meaning to "the reasonably foreseeable future." Petitioner's post-order detention time continues to accumulate. With each passing day, the period that constitutes the "reasonably foreseeable future" shrinks.
8. Petitioner was required to complete regular check ins with ICE from when he was placed on an OOS and when he was redetained in violation of law in 2025. Petitioner complied with all check-in requirements and made sure to update his address with ICE every time he moved.
9. On October 8, 2025, Petitioner was picked up and redetained by ICE at a scheduled check-in appointment despite having done nothing wrong and remaining in compliance with his OOS.
10. Petitioner is not certain as to whether he has ever been asked to apply for travel documents from Vietnam prior to being redetained on October 8, 2025. If Petitioner or Respondents had ever previously applied for travel documents from Vietnam on Petitioner's behalf previously, all such requests have been denied or ignored.

11. Upon information and belief, Petitioner pleads that Respondents have yet to submit a travel document request to the embassy of Vietnam on Petitioner's behalf.
12. Petitioner does not seek to evade deportation. Petitioner seeks only to be released until a travel document is obtained that will allow for Petitioner's prompt deportation.
13. There is no significant likelihood that Petitioner will be granted a Vietnamese travel document in the reasonably foreseeable future because, *inter alia*, Petitioner lacks any proof of his Vietnamese citizenship. Petitioner lacks a valid Vietnamese passport.
14. Since being detained in 2025, no government agent has expressed to Petitioner that a third-country removal is being attempted, much less expected to be successful.
15. Since being arrested on October 8, 2025, Petitioner has not received any Notice of Revocation of Release informing him of the reasons for his redetention. Similarly, Petitioner has not received any other written decision explaining what changed circumstances allegedly justified or currently justify his redetention.
16. Petitioner remains detained at this time. He is housed in Houston Processing Center in Houston, Texas, a facility designed to restrict liberty and house civil detainees in conditions that are largely indistinguishable from those of convicted criminals.<sup>1</sup>
17. The government is not in possession of any credible or persuasive documents or evidence that Petitioner's removal is likely to occur in the reasonably foreseeable

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<sup>1</sup> Petitioner does not assert a conditions of confinement claim.

future. This was true on October 8, 2025, and it remains true at the time of this filing.

18. It remains true at the time of this filing that Petitioner cannot be deported to his country of origin, Vietnam, because he does not have a valid travel document and there is no significant likelihood that Vietnam will issue one to him in the reasonably foreseeable future.
19. The redetention of Petitioner serves no legitimate purpose. Instead, the effect of his detention is punitive. The redetention of Petitioner sends a message to other individuals with final orders of removal that they need to leave the United States or they will be jailed indefinitely and without any process. This is especially obvious because Petitioner is willing to return to Vietnam and to show up for deportation when a travel document is obtained, and has previously showed up for all scheduled ICE check-ins; detention for the purpose of facilitating removal is unnecessary.
20. Federal statutes and regulations require ICE to follow certain procedures before they redetained Petitioner. ICE failed to comply with these laws prior to redetaining Petitioner, thereby depriving Petitioner of his constitutional right to due process.

These failures include:

- a. Petitioner's redetention has not been reviewed or authorized by any member of the Headquarters Post-order Detention Unit ("HQPDU") or ERO HQ. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.13(b)(2), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h)(1), (h)(4)(i), (j) (all restricting ability to perform certain functions relevant to this petition to the HQPDU); 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(c)(2)-(3), (d)(2), (e), (g)(2)-(3), (i)(1)-(3), (i)(7), (k)(2)-(4), (l)(3) (same).

- b. Petitioner’s redetention has not been reviewed or authorized by the Executive Associate Commissioner or District Director. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.4(1), (c)(2)-(4), (d)(1)-(2), (i)(1), (i)(6), (j)(1)-(4), (k)(2), (k)(4), (l)(2)-(3).
- c. Petitioner has been redetained in the absence of changed circumstances capable of rebutting his prior showing of no significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2); *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 699-700 (2001); *Abuelhawa v. Noem*, No. 4:25-CV-04128, 2025 WL 2937692, at \*8-9 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 16, 2025); *Phong Van Do v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05643, ECF No. 10 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 18, 2025); *Bon Van Nguyen v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05827, ECF No. 11 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 19, 2025).
- d. Petitioner has not received a written decision stating the reasons for his redetention. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(g); *Momennia v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 3011896, at \*6 (W.D. Okla. Oct. 15, 2025) (“ICE is required to issue a written decision. § 241.13(g).”); 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(h)(4), (k)(1)(i), (k)(2)(iii); 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.13(e)(1), (e)(2), (e)(6); *Pham v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-1157-SLP, 2025 WL 3243870, at \*1 n.2 and accompanying text (W.D. Okla. Nov. 20, 2025).
- e. Petitioner has not received an individualized post-detention interview to determine whether his OOS should be reinstated or to otherwise allow Petitioner to provide information that demonstrates there is no significant likelihood of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future. *See* 8 C.F.R.

§ 241.13(i)(2)-(3); *Abuelhawa v. Noem*, No. 4:25-CV-04128, 2025 WL 2937692, at \*8-9 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 16, 2025); *Phong Van Do v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05643, ECF No. 10 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 18, 2025); *Bon Van Nguyen v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05827, ECF No. 11 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 19, 2025).

21. To remedy his unlawful detention, Petitioner seeks declaratory and injunctive relief in the form of immediate release from detention.
22. Pending the adjudication of his Petition, Petitioner seeks an order restraining the Respondents from transferring him to a location where he cannot reasonably consult with counsel, such a location to be construed as any location outside of the geographic jurisdiction of the day-to-day operations of U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement's ("ICE") Houston Office of Enforcement and Removal Operations in the State of Texas.
23. Pending the adjudication of this Petition, Petitioner also respectfully requests that Respondents be ordered to provide seventy-two (72) hour notice of any movement of Petitioner.
24. Petitioner requests the same opportunity to be heard in a meaningful manner, at a meaningful time, and thus requests 72-hour notice prior to any removal or movement of him away from the State of Texas.
25. Petitioner requests an emergency preliminary order requiring Respondents to give Petitioner due process prior to removing him to an allegedly safe third country in the form of a full merits hearing for asylum, withholding of removal, and DCAT

before an immigration judge relating to the proposed country of removal with a right to an administrative appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals, and further requests that this injunction be made permanent.

26. Petitioner requests an order compelling Respondents to release him pending the outcome of this petition.
27. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1657, Petitioner requests that the district court issue an Order to Show Cause (“OSC”) giving the government no more than 7 days to file evidence and argument in response to the OSC. Petitioner further requests that the time for making any objections to the magistrate’s potentially forthcoming Report & Recommendation from 14 days to 5 days if a magistrate is assigned.
28. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1657 and Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 and 2255 Cases, Petitioner requests that rather than proceed via summonses, the Court order the Clerk of Courts to serve a copy of the petition and any subsequent Order on Respondents and any other appropriate individual involved.
29. Petitioner requests that the Court order his immediate release and return him to the conditions of his prior OOS.

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

30. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), § 1361 (mandamus action), § 1651 (All Writs Act), and § 2241 (habeas corpus); Art. I, § 9, cl. 2 of the U.S. Constitution (“Suspension Clause”); 5 U.S.C. § 702 (Administrative Procedure Act); and 28 U.S.C. § 2201 (Declaratory Judgment Act). This action further arises under the Constitution of the United States and the

Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”), specifically, 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)-(3) and 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.4, 241.13.

31. Because Petitioner seeks to challenge his custody as a violation of the Constitution and laws of the United States, jurisdiction is proper in this court.
32. Federal district courts have jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 to hear habeas petitions by noncitizens challenging the lawfulness or constitutionality of their detention by DHS. *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 516–17 (2003); *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 138 S. Ct. 830, 839–41 (2018); *Nielsen v. Preap*, 139 S. Ct. 954, 961–63 (2019); *Sopo v. U.S. Attorney Gen.*, 825 F.3d 1199, 1209-12 (11th Cir. 2016).
33. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1657, Petitioner’s petition “**shall**” be expedited for good cause. (emphasis added). The good cause consists of Petitioner’s credible and detailed allegations of indefinite and prolonged unlawful and unconstitutional civil confinement. Numerous other courts around the country have expedited these types of matters recently. *See Roble v. Bondi*, No. 25-cv-3196, 2025 WL 2443453 (D. Minn. Aug. 25, 2025); *Sarail A. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2144, 2025 WL 2533673 (D. Minn. Sept. 3, 2025); *Sonam T. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2834, *slip op.*, ECF No. 19 (D. Minn. Sept. 16, 2025); *see also Sonam T. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2834, ECF No. 25 (D. Minn. Sept. 19, 2025) (ordering release); *Mehran S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3724, ECF No. 6 (D. Minn. Sept. 29, 2025) (providing 7 days to respond to OSC); *Mehran S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3724, ECF No. 11 (D. Minn. Sept. 29, 2025) (ordering release); *Omar J. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3719 (D. Minn. Sept. 29, 2025), ECF No. 11; *Constantinovici v. Bondi*, No. 3:25-CV-02405-RBM-AHG (S.D. Cal.

Sept. 17, 2025), ECF No. 5 (OSC gave the government 48 hours to respond); *Constantinovici v. Bondi*, No. 3:25-CV-02405-RBM-AHG (S.D. Cal. Oct. 10, 2025), ECF No. 15 (granting habeas petition less than one month after filing); *Momennia v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-CV-1067-J, ECF No. 9 (giving the government just 14 days to respond to OSC) (W.D. Okla. Sept. 17, 2025); *Momennia v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-CV-1067-J, ECF No. 12 at 1 n.1 (W.D. Okla. Oct. 3, 2025) (“This Order is in furtherance of the need recognized by the Magistrate Judge to proceed in this case in an expedited manner.”); *Momennia v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-CV-1067-J, ECF No. 16 (W.D. Okla. Oct. 9, 2025) (granting motion to expedite in part); *Pham v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-CV-01157-SLP, ECF No. 14 (Oct. 8, 2025) (ordering government just 7 days to respond to OSC); *Yee S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-02782-JMB-DLM, ECF No. 13 (D. Minn. Oct. 9, 2025) (granting habeas petition 4 days after TRO and motion to expedite was filed); *Phong Van Do v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05643, ECF No. 10 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 18, 2025) (granting extremely similar § 2241 Vietnamese petition in less than 30 days); *Bon Van Nguyen v. Bondi*, No. 4:25-CV-05827, ECF No. 11 (Slip Op.) (S.D. Tex. Dec. 19, 2025) (same as *Phong Van Do*).

34. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 28 USC §§ 1391(b), (e)(1)(B), and 2241(d) because Petitioner is detained within this District. He is currently detained at the Houston Processing Center in Houston, Texas. Venue is also proper in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e)(1)(A) because Respondents are operating in this district.

**PARTIES**

35. Petitioner is a citizen of Vietnam who entered the United States in or around 1979 as a refugee before becoming a lawful permanent resident. Petitioner lacks a valid Vietnamese passport or any other valid proof of his Vietnamese citizenship. Petitioner's Alien Registration Number ("A number") is [REDACTED]. Petitioner is an alien with an administratively final removal order. Petitioner is currently in custody at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") detention center in Houston, Texas. Petitioner's aggregate period of civil immigration confinement continues to grow. Petitioner has a number of U.S. citizen relatives living in the United States, including his wife, four siblings, two children, his mother, and at least 20 cousins.
36. Respondent Pamela Bondi is being sued in her official capacity as the Attorney General of the United States and the head of the Department of Justice, which encompasses the BIA and the immigration judges through the Executive Office for Immigration Review. Attorney General Bondi shares responsibility for implementation and enforcement of the immigration detention statutes, along with Respondent Noem. Attorney General Bondi is a legal custodian of Petitioner.
37. Respondent Kristi Noem is being sued in her official capacity as the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. In this capacity, Secretary Noem is responsible for the administration of the immigration laws pursuant to § 103(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA"), 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a), routinely transacts business in the Southern District of Texas, supervises the Houston ICE

Field Office, and is legally responsible for pursuing Petitioner's detention and removal. As such, Respondent Noem is a legal custodian of Petitioner.

38. Respondent Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") is the federal agency responsible for implementing and enforcing the INA, including the detention and removal of noncitizens.
39. Respondent Todd M. Lyons is the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and is sued in his official capacity. Defendant Lyons is responsible for Petitioner's detention.
40. Respondent Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") is the subagency within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for implementing and enforcing the Immigration & Nationality Act, including the detention of noncitizens.
41. Respondent Marcos Charles is the Acting Executive Associate Director for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations ("ERO").
42. Respondent Bret Bradford is being sued in his official capacity as the Field Office Director for the Houston Field Office for ICE within DHS. In that capacity, Field Director Bradford has supervisory authority over the ICE agents responsible for detaining Petitioner.
43. Respondent Martin Frink is being sued in his official capacity as the Warden of the Houston Processing Center located in Houston, Texas. Because Petitioner is detained in the Houston Processing Center, Respondent Frink has immediate day-

to-day control over Petitioner.

### **EXHAUSTION**

44. ICE asserts authority to jail Petitioner pursuant to the mandatory detention provisions of 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1). No statutory requirement of exhaustion applies to Petitioner's challenge to the lawfulness of his detention. *See, e.g., Araujo-Cortes v. Shanahan*, 35 F. Supp. 3d 533, 538 (S.D.N.Y. 2014) ("There is no statutory requirement that a habeas petitioner exhaust his administrative remedies before challenging his immigration detention."); *Rodriguez v. Bostock*, No. 3:25-CV-05240-TMC, 2025 WL 1193850, at \*11 (W.D. Wash. Apr. 24, 2025) (citing *Marroquin Ambriz v. Barr*, 420 F. Supp. 3d 953, 962 (N.D. Cal. 2019) ("this Court 'follows the vast majority of other cases which have waived exhaustion based on irreparable injury when an individual has been detained for months without a bond hearing, and where several additional months may pass before the BIA renders a decision on a pending appeal.'"); *Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 1:25-CV-11571-JEK, 2025 WL 1869299, at \*5 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025) ((citing *Portela-Gonzalez v. Sec'y of the Navy*, 109 F.3d 74, 77 (1st Cir. 1997) (quoting *McCarthy v. Madigan*, 503 U.S. 140, 146 (1992))).
45. To the extent that prudential consideration may require exhaustion in some circumstances, Petitioner has exhausted all effective administrative remedies available to him as he has previously demonstrated to ICE's satisfaction that his removal is not substantially likely to occur in the reasonably foreseeable future. ICE has never rebutted this showing. Any further efforts would be futile.

46. Prudential exhaustion is not required when to do so would be futile or “the administrative body . . . has . . . predetermined the issue before it.” *McCarthy v. Madigan*, 503 U.S. 140, 148 (1992), *superseded by statute on other grounds as stated in Woodford v. Ngo*, 548 U.S. 81 (2006).
47. Prudential exhaustion is also not required in cases where “a particular plaintiff may suffer irreparable harm if unable to secure immediate judicial consideration of his claim.” *McCarthy*, 503 U.S. at 147. Every day Petitioner is unlawfully detained causes him and his family irreparable harm. *Jarpa v. Mumford*, 211 F. Supp. 3d 706, 711 (D. Md. 2016) (“Here, continued loss of liberty without any individualized bail determination constitutes the kind of irreparable harm which forgives exhaustion.”); *Matacua v. Frank*, 308 F. Supp. 3d 1019, 1025 (D. Minn. 2018) (explaining that “loss of liberty” is “perhaps the best example of irreparable harm”); *Hamama v. Adducci*, 349 F. Supp. 3d 665, 701 (E.D. Mich. 2018) (holding that “detention has inflicted grave” and “irreparable harm” and describing the impact of prolonged detention on individuals and their families).
48. Prudential exhaustion is additionally not required in cases where the agency “lacks the institutional competence to resolve the particular type of issue presented, such as the constitutionality of a statute.” *McCarthy*, 503 U.S. at 147–48. Immigration agencies have no jurisdiction over constitutional challenges of the kind Petitioner raises here. *See, e.g., Matter of C-*, 20 I. & N. Dec. 529, 532 (BIA 1992) (“[I]t is settled that the immigration judge and this Board lack jurisdiction to rule upon the constitutionality of the Act and the regulations.”); *Matter of Akram*, 25 I. & N. Dec.

874, 880 (BIA 2012); *Matter of Valdovinos*, 18 I. & N. Dec. 343, 345 (BIA 1982); *Matter of Fuentes-Campos*, 21 I. & N. Dec. 905, 912 (BIA 1997); *Matter of U-M-*, 20 I. & N. Dec. 327 (BIA 1991).

49. Because requiring Petitioner to exhaust administrative remedies would be futile, would cause him irreparable harm, and the immigration agencies lack jurisdiction over the constitutional claims, this Court should not require exhaustion as a prudential matter.
50. In any event, Petitioner has indeed exhausted all remedies available to him.
51. ICE has denied Petitioner release because: (A) ICE is misinterpreting and otherwise failing to follow binding regulations; (B) ICE has failed to conduct the necessary review of whether there is a significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future; (C) ICE incorrectly believes Petitioner is responsible for reestablishing that removal is not substantially likely to occur in the reasonably foreseeable future, (D) ICE seeks to punish Petitioner for remaining in the United States after previously having been ordered removed; and (E) ICE seeks to use Petitioner's detention to send a message to similarly situated persons who have not yet been detained as a way to encourage those similarly situated people to immediately leave the United States to avoid Petitioner's fate.

### **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS & PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

52. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in ¶¶ 1-51 as if set forth fully herein.
53. On October 8, 2025, Petitioner was picked up and redetained by ICE at a scheduled

check-in while doing nothing wrong and without being in violation of any condition of his OOS. He has remained detained in Respondents' custody since that date.

54. Each time ICE or Petitioner have tried to obtain a travel document for Petitioner, they have failed or received no response.
55. Petitioner was never served with a Notice of Revocation of Release ("Notice") purporting to revoke his OOS, nor was he given any sort of informal interview to challenge the Notice or to otherwise present argument or evidence upon re-detention as to why there is no significant likelihood of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future.
56. Assuming *arguendo* that Petitioner may have been served with a Notice, revoking his OOS, the Notice has not been reviewed by Petitioner's counsel, but likely claims in a conclusory manner that "ICE has determined there is a significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future in your case" based on unidentified "changed circumstances."
57. The Notice, if any, does not provide a reasoned basis for believing that there is now a significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future.
58. The Notice, if any, does not provide Petitioner with sufficient information to be in a position to rebut the factual allegations underlying the Notice at an informal interview.
59. The Notice, if any, does not provide enough information or detail to allow this Court to meaningfully review the relevant claims made in the Notice.

60. Petitioner does not understand the reason ICE now believes that there is a significant likelihood he will be removed in the reasonably foreseeable future.
61. The Notice, if any, does not allege that Petitioner has failed to comply with any of the terms of his OOS.
62. The Notice, if any, does not allege that Respondents have obtained a travel document allowing for Petitioner's immediate removal from the United States.
63. The Notice, if any, does not allege any new facts that might form an independent basis for taking Petitioner into custody.
64. At the time of Petitioner's arrest, up through the present, ICE has no information that could reasonably lead it to believe changed circumstances exist that justify redetention under 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2)-(3).
65. Petitioner satisfies the criteria for release at 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(e).
  - a. Travel documents for Petitioner are not available.
  - b. Removal of Petitioner is not practicable or in the public interest.
  - c. Petitioner is presently a non-violent person.
  - d. Petitioner is likely to remain nonviolent if released.
  - e. Petitioner is not likely to pose a threat to the community following release.
  - f. Petitioner has not been convicted of any new criminal offenses since his release on an OOS.
  - g. Petitioner is not likely to violate the conditions of release.
  - h. Petitioner does not pose a significant flight risk if released. He was arrested

at a *scheduled check-in*.

66. The factors for consideration at 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(f) all favor releasing Petitioner.
- a. Petitioner has no disciplinary infractions or incident reports received while incarcerated in Service custody.
  - b. Petitioner's long history of law abiding behavior and volunteering within his community while raising and supporting a loving family demonstrates complete rehabilitation and no risk of recidivism.
  - c. No psychiatric or psychological reports indicate Petitioner's mental health poses a risk to any person.
  - d. Petitioner previously entered the United States lawfully and even became a permanent resident and maintained such status for decades before getting into criminal trouble and getting ordered deported. Since his release from custody on an OOS, his conduct has been exemplary and he has complied with all OOS requirements.
  - e. Petitioner is not a flight risk. He was arrested *at a scheduled check-in*. Petitioner will turn himself in for deportation if a travel document is obtained after his release.
  - f. Petitioner's post-OOS conduct demonstrates that he has managed to adjust to life in a community, avoid engaging in acts of violence or criminal activity, does not pose a danger to the safety of anyone, and is unlikely to violate the conditions of his release from custody pending removal.
67. Respondents maintain Petitioner is ineligible for release from custody.

68. On April 30, 2025, the Department of Homeland Security issued a press release entitled *100 Days of Fighting Fake News*.<sup>2</sup> In that document, DHS referenced civil immigration detention and the present administration's heavy reliance on civil detention to accomplish its political aims. Specifically, the document states:

The reality is that **prison isn't supposed to be fun. It's a necessary measure to protect society and punish bad guys.** It is not meant to be comfortable. **What's more: prison can be avoided by self-deportation.** CBP Home makes it simple and easy. If you are a criminal alien and we have to deport you, you could end up in Guantanamo Bay or CECOT. **Leave now.**

Exhibit 1 (emphasis added).

69. Myriad courts around the country have granted habeas corpus petitions and/or enjoined the current administration's attempts to use civil detention punitively against noncitizens. *See, e.g., Mohammed H. v. Trump*, No.: 25-CV-1576-JWB-DTS, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 1692739, at \*5 (D. Minn. June 17, 2025) (“Punishing Petitioner for protected speech or **using him as an example to intimidate other students into self-deportation is abusive and does not reflect legitimate immigration detention purposes.**”) (emphasis added); *Mahdawi v. Trump*, 781 F. Supp. 3d 214, 231-32 (D. Vt. Apr. 30, 2021) (recognizing that immigration detention cannot be motivated by the desire to punish speech or to deter others from speaking); *Ozturk*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 462, 493 (“So long as detention is motivated by those goals, and not a desire for punishment, the Court is generally required to defer to the political branches on the administration of the immigration

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/04/30/100-days-fighting-fake-news> (attached as Exhibit 1).

system.”); *see also Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, 149 U.S. 698, 730 (1893) (“The order of deportation is not a punishment”); *Roble v. Bondi*, No. 25-cv-3196, 2025 WL 2443453 (D. Minn. Aug. 25, 2025) (ordering release and characterizing the government’s actions as “Kafkaesque”); *Sarail A. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2144, 2025 WL 2533673 (D. Minn. Sept. 3, 2025) (ordering release); *Sonam T. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2834, *slip op.*, ECF No. 19 (D. Minn. Sept. 16, 2025) (R&R recommending order of release); *see also Sonam T. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-2834, ECF No. 25 (D. Minn. Sept. 19, 2025) (ordering release); *Mehran S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3724, ECF No. 11 (D. Minn. Sept. 29, 2025) (ordering release); *Omar J. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3719 (D. Minn. Sept. 29, 2025), ECF No. 11 (ordering release); *Yee S. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-02782-JMB-DLM (D. Minn. Oct. 9, 2025), ECF No. 13 (granting habeas petition 4 days after TRO and motion to expedite was filed); *Constantinovici v. Bondi*, No. 3:25-CV-02405-RBM-AHG (S.D. Cal. Oct. 10, 2025), ECF No. 15 (granting habeas petition less than one month after filing).

### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

70. Petitioner’s present detention is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1231 and its implementing regulations at 8 C.F.R. pt. 241.
71. Section 1231 mandates detention “[d]uring the removal period.” *Accord* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)(A), (a)(2). However, the same sections also require the government to actually remove the alien during this removal period. 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)(A).
72. The “removal period” is “90 days.” 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)(A). Petitioner’s “removal period” ended on July 11, 2000.

73. Detention past the removal period can be lawful in circumstances not presented here. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1)(C), (a)(6).
74. After a noncitizen with a final order of removal has been detained, they may seek and obtain their release by demonstrating “there is no significant likelihood of removal to the country to which he or she was ordered removed, or to a third country, in the reasonably foreseeable future.” 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(a).
75. Once a noncitizen is released on an OOS, they are subject to certain conditions of release. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(h)(1).
76. Redetention is permitted where it is alleged a noncitizen violated the conditions of release. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(h)(2), (i).
77. Regulations also permit the government to withdraw or otherwise revoke release under specific circumstances. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(h)(4). One permissible reason to revoke release occurs when, “on account of changed circumstances, the Service determines that there is a significant likelihood that the alien may be removed in the reasonably foreseeable future.” 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2). Once such a determination is made, the noncitizen must “be notified of the reasons for revocation of [their] release” and must be provided with “an initial informal interview... to afford the alien an opportunity to respond to the reasons for revocation stated in the notification.” 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(3). “The revocation custody review will include an evaluation of any contested facts relevant to the revocation and a determination whether the facts as determined warrant revocation and further denial of release.”  
*Id.* If a noncitizen is not released following the informal interview, “the provisions

of [8 C.F.R. § 241.4] shall govern the alien’s continued detention pending removal.”

8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2). Once the provisions of § 241.4 take effect, it appears that the consequence is a total reset of the 90-day removal period under 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a), though Petitioner respectfully submits the regulation is *ultra vires* to statute as an arbitrary or capricious interpretation of statute that exceeds statutory authority. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 241.4(b)(4).

78. Under the Supreme Court’s decision in *Zadvydas v. Davis*, a person subject to a final order of removal cannot, consistent with the Due Process Clause, be detained indefinitely pending removal. 533 U.S. 678, 699-700 (2001). *Zadvydas* established a temporal marker: post-final order of removal detention of six months or less is presumptively constitutional. Detention periods of less than six months can be unconstitutional if the presumption of reasonableness is rebutted.
79. Petitioner has rebutted any presumption of reasonableness that might apply to the facts of his case and the length of his present detention by demonstrating there is no reasonable likelihood of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future and/or by demonstrating that the Respondents have violated binding federal regulations by detaining him in the absence of changed circumstances showing a significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future.
80. The 6-month *Zadvydas* clock does not reset upon every new iteration of detention. It is instead measured in the aggregate. At minimum, the 6-month *Zadvydas* clock must be measured in the aggregate when the required prerequisites for redetention, as identified by 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.13(g) and (i)(2)-(3) (*inter alia*) are not satisfied

prior to redetention.

81. *Zadvydas* also stated:

After this 6-month period, once the alien provides good reason to believe that there is no significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future, **the Government must respond with evidence sufficient to rebut that showing. And for detention to remain reasonable, as the period of prior post-removal confinement grows, what counts as the “reasonably foreseeable future” conversely would have to shrink.**

533 U.S. at 701 (emphasis added).

82. *Zadvydas* further held that civil detention violates due process unless special, nonpunitive circumstances outweigh an individual’s interest in avoiding restraint.

533 U.S. at 690 (**immigration detention must remain “nonpunitive in purpose and effect”**) (emphasis added).

### **REMEDY**

83. Respondents’ detention of Petitioner violates the Due Process Clause of the United States Constitution. Petitioner’s ongoing detention violates the Fifth Amendment’s guarantee that “[n]o person shall be . . . deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” U.S. Const., amend. V.

84. Due Process requires that detention “bear [] a reasonable relation to the purpose for which the individual [was] committed.” *Zadvydas, v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001) (citing *Jackson v. Indiana*, 406 U.S. 715, 738 (1972)).

85. Petitioner seeks immediate release to the extent that Respondents justify his detention on the idea that Petitioner has failed to demonstrate that there is no significant likelihood of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future;

Respondents bear the burden of rebutting the prior showing made by Petitioner. 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2)-(3). Respondents have failed to meet this burden.

86. Petitioner seeks immediate release subject to the same conditions as his prior OOS.
87. Petitioner seeks immediate release to the extent that Respondents have violated his due process rights by failing to comply with 8 C.F.R. §§ 241.4 and/or 241.13.
88. Petitioner seeks immediate release to the extent that Respondents have redetained him for the purpose of punishing him for remaining in the United States despite his final order of removal.
89. Petitioner seeks immediate release to the extent that Respondents have redetained him for the purpose of sending a message to similarly situated individuals for the purpose of encouraging those similarly situated persons to leave the United States before they share Petitioner's fate.
90. Although neither the Constitution nor the federal habeas statutes delineate the necessary content of habeas relief, *I.N.S. v. St. Cyr*, 533 U.S. 289, 337 (2001) (Scalia, J., dissenting) (“A straightforward reading of [the Suspension Clause] discloses that it does not guarantee any content to . . . the writ of habeas corpus”), implicit in habeas jurisdiction is the power to order release. *Boumediene v. Bush*, 553 U.S. 723, 779 (2008) (“[T]he habeas court must have the power to order the conditional release of an individual unlawfully detained.”).
91. The Supreme Court has noted that the typical remedy for unlawful detention is release from detention. *See, e.g., Munaf v. Geren*, 553 U.S. 674 (2008) (“The typical

remedy for [unlawful executive detention] is, of course, release.”); *see also Wajda v. United States*, 64 F.3d 385, 389 (8th Cir. 1995) (stating the function of habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 “is to obtain release from the duration or fact of present custody.”).

92. That courts with habeas jurisdiction have the power to order outright release is justified by the fact that, “habeas corpus is, at its core, an equitable remedy,” *Schlup v. Delo*, 513 U.S. 298, 319 (1995), and that as an equitable remedy, federal courts “[have] broad discretion in conditioning a judgment granting habeas relief [and are] authorized . . . to dispose of habeas corpus matters ‘as law and justice require.’” *Hilton v. Braunskill*, 481 U.S. 770, 775 (1987) (quoting 28 U.S.C. § 2243). An order of release falls under court’s broad discretion to fashion relief. *See, e.g., Jimenez v. Cronen*, 317 F. Supp. 3d 626, 636 (D. Mass. 2018) (“Habeas corpus is an equitable remedy. The court has the discretion to fashion relief that is fair in the circumstances, including to order an alien’s release.”).
93. Immediate release is an appropriate remedy in this case.

### **CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### **COUNT ONE: DECLARATORY RELIEF**

94. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in the preceding paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.
95. Petitioner requests a declaratory judgment pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2201 that Petitioner is detained pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1).
96. Petitioner requests a declaratory judgment pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2201 that

Petitioner has previously demonstrated to ICE's satisfaction that there is no significant likelihood of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future ("NSLRRFF").

97. Petitioner requests a declaratory judgment pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2201 that ICE did not rebut Petitioner's prior NSLRRFF showing prior to redetaining him.
98. Petitioner requests a declaratory judgment pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2201 that until ICE rebuts Petitioner's prior NSLRRFF showing, Petitioner may not be redetained.

**COUNT TWO: VIOLATION OF THE IMMIGRATION & NATIONALITY ACT – 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2)-(3)**

99. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in ¶¶ 1-93 as if set forth fully herein.
100. Section 1231(a)(1)-(3) of Title 8 of the U.S. Code and 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(g), (i)(2)-(3) governs the detention, release, and redetention of aliens with final orders of removal.
101. Respondents have failed to comply with these provisions prior to redetaining Petitioner after Petitioner's release on an OOS.
102. No independent alternative basis supports Respondents' decision to redetain Petitioner.
103. Petitioner is therefore detained in violation of the INA.

**COUNT THREE: VIOLATION OF THE FIFTH AMENDMENT**

104. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in ¶¶ 1-93 as if set forth fully herein.

105. The Fifth Amendment Due Process Clause protects against arbitrary detention and requires that detention be reasonably related to its purpose and accompanied by adequate procedures to ensure that detention is serving its legitimate goals. It further requires that detention cease when a noncitizen has established to the government’s satisfaction that there is no significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future after the noncitizen has been ordered removed.
106. Petitioner is no longer subject to mandatory custody under the Immigration & Nationality Act. Petitioner previously established to the government’s satisfaction that there was no significant likelihood of removal in the reasonably foreseeable future. The government has not rebutted this with credible or probative evidence. The government does not presently have a travel document for Petitioner. There are no new circumstances that otherwise justify Petitioner’s redetention. Respondents have violated Petitioner’s Fifth Amendment guarantee of due process.
107. Respondents have also independently violated Petitioner’s Fifth Amendment due process right by incarcerating him to punish him or to otherwise send a message to similarly situated individuals that they must leave the United States to avoid a similar fate.

**COUNT FOUR: VIOLATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROCEDURES ACT – CONTRARY TO LAW AND ARBITRARY  
AND CAPRICIOUS AGENCY POLICY**

108. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in ¶¶ 1-93 as if set forth fully herein.
109. The APA provides that a “reviewing court shall . . . hold unlawful and set aside

agency action, findings, and conclusions found to be . . . arbitrary and capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law.” 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A).

110. Respondents have failed to articulate any reasoned explanation for redetaining Petitioner.
111. Respondents have failed to articulate any reasoned explanation for deviating from or otherwise ignoring or failing to comply with the plain language of 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(g), (i)(2)-(3).
112. Respondents’ decisions, which represent changes in the agencies’ policies and positions, have considered factors that Congress did not intend to be considered, have entirely failed to consider important aspects of the case, and have offered explanations for their decisions that run counter to the evidence before the agencies.
113. Respondents’ decision to redetain Petitioner is arbitrary, capricious, and not in accordance with law, and as such, it violates the APA. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706(2).

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Petitioner, Phong Duc Nguyen, asks this Court for the following relief:

1. Assume jurisdiction over this matter.
2. Expedite consideration of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1657 because it is an action brought under 28 U.S.C. Ch. 153.
  - a. Issue an Order to Show Cause ordering Respondents to state the true cause of Petitioner’s detention within 7 days of the Court’s issuance of the OSC.

- b. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1657, issue an Order shortening the time for making any objections to the magistrate's forthcoming Report & Recommendation from 14 days to 5 days if a magistrate is assigned.
    - c. Order the Clerk of Courts to promptly serve a copy of the petition and any subsequent Order on Respondents and any other appropriate individual involved pursuant Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 and 2255 Cases.
  3. Issue an emergency preliminary order restraining Respondents from attempting to move Petitioner from the State of Texas during the pendency of this Petition.
  4. Issue an emergency preliminary order requiring Respondents to provide 72-hour notice of any intended movement of Petitioner.
  5. Issue an emergency preliminary order requiring Respondents to give Petitioner due process prior to removing him to an allegedly safe third country in the form of a full merits hearing for asylum, withholding of removal, and DCAT before an immigration judge relating to the proposed country of removal with a right to an administrative appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals.
  6. Order Petitioner's immediate release subject to the conditions of his prior OOS.
  7. Declare that Respondents' action is arbitrary and capricious.
  8. Declare that Respondents failed to adhere to binding regulations and precedent.
  9. Declare that Petitioner's detention violates the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.
  10. Permanently enjoin Respondents from redetaining Petitioner under 8 C.F.R. §

241.13(i)(2)-(3) unless and until Respondents have obtained a travel document allowing for Respondent's removal from the United States.

11. Permanently enjoin Respondents from redetaining Petitioner under 8 C.F.R. § 241.13(i)(2)-(3) for more than three days after receiving a travel document.
12. Permanently enjoin Respondents from deporting Petitioner to an allegedly safe third country without first giving Petitioner due process in the form of a full merits hearing for asylum, withholding of removal, and DCAT before an immigration judge relating to the proposed country of removal with a right to an administrative appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals.
13. Grant Petitioner reasonable attorney fees and costs pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d)(1)(A).
14. Grant all further relief this Court deems just and proper.

DATED: December 21, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

**RATKOWSKI LAW PLLC**

/s/ Nico Ratkowski

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*Attorney for Petitioner*

**Verification by Petitioner Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2242**

I am submitting this verification because I am the Petitioner. I hereby verify that the statements made in the attached Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, including the statements regarding my detention status, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I declare under penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746 that all of the factual allegations and statements in the Petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

/s/ Phong Duc Nguyen  
Phong Duc Nguyen

Dated: December 21, 2025