

District Judge Tiffany M. Cartwright

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

JUAN CHAVARIN MORALES,

Petitioner,

v.

KRISTI NOEM, *et al.*,

Respondents.

Case No. 2:26-cv-00011-TMC

FEDERAL RESPONDENTS'
RETURN MEMORANDUM

Noted for Consideration:
January 26, 2026

Petitioner seeks habeas relief from his mandatory immigration detention. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detains Petitioner pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). Federal Respondents acknowledge that in *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, this Court granted summary judgment and found that detention pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) of the Bond Denial Class is unlawful. *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, No. 3:25-cv-05240-TMC, 2025 WL 2782499 (W.D. Wash. Sept. 30, 2025). That decision is presently on appeal. *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, No. 3:25-cv-05240-TMC, Dkt. 71. Additionally, in *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, the district court found the same and extended declaratory relief to a similarly defined and certified nationwide Bond Eligible Class. *See Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, 2025 WL 3288403 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 25, 2025).

FEDERAL RESPONDENTS' RETURN MEMORANDUM
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1 **A. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)**

2 While acknowledging the decisions in *Rodriguez Vazquez* and *Maldonado*, Federal
3 Respondents continue to believe Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention pursuant to 8 U.S.C.
4 § 1225(b). *See Vargas Lopez v. Trump*, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 2780351 (D. Neb. Sept. 30,
5 2025) (holding petitioner detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)); *Sixtos Chavez v. Noem*, --- F.
6 Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 2730228 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 24, 2025) (same). Noncitizens who are
7 apprehended shortly after illegally crossing the border and who are determined to be inadmissible
8 due to lacking a visa or valid entry documentation, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(7)(A), may be removed
9 pursuant to an expedited removal order unless they express an intention to apply for asylum or a
10 fear of persecution in their home country. 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), (iii)(II). “The purpose of
11 these provisions is to expedite the removal from the United States of aliens who indisputably have
12 no authorization to be admitted to the United States, while providing an opportunity for such an
13 alien who claims asylum to have the merits of his or her claim promptly assessed by officers with
14 full professional training in adjudicating asylum claims.” H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 828, 104th Cong.,
15 2d Sess. 209 (1996).

16 Applicants for admission fall into one of two categories. Section 1225(b)(1) covers
17 noncitizens initially determined to be inadmissible due to fraud, misrepresentation, or lack of
18 valid documentation, and certain other noncitizens designated by the Attorney General in her
19 discretion. Separately, Section 1225(b)(2) serves as a catchall provision that applies to all
20 applicants for admission not covered by Section 1225(b)(1) (with specific exceptions not relevant
21 here). *See Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 287 (2018).

22 Congress has determined that all noncitizens subject to Section 1225(b) are subject to
23 mandatory detention. Regardless of whether a noncitizen falls under Section 1225(b)(1) or (b)(2),
24

1 the sole means of release is “temporary parole from § 1225(b) detention ‘for urgent humanitarian
2 reasons or significant public benefit,’ § 1182(d)(5)(A).” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 283.

3 Further, several provisions at 8 U.S.C. § 1252 preclude review. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g)
4 bars review of Petitioner’s claims because they arise from the government’s decision to
5 commence removal proceedings. Second, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9) bars the Court from hearing
6 Petitioner’s claims because his claims challenge the decision and action to detain him, which
7 arises from the government’s decision to commence removal proceedings, thus an “action taken
8 . . . to remove an alien from the United States.” Third and lastly, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(e)(3) applies
9 and limits “[j]udicial review of determinations under section 1225(b) of this title and its
10 implementation.” The plain language of the statute precludes judicial review for noncitizens
11 determined to be detained pursuant to Section 1225(b)(2) and applies to a “determination under
12 section 1225(b)” and to its implementation.

13 **B. Petitioner is lawfully detained**

14 Through this habeas action, Petitioner seeks relief as a member of the nationwide Bond
15 Eligible Class in *Maldonado Bautista*.¹ As mentioned above, the Bond Eligible Class in
16 *Maldonado Bautista* is substantially similar to the Bond Denial Class in *Rodriguez Vazquez*, with
17 *Rodriguez Vazquez* applying more narrowly to noncitizens detained at Northwest ICE Processing
18 Center.² Again, Federal Respondents do not agree with the *Rodriguez Vazquez* and *Maldonado*
19

20 ¹ “**Bond Eligible Class:** All noncitizens in the United States without lawful status who (1) have entered or will
21 enter the United States without inspection; (2) were not or will not be apprehended upon arrival; and (3) are not or
22 will not be subject to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c), § 1225(b)(1), or § 1231 at the time the Department of
Homeland Security makes an initial custody determination.” *Maldonado Bautista*, 2025 WL 3288403, at *1.

23 ² “**Bond Denial Class:** All noncitizens without lawful status detained at the Northwest ICE Processing Center who
24 (1) have entered or will enter the United States without inspection, (2) are not apprehended upon arrival, (3) are not
or will not be subject to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c), § 1225(b)(1), or § 1231 at the time the noncitizen is
scheduled for or requests a bond hearing.” *Rodriguez*, 2025 WL 2782499, at *6.

1 *Bautista* decisions. Alternatively, they do not oppose Petitioner being considered a member of the
2 *Rodriguez Vazquez* Bond Denial Class for purposes of this litigation. Federal Respondents do not
3 believe that Petitioner can be a member of both classes simultaneously, and treating Petitioner as a
4 member of the *Rodriguez Vazquez* Bond Denial Class does not change the legal posture of Petitioner
5 in the instant petition at this time.

6 However, even if Petitioner is considered a *Rodriguez Vazquez* Bond Denial Class
7 member, his detention is lawful, and he is not entitled to the relief he seeks through this petition.

8 On December 10, 2025, Petitioner appeared at a bond hearing at the Tacoma Immigration
9 Court, where the Immigration Judge denied Petitioner's request bond, finding lack of jurisdiction
10 under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). Declaration of Katherine G. Collins ("Collins Decl."), Exh. A, Bond
11 Order. In the alternative, the Immigration Judge held a bond hearing and found Petitioner
12 ineligible for bond based on a finding that Petitioner is a danger to the community and/or flight
13 risk. *See id.*

14 "[T]he essence of habeas corpus is an attack by a person in custody upon the legality of
15 that custody, and . . . the traditional function of the writ is to secure release from illegal custody."
16 *Preiser v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 475, 484 (1973). Although Petitioner challenges the Immigration
17 Judge's finding of mandatory detention under § 1225(b), the Immigration Judge alternatively held
18 a bond hearing for Petitioner and determined that Petitioner presents a flight risk. Collins Decl.,
19 Exh. A, Bond Order. This remains is a separate basis for the "legality of [his] custody." *See id.*
20 Accordingly, even if Petitioner were treated as subject to the discretionary detention regime of §
21 1226(a) as directed in *Rodriguez Vazquez*, Petitioner would remain lawfully in detention under
22 that the Immigration Judge's separate finding.

1 Because Petitioner has not demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence that “the fact
2 or duration of his confinement” violates any law, *see Preiser*, 411 U.S. at 489, habeas relief must
3 be denied.

4
5 DATED this 20th day of January, 2026.

6 Respectfully submitted,

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20 *I certify that this memorandum contains 998*
21 *words, in compliance with the Local Civil Rules*