

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
COLUMBUS DIVISION

JOEL MERIDA GOMEZ,

Petitioner,

v.

WARDEN, STEWART DETENTION
CENTER,

Respondent.

Case No. 4:26-CV-00063-CDL-ALS

**ABBREVIATED RESPONSE TO PETITION
AND RESPONSE TO ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

On January 14, 2026, Petitioner filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus (“Petition”) claiming that (1) he is not subject to mandatory pre-final order of removal detention pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), and (2) even if he is, that statute is unconstitutional on its face because it violates due process. ECF No. 1. On January 15, 2026, the Court issued an Order to Show Cause directing Respondent to show cause within seven days why the Petition should not be granted in light of the Court’s rulings in *J.A.M. v. Streeval*, No. 4:25-cv-342-CDL-AGH (M.D. Ga. Nov. 1, 2025) and *P.R.S. v. Streeval*, No. 4:25-cv-330-CDL, 2025 WL 3269947 (M.D. Ga. Nov. 24, 2025). ECF No. 3.

Respondent acknowledges this Court’s prior rulings in *J.A.M.* and *P.R.S.*, concerning similar challenges to the detention authority at issue in this case, which would

control the result in this case should the Court adhere to its legal reasoning in those prior decisions. Should the Court determine that § 1226(a) governs Petitioner's detention, the only appropriate remedy is a bond hearing before an immigration judge, during which an immigration judge can properly determine in the first instance whether Petitioner is a flight risk or danger to the community. See *J.A.M. v. Streeval*, No. 4:25-cv-342-CDL-AGH, Order 15 (M.D. Ga. Oct. 31, 2025), ECF No. 12. Respondent reserves all rights, including the right to appeal, and reasserts the arguments raised in response to the petitions at issue in *J.A.M.* and *P.R.S.* by reference herein. Respondent submits this abbreviated response in lieu of an exhaustive responsive brief to preserve the legal issues and to conserve the resources of the Court and the parties. Should the Court prefer to receive a more exhaustive response brief, Respondent respectfully requests leave to file such a brief and will do so upon the Court's request.

Respectfully submitted this 21st day of January, 2026.

WILLIAM R. KEYES
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

BY: *s/ Travis D. Lynes*
TRAVIS D. LYNES
Assistant United States Attorney
Georgia Bar No. 675496
United States Attorney's Office
Middle District of Georgia
P.O. Box 1702
Macon, Georgia 31202
Telephone: (478) 972-0711
E-mail: travis.lynes@usdoj.gov