

Pretty Martinez, Esq. (PA Bar ID: 329658)  
Matthew Archambeault (PA Bar ID: 89501)  
Law Office of Matthew Archambeault  
216 Haddon Avenue, Suite 402  
Haddon Township, NJ 08108-2812  
prettysmartinez@archambeaultlaw.com  
856-890-9320 / 215-599-2189  
*Attorneys for Petitioner*

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

GUTIERREZ FLORES, RENE  
Petitioner,

v.

WARDEN of Federal Detention  
Center Philadelphia; MICHAEL  
ROSE, in his official capacity as  
Acting Philadelphia Field Office  
Director of Immigration and  
Customs Enforcement, Enforcement  
and Removal Operations; TODD  
LYONS, in his official capacity as  
the Acting Director of U.S.  
Immigration and Customs  
Enforcement; KRISTI NOEM, in  
her official capacity as Secretary of  
the Department of Homeland  
Security, and PAMELA BONDI, in  
her official capacity as U.S.  
Attorney General,

Respondents.

Case No. 2:26-cv-00404

**VERIFIED PETITION  
FOR WRIT OF  
HABEAS  
CORPUS**

**PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS  
PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 2241**

Petitioner respectfully petitions this Honorable Court for writ of habeas corpus to remedy Petitioner's unlawful detention by Respondents, as follows:

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

1. Petitioner Rene Gutierrez Flores (hereinafter "Rene") is a 55-year-old Mexican national, who is in the custody of the United States Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"), Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE").<sup>1</sup> *See* Ex. A, Passport Biographic Page of Rene Gutierrez Flores. Petitioner was arrested by ICE outside his home in Northeast Philadelphia while loading his truck for work early this morning. Upon information received from Philadelphia Enforcement and Removal Operations, he will be transferred to Philadelphia Federal Detention Center ("FDC"). We believe Petitioner is either currently detained at the Philadelphia FDC or at the Philadelphia ICE Field Office.
2. As of today, January 22, 2026, it is unknown if Rene has been assigned an A-number or whether a case exists for Rene on the Executive Office for Immigration Review's Automated Case Information site. A search of Petition on ICE's Online Detainee Locator yields no results as of the time of filing this petition. *See* Ex. B ICE Detainee Locator last visited Jan. 22, 2026.

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<sup>1</sup> All exhibits cited herein refer to the exhibits listed in the Declaration of Pretty Martinez filed in support of this petition.

3. Rene has entered the United States twice without inspection, once in 1995 and again in 2003. Rene has not left the United States since his most recent entry in 2003. Prior to his detention, Rene had lived peacefully with his family in Philadelphia for over twenty years after his most recent entry to the United States without inspection sometime in 2003.
4. To the best of undersigned counsel's knowledge, Rene does not currently have an Alien Number or scheduled hearing before the immigration court. In approximately October 2025, Rene and his wife filed an application for U Nonimmigrant Status. *See* Ex. C, Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status with 10Oct2025 USPS Delivery Confirmation. They have yet to be issued receipts by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.
5. Rene has not been arrested here in the United States or anywhere else in the world. He has no history of violence or criminal activity.

### **INTRODUCTION**

6. Rene is detained pending his removal proceedings without access to a hearing conducted by a neutral decision maker—a federal judge or an immigration judge—to determine whether his detention is warranted based on a danger or flight risk, pursuant to the BIA's recent decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).
7. This decision, which holds that 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) makes noncitizens like Rene who are apprehended in the United States but have never been admitted

subject to mandatory detention without a bond hearing, violates the statute. Instead, 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) applies and authorizes release on bond after a hearing before an immigration judge. The BIA's interpretation conflicts with the plain language and structure of the statute, as well as decades of uncontroverted agency practice. Therefore, the application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner is contrary to law and violates the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and the Administrative Procedure Act (APA).

8. In the alternative, if the statute does authorize Rene's detention without a bond hearing, it violates his rights to substantive and procedural due process.

Detention of all noncitizens who are subject to inadmissibility grounds, like Petitioner, without any individualized hearing does not "bear a reasonable relation to the purpose for which the individual was committed." *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001). Moreover, the application of *Mathews v. Eldridge* balancing test shows that a bond hearing is necessary to protect Petitioner from an unnecessary deprivation of liberty. *See* 424 U.S. 319, 335 (1976).

9. Rene, therefore, respectfully requests that this Court issue a writ of habeas corpus and order his immediate release from custody, with appropriate conditions of supervision if necessary.

**PARTIES**

10. Petitioner Rene Gutierrez Flores is a noncitizen asylum seeker currently detained by Respondents pending removal proceedings.
11. Respondent Warden of the Federal Detention Center Philadelphia is named in his capacity as Facility Administrator/Warden; he oversees the administration and management of the FDC Philadelphia. Accordingly, Respondent Warden is the immediate custodian of Petitioner. He is sued in his official capacity.
12. Respondent Michael Rose is named in his official as the Acting Philadelphia Field Office Director for ICE. In this capacity, Respondent Rose is responsible for administration and management of ICE Enforcement Removal Operations in Pennsylvania and exercises control over Petitioner's custody at FDC. Respondent Rose's office is located at 114 North 8th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.
13. Respondent Todd Lyons is named in his official capacity as the Acting Director of ICE. In this capacity, Respondent Lyons is responsible for the administration of federal immigration law and the execution of detention and removal determinations, and, as such, he is a legal custodian of Petitioner. Respondent Lyons's office is located at 500 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20536.
14. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS oversees ICE, which is responsible for administering and enforcing the immigration laws. Secretary Noem is the ultimate legal custodian

of Petitioner. She is sued in her official capacity. Respondent Noem's office is located at U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, D.C., 20528.

15. Respondent Pamela Bondi is named in her official capacity as the Attorney General of the United States. In this capacity, she is responsible for the administration of the immigration laws as exercised by the Executive Office for Immigration Review, pursuant to INA § 103(g), 8 U.S.C. § 1103(g), routinely transacts business in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, is legally responsible for administering Petitioner's removal proceedings and the standards used in those proceedings, and as such is the legal custodian of Petitioner. Respondent Bondi's address is U.S. Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, District of Columbia 20530.

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

16. This action arises under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

17. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, Art. I § 9, cl. 2 of the United States Constitution, 28 U.S.C. § 1331, and 28 U.S.C. § 1361. This Court may grant relief under the habeas corpus statutes, 28 U.S.C. § 2241 et seq., the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201 et seq., and the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1651.

18. The Third Circuit's recent decision in *Khalil v. United States*, —F.4th—, 2026 WL 111933 at 8 (3d Cir. Jan. 15, 2026) has no bearing here, and this Honorable

Court retains subject matter jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup> The Third Circuit addressed two questions in *Khalil*: (1) whether the New Jersey District Court had jurisdiction over Khalil's habeas petition with regard to district of confinement rules and immediate custodian rules and (2) whether the INA stripped the New Jersey District Court of jurisdiction. *See generally id.* As to the first question, the New Jersey District Court, like the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in the instant case, had habeas jurisdiction. However, the *Khalil* Court found that the New Jersey District Court did not have subject matter jurisdiction. Rene's instant petition is factually distinct and raises different assertions from those addressed by the *Khalil* Court. Because Rene's instant petition raises the narrow issue of bond eligibility and access to a bond hearing, rather than challenges to removal, this Honorable Court retains habeas jurisdiction *and* subject matter jurisdiction over Rene's petition for writ of habeas corpus.

19. The United States has waived sovereign immunity for this action for declaratory and injunctive relief against one of its agencies and that agency's officers are sued in their official capacities. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 702.

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<sup>2</sup> Petitioner notes that two judges in district have found that *Khalil* is distinguishable and does not prevent jurisdiction. *See e.g. Kourouma v. Jamison, et al.*, No. 26-0182-KSM (Jan. 15, 2026); *Restrepo v. Jamison*, No. 25-cv-6518 (Jan. 20, 2026) (J. Leeson).

20. Venue is proper in this District because the Petitioner is detained in this district. 28 U.S.C. § 1391; *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426, 442 (2004).

**EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES**

21. There is no statutory requirement of exhaustion of administrative remedies where a noncitizen challenges the lawfulness of his detention. *Arango Marquez v. I.N.S.*, 346 F.3d 892, 897 (9th Cir. 2003). Any requirement of administrative exhaustion is therefore purely discretionary. *See Santos v. Lowe*, No. 1:18-cv-1553, 2020 WL 4530728, at \*2 (M.D. Pa. Aug. 2020) (“[T]he exhaustion requirement imposed by courts relating to habeas corpus petitions filed by immigration detainees is a prudential benchmark which is not compelled by statute.”).

22. In making that decision, the Court should consider the urgency of the need for immediate review. “Where a person is detained by executive order . . . the need for collateral review is most pressing. . . . In this context the need for habeas corpus is more urgent.” *Boumediene v. Bush*, 553 U.S. 723, 783 (2008) (waiving administrative exhaustion for executive detainees).

23. Moreover, the exhaustion “doctrine is not without exception.” *Ashley v. Ridge*, 288 F. Supp. 2d 662, 666. (D.N.J. 2003). “Courts have found that the exhaustion of administrative remedies may not be required when available remedies provide no opportunity for adequate relief, an administrative appeal would be

futile, or if plaintiff has raised a substantial constitutional question.” *Id.* at 666-67.

24. The Board of Immigration Appeals has issued a published decision holding that people like Rene who entered the United States without inspection and therefore have not been admitted are ineligible for bond pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A). Immigration judges and the BIA are bound by this decision. 8 C.F.R. § 1003.1(g)(1). Exhaustion before the BIA would therefore be futile.

25. Further, the BIA does not have jurisdiction to adjudicate constitutional issues. *Qatanani v. Att’y Gen. of the U.S.*, 144 F.4<sup>th</sup> 485, 500 (3d Cir. 2025); *see also Ashley*, 288 F. Supp. 2d at 667 (citation omitted). Therefore, any administrative proceedings would be futile because Petitioner raises a constitutional due process claim. *Qatanani*, 144 F.4<sup>th</sup> at 500.

### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **I. Section 1226(a) Governs the Detention of People Like Rene Who are Detained in the United States and Have Not Previously Been Admitted**

26. The Immigration and Nationality Act contains several provisions authorizing the detention of noncitizens. Section 1226(a) entitles most noncitizens with pending removal proceedings to a hearing before an Immigration Judge to determine whether they should be released on bond. 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); 8 C.F.R. § 1236.1(d). Section 1226(c) creates an exception to section 1226(a) and provides that noncitizens who are removable by virtue of certain criminal

convictions must be detained without a bond hearing. Section 1225(b) provides for mandatory detention of noncitizens subject to expedited removal under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1) and for other recent arrivals “seeking admission” under (b)(2). Finally, section 1231 governs the detention of noncitizens with a final order of removal.

27. The detention provisions at § 1226(a) and § 1225(b)(2) were enacted as part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-208, Div. C. §§ 302-03, 110 Stat. 3009-546, 3009-582 to 3009-583, 3009-585. Section 1226 was most recently amended earlier this year by the Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No. 119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025). “Upon passing IIRIRA, Congress declared that the new Section 1226(a) ‘restates the current provisions in the predecessor statute,’” which allowed noncitizens who entered without inspection to be released on bond. *Rodriguez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1260 (W.D. Wash. 2025) (citing H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 229; H.R. Rep. No. 104-828, at 210).

28. Following the enactment of the IIRIRA, EOIR drafted new regulations explaining that, in general, people who entered the country without inspection were not considered detained under § 1225 and that they were instead detained under § 1226(a). *See* Inspection and Expedited Removal of Aliens; Detention and Removal of Aliens; Conduct of Removal Proceedings; Asylum Procedures, 62 Fed. Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997) (“Despite being applicants for

admission, aliens who are present without having been admitted or paroled (formerly referred to as aliens who entered without inspection) will be eligible for bond and bond redetermination.”).

29. Thus, in the decades that followed, most people who entered without inspection and were thereafter arrested and placed in standard removal proceedings were considered for release on bond and also received bond hearings before an IJ, unless their criminal history rendered them ineligible. *Diaz Martinez v. Hyde*, No. 25-11613, 2025 WL 2084238, – F. Supp. 3d –, at \*4 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025). That practice was consistent with many more decades of prior practice, in which noncitizens who had entered the United States, even if without inspection, were entitled to a custody hearing before an Immigration Judge or other hearing officer. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a) (1994).

30. In recent months, Respondents have abruptly changed course. On July 8, 2025, ICE Director Todd M. Lyons issued an internal memorandum stating that, “in coordination with the Department of Justice (DOJ),” DHS had “revisited” its legal position and believed that § 1225, not § 1226, governs the detention of noncitizens who are present in the United States without having been admitted. *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*4.

31. On September 5, 2025, the BIA followed suit and issued a precedential decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). The BIA held that noncitizens “who are present in the United States without admission

are applicants for admission as defined under section 235(b)(2)(A) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), and must be detained for the duration of their removal proceedings.” 29 I&N Dec. at 220.

32. The BIA adopted this position despite numerous recent federal court decisions rejecting DHS’s position and holding that people who are present without having been admitted are eligible for bond pursuant to § 1226(a). *See, e.g., Perez v. Berg*, No. 8:25-cv-494, 2025 WL 2531566, 2025 WL 2531566, at \*2 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025); *Maldonado v. Olson*, No. 25-cv-3142, 2025 WL 2374411, – F. Supp. 3d –, at \*13 (D. Minn. Aug. 15, 2025); *Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, No. 25-cv-5937, 2025 WL 2371588, – F. Supp. 3d –, at \*9 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025); *Rosado v. Figueroa*, No. 25-2157, 2025 WL 2337099, at \*7 (D. Ariz. Aug. 11, 2025); *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*8; *Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 1:25-cv-11571, 2025 WL 1869299, at \*7 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025); *Rodriguez*, 779 F. Supp. 3d at 1257.

33. As these decisions explain, the BIA’s position in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* defies the INA. The plain text of the statute shows that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to people like Rene.

34. Section 1226(a) applies by default to all persons “pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States.” *See Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 288 (2018) (describing 1226(a) as the “default rule”

for people detained pending removal). These removal hearings are held under § 1229a, to “decid[e] the inadmissibility or deportability of a[] [noncitizen].”

35. The text of § 1226 explicitly applies to people charged as being inadmissible, including those who entered without inspection. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c)(1)(E). Just this year, Congress enacted subparagraph (E) in the Laken Riley Act to exclude certain noncitizens who entered without inspection from § 1226(a)’s default bond provision. Subparagraph (E)’s reference to persons inadmissible under § 1182(6)(A), i.e., persons inadmissible for entering without inspection, makes clear that, by default, such people are afforded a bond hearing under subsection (a). As the *Rodriguez Vazquez* court explained, “[w]hen Congress creates “specific exceptions” to a statute’s applicability, it “proves” that absent those exceptions, the statute generally applies. *Rodriguez Vazquez*, 2025 WL 1193850, at \*12 (citing *Shady Grove Orthopedic Assocs., P.A. v. Allstate Ins. Co.*, 559 U.S. 393, 400 (2010)).

36. Under the BIA’s interpretation, all noncitizens subject to inadmissibility grounds are detained without the opportunity for a bond hearing under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b). *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. at 220; *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6) (making people who are present without having been admitted inadmissible); 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(14) (defining an admission). Therefore, this interpretation would render all the grounds of mandatory detention in § 1226(c) applying to inadmissible noncitizens, including the recently-passed Laken Riley

Act, superfluous. *Gomes*, 2025 WL 1869299, at \*7; *Rodriguez*, 779 F. Supp. 3d at 1258; see *Marx v. Gen. Revenue Corp.*, 568 U.S. 371, 386 (2103) (“[T]he canon against surplusage is strongest when an interpretation would render superfluous another part of the same statutory scheme.”). This statutory structure demonstrates that Congress did not intend to make § 1226(a) inapplicable to all inadmissible noncitizens, but rather viewed it as the default bond provision for people arrested within the United States.

37. By contrast, § 1225(b) applies to people arriving at U.S. ports of entry or who very recently entered the United States. The statute’s entire framework is premised on inspections at the border of people who are “seeking admission” to the United States. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A); see also *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*8 (“[O]ur immigration laws have long made a distinction between those [noncitizens] who have come to our shores seeking admission . . . and those who are within the United States after an entry, irrespective of its legality.” (quoting *Leng May Ma v. Barber*, 357 U.S. 185, 187 (1958))). Indeed, the Supreme Court has explained that this mandatory detention scheme applies “at the Nation’s borders and ports of entry, where the Government must determine whether a[] [noncitizen] seeking to enter the country is admissible.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287.

38. The BIA’s interpretation “would render the phrase ‘seeking admission’ in 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) mere surplusage.” *Lopez Benitez*, 2025 WL 2371588,

at \*6. That section applies to people who are (1) applicants for admission; (2) seeking admission; and (3) not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A); *Lopez Benitez*, 2025 WL 2371588, at \*6; *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*2. The BIA’s interpretation makes all applicants for admission subject to mandatory detention, leaving the “seeking admission” criterion unnecessary and violating the rule against surplusage. *Lopez Benitez*, 2025 WL 2371588, at \*6; *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*6.

39. Instead, the phrase “seeking admission” indicates that § 1225(b)(2)(A) applies to people who are taking “some sort of present-tense action,” in other words, coming or attempting to come into the United States. *Diaz Martinez*, 2025 WL 2084238, at \*6; *see also Matter of M-C-D-V-*, 28 I&N Dec. 18, 23 (BIA 2020) (stating that “the use of the present progressive tense . . . denotes an ongoing process”). Therefore, § 1226(a), not § 1225(b)(2)(A), governs the detention of people detained within the United States who are not actively seeking admission, as required by the statute.

40. Applying § 1226(a), rather than § 1225(b), to people detained in the interior who had previously entered without inspection is consistent with the government’s longstanding practice, which “can inform a court’s determination of what the law is.” *Loper Bright Enter. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 386 (2024).

This longstanding practice further counsels against the BIA's abrupt change in policy. *Maldonado*, 2025 WL 2374411, at \*11.

41. Finally, as discussed below, the BIA's interpretation of § 1225(b)(2)(A) to mandate detention without a bond hearing for all noncitizens present in the United States without having been admitted presents serious constitutional concerns. Therefore, to the degree that the statute remains ambiguous, the Court should presume that Congress "did not intend the alternative which raises serious constitutional doubts" and reject that construction. *Clark v. Martinez*, 543 U.S. 371, 381-82 (2005). Therefore, § 1226(a), which permits bond hearings, not § 1226(b)(2)(A), which does not, governs the detention of people like Rene.

42. Many District Courts have rejected the holding of *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*. Some of the more than 280 district courts have rejected the government's new interpretation of the interplay between § 1226(a) and § 1225(b)(2), including many within Pennsylvania and New Jersey. *See, e.g., Yilmaz v. Fed. Det. Ctr. Philadelphia*, No. 2:25-cv-06572 (E.D. Pa. Dec. 12, 2025); *Centeno Ibarra v. Fed. Det. Ctr. Philadelphia*, No. 2:25-cv-06312 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 25, 2025); *Patel v. McShane*, No. 25-cv-5975 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 20, 2025); *Ndiaye v. Jamison*, No. 25-cv-6007, 2025 WL 3229307 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 19, 2025) (Sanchez, J.); *Kashranov v. Jamison*, No. 25-5555, 2025 WL 3188399 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 14, 2025); *Demirel v. Fed. Det. Ctr. Philadelphia, et al.*, No. 2:25-cv-05488 (E.D.

Pa. Nov. 18, 2025), *Cantu-Cortes v. O'Neill*, No. 25-6338, 2025 WL 317639 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 13, 2025); *see also Bethancourt Soto v. Soto, et al.*, No. 25-16200, 2025 WL 2976572 (D.N.J. Oct. 22, 2025), *Zumba v. Bondi*, No. 25-14626, 2025 WL 2753496 (D.N.J. Sept. 26, 2025); *Lomeu v. Soto, et al.*, No. 25-16589, 2025 WL 2981296, at \*8 (D.N.J. Oct. 23, 2025); *del Cid v. Bondi*, No. 25-00304, 2025 WL 2985150 (W.D. Pa. Oct. 23, 2025); *see also Mugliza Castillo v. Lyons*, No. 25-16219, 2025 WL 2940990 (D.N.J. Oct. 10, 2025); *Buestan v. Chu*, No. 25-16034, 2025 WL 2972252, at \*1 (D.N.J. Oct. 21, 2025); *Oliveira Gomes v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 1868299 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025); *Martinez v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2084238 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025); *dos Santos v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2370988 (D. Mass. Aug. 14, 2025); *Romero v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2403827 (D. Mass. Aug. 19, 2025); *Doe v. Moniz*, 2025 WL 2576819 (D. Mass. Sept. 5, 2025); *Encarnacion v. Moniz*, No. 25-12237 (D. Mass. Sept. 5, 2025); *Sampiao v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2607924 (D. Mass. Sept. 9, 2025); *Hilario Rodriguez v. Moniz*, No. 25-12358 (D. Mass. Sept. 18, 2025); *Chogllo Chafla v. Scott*, 2025 WL 2531027 (D. Me. Sept. 2, 2025); *Jimenez v. FCI Berlin, Warden*, 2025 WL 2639390 (D.N.H. Sept. 8, 2025); *Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, 2025 WL 2371588 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025); *Samb v. Joyce*, 2025 WL 2398831 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 19, 2025); *Savane v. Francis*, 2025 WL 2774452 (S.D.N.Y. Sept. 28, 2025); *Luna Quispe v. Crawford*, 2025 WL 2783799 (E.D. Va. Sept. 29, 2025); *Rivera Zumba v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2753496 (D.N.J. Sept. 26, 2025); *Leal-Hernandez v. Noem*,

2025 WL 2430025 (D. Md. Aug. 24, 2025); *Hasan v. Crawford*, 2025 WL 2682255 (E.D. Va. Sept. 19, 2025); *Kostak v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2472136 (W.D. La. Aug. 27, 2025); *Lopez Santos v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2642278 (W.D. La. Sept. 11, 2025); *Lopez-Arevelo v. Ripa*, 2025 WL 2691828 (W.D. Tex., Sept. 22, 2025); *Barrera v. Tindall*, 2025 WL 2690565 (W.D. Ky. Sept. 19, 2025); *Singh v. Lewis*, 2025 WL 2699219 (W.D. Ky. Sept. 22, 2025); *Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2496379 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025); *Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, 2:25-cv-12546, 2025 WL 2609425 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 9, 2025); *Campos Leon v. Forestal*, 2025 WL 2694763 (S.D. Ind. Sept. 22, 2025); *Giron Reyes v. Lyons*, 2025 WL 2712427 (N.D. Iowa Sept. 23, 2025); *Santiago Helbrum v. Williams*, 4:25-cv-00349 (S.D. Iowa Sept. 30, 2025); *Hernandez Marcelo v. Trump* (S.D. Iowa Sept. 10, 2025); *Brito Barajas v. Noem*, No. 4:25-cv-00322 (S.D. Iowa Sept. 23, 2025); *Belsai D.S. v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2802947 (D. Minn. Oct. 1, 2025); *Maldonado v. Olson*, 2025 WL 2374411 (D. Minn. Apr. 15, 2025); *O.E. v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2466670 (D. Minn. Apr. 27, 2025); *Garcia Jimenez v. Kramer*, 2025 WL 2374223 (D. Neb. Aug. 14, 2025); *Aniscasio v. Kramer*, 2025 WL 2374224 (D. Neb. Aug. 14, 2025); *Jacinto v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2402271 (D. Neb. Aug. 19, 2025); *Carmona-Lorenzo v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2531521 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025); *Cortes Fernandez v. Lyons*, 2025 WL 251539 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025); *Palma Perez v. Berg*, 2025 WL 2531566 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025); *Lorenzo Perez v. Kramer*, 2025 WL 2624387 (D. Neb. Sept. 11, 2025); *Oruna Carlon v.*

*Kramer*, 2025 WL 2624386 (D. Neb. Sept. 11, 2025); *Genchi Palma v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2624385 (D. Neb. Sept. 11, 2025); *Duenas Arcey v. Trump*, 2025 WL 2676934 (D. Neb. Sept. 18, 2025); *Rosado v. Figueroa*, 2025 WL 2337099 (D. Ariz. Aug. 11, 2025); *Arrazola-Gonzalez v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2379235 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 2025); *Zaragoza Mosqueda et al. v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2951930 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 8, 2025); *Cuevas Guzman v. Andrews*, 2025 WL 2617256 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 9, 2025); *Guerrero Lepe v. Andrews*, 2025 WL 2716910 (E.D. Cal. Sept. 23, 2025); *Hernandez Nieves v. Kaiser*, 2025 WL 2533110 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 3, 2025); *Caicedo Hinestroza v. Kaiser*, 2025 WL 2606983 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 9, 2025); *Salcedo Aceros v. Kaiser*, 2025 WL 2637503 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 12, 2025); *Vasquez Garcia v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2549431 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 3, 2025); *Maldonado Vazquez v. Feeley*, 2025 WL 2676082 (D. Nev. Sept. 17, 2025); *Sanchez Roman v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2710211 (D. Nev. Sept. 23, 2025); *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239 (W.D. Wash. 2025); *Garcia Cortes v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2652880 (D. Colo. Sept. 16, 2025); *Salazar v. Dedos*, 2025 WL 2676729 (D.N.M. Sept. 17, 2025); *Gamez Lira v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2676729 (D.N.M. Sept. 24, 2025); *Hernandez Lopez v. Hardin* (M.D. Fla. Sept. 25, 2025). In decision after decision, federal courts have rejected Respondents' sudden reinterpretation of the statutory scheme, and have instead held that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to noncitizens who are not apprehended upon

arrival to the United States. The plain text of the statutory provisions demonstrates that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to people like Rene.

## **II. The BIA’s Application of Mandatory Detention to Noncitizens Like Rene Violates Substantive and Procedural Due Process**

43. “It is well established that the Fifth Amendment entitles [noncitizens] to due process of law in deportation proceedings.” *Demore v. Kim*, 538 U.S. 510, 523 (2003) (quoting *Reno v. Flores*, 507 U.S. 292, 306 (1993)). “Freedom from imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty” that the Due Process Clause protects. *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001); *see also id.* at 718 (Kennedy, J., dissenting) (“Liberty under the Due Process Clause includes protection against unlawful or arbitrary personal restraint or detention.”). This fundamental due process protection applies to all noncitizens within the United States, including both removable and inadmissible noncitizens. *See id.* at 693; *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202, 212 (1982); *Wong Wing v. United States*, 163 U.S. 228, 238 (1896).

44. Absent adequate procedural protections, substantive due process requires a “special justification” that “outweighs the individual’s constitutionally protected interest in avoiding physical restraint.” *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690; *accord, e.g., Torralba v. Knight*, No. 2:25-cv-1366, 2025 WL 2581792, at \*12 (D. Nev. Sept. 5, 2025) (describing the standard for a substantive due process violation); *Fernandez v. Lyons*, No. 8:25-cv-506, 2025 WL 2531539, at \*4 (D. Neb. Sept. 3,

2025) (same). In the immigration context, the Supreme Court has recognized only two valid purposes for civil detention—to mitigate the risks of danger to the community and to prevent flight. *Id.*; *Demore*, 538 U.S. at 528. Thus, to withstand constitutional scrutiny, the nature and duration of mandatory immigration detention must be reasonably related to these purposes.

45. In *Demore*, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of § 1226(c) against a facial challenge, specifically citing evidence that had been before Congress about noncitizens with criminal convictions. 538 U.S. at 518-520. This justification does not apply, however, to noncitizens with no criminal record whatsoever who have lived in the community for years. The broad policy set forth in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* is not reasonably related to the purposes of prevent danger to the community or flight risk and violates substantive due process.

46. Additionally, procedural due process protects noncitizens against deprivation of liberty without adequate procedural protections, including notice and the opportunity to be heard. *A.A.R.P. v. Trump*, 145 S. Ct. 1364, 1367 (2025); *Trump v. J.G.G.*, 145 S. Ct. 1003, 1006 (2025); *Velasco Lopez v. Decker*, 978 F.3d 842, 851 (2d Cir. 2020). In determining the proper procedure to protect a detained noncitizen’s procedural due process rights under the Fifth Amendment, courts apply the three-part balancing test in *Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319, 335 (1976), weighing (1) “the private interest that will be affected by the official

action;” (2) “the risk of an erroneous deprivation of such interest through the procedures used, and the probable value, if any, of additional or substitute procedural safeguards;” and (3) “the Government’s interest, including the function involved and the fiscal and administrative burdens that the additional or substitute procedural requirement would entail.” *Black v. Decker*, 103 F.4th 133, 147-48 (2d Cir. 2024); *Gayle v. Warden Monmouth C’ty Corr. Facility*, 12 F. 4th 321, 331 (3d Cir. 2021); *Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 28; *Velasco Lopez*, 978 F.3d at 851 (all quoting *Mathews*, 424 U.S. at 335). Here, the BIA’s interpretation of the statute to require detention of all people in the United States without having been admitted deprives them of their liberty without any individualized process to determine whether such detention is necessary to prevent flight risk or danger to the community, and violates due process.

47. First, the “importance and fundamental nature” of an individual’s liberty interest is well-established. *United States v. Salerno*, 481 U.S. 739, 750 (1987); *see also Ashley*, 288 F. Supp. at 670 (“[F]reedom from confinement is a liberty interest of the highest constitutional import.”). For people “who can face years of detention before resolution of their immigration proceedings, ‘the individual interest at stake is without doubt particularly important.’” *Linares Martinez v. Decker*, No. 18-cv-6527 (JMF), 2018 WL 5023946 at \*3 (S.D.N.Y. Oct. 17, 2018).

48. Weighing this factor in *Velasco Lopez*, the Second Circuit found the private interest to be “on any calculus, substantial,” observing that the petitioner, “could not maintain employment or see his family or friends or others outside normal visiting hours. The use of a cell phone was prohibited, and he had no access to the internet or email and limited access to the telephone.” 978 F.3d at 851-52. Similarly, the First Circuit found a substantial private liberty interest for the petitioner in *Hernandez-Lara*, noting that the petitioner there was incarcerated “alongside criminal inmates” at a jail where “she was separated from her fiancé and unable to maintain her employment.” 10 F.4th at 28.

49. Second, absent any individualized bond hearing, people will be detained despite not being a danger to the community or a flight risk, because there is no mechanism to determine whether their detention is necessary. *See, e.g., Günaydin v. Trump*, No. 25-cv-1151, 2025 WL 1459154, — F. Supp. 3d —, at \*8 (D. Minn. May 21, 2025) (noting that lack of consideration of “individualized or particularized facts . . . increases the potential for erroneous deprivation of individuals’ private rights”); *Ashley*, 28 F. Supp. 2d at 670 (finding a procedural due process violation because “the Government has not proved that Petitioner presents an identified and articulable threat to an individual or the community so as to justify his continued detention”). A bond hearing would have significant value because it is designed to assess the

individualized facts of each case and determine whether less restrictive measures can fulfill the same goals.

50. Finally, the burden on the government of returning to the longstanding practice of holding bond hearings for people like Petitioner does not outweigh the liberty interest at stake. To the contrary, the government has an interest in “minimizing the enormous impact of incarceration in cases where it serves no purpose.”

*Velasco Lopez*, 978 F.3d at 854; *see also Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 33 (noting that “limiting the use of detention to only those noncitizens who are dangerous or a flight risk may save the government, and therefore the public, from expending substantial resources on needless detention”). Additionally, “unnecessary detention imposes substantial societal costs. . . . The needless detention of those individuals thus separates families and removes from the community breadwinners, caregivers, parents, siblings and employees. Those ruptures in the fabric of communal life impact society in intangible ways that are difficult to calculate in dollars and cents.” *Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 33 (citation and internal quotation marks omitted). The cost to the government and society of detaining people unnecessarily for long periods of time is greater than the cost of providing individualized hearings, and weighs in favor of additional procedural protections.

51. At these bond hearings, due process requires that the Government bear the burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence. *See Gayle*, 12 F.4th at 332

("[W]hen such a severe deprivation is at issue, the Government must bear the burden of proof."). "A standard of proof serves to allocate the risk of error between the litigants and reflects the relative importance attached to the ultimate decision." *German Santos v. Warden Pike C'ty Corr. Facility*, 965 F.3d 203, 213 (citing *Addington v. Texas*, 441 U.S. 418, 423 (1979)). Therefore, when the Third Circuit has ordered a constitutionally-required bond hearing, it is placed the burden on the government by clear and convincing evidence. *German Santos*, 965 F.3d at 214; *Guerrero-Sanchez v. Warden York C'ty Prison*, 905 F.3d 208, 224 & n.12 (3d Cir. 2018), *abrogated on other grounds by Johnson v. Arteaga-Martinez*, 596 U.S. 572 (2022). Other circuit courts have similarly held that due process requires this allocation of the burden in bond hearings for noncitizens like petitioner, who were then detained under § 1226(a). *Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 39-40; *Velasco Lopez*, 978 F.3d at 855-56. Thus, even if the statute requires detention without a bond hearing, due process requires a hearing at which the government bears the burden by clear and convincing evidence.

**FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**Violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)**  
**Unlawful Denial of Release on Bond**

52. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the above paragraphs.

53. The mandatory detention provision at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) does not apply to all noncitizens residing in the United States who are subject to grounds of inadmissibility. Specifically, it does not apply to Rene, who has been living in

the United States since approximately 2003. Rene is detained under § 1226(a) and is eligible for release on bond. Respondents' unlawful application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner violates the INA.

**SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**Violation of Bond Regulations, 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1, 1236.1, and 1003.19**  
**Unlawful Denial of Release on Bond**

54. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the above paragraphs.

55. In 1997, after Congress amended the INA through IIRIRA, EOIR and the then-Immigration and Naturalization Service issued an interim rule to interpret and apply IIRIRA. Specifically, under the heading of "Apprehension, Custody, and Detention of [Noncitizens]," the agencies explained that "[d]espite being applicants for admission, [noncitizens] who are present without having been admitted or paroled (formerly referred to as [noncitizens] who entered without inspection) will be eligible for bond and bond redetermination." 62 Fed. Reg. at 10323 (emphasis added). The agencies thus made clear that individuals who had entered without inspection were eligible for consideration for bond and bond hearings before immigration judges under 8 U.S.C. § 1226 and its implementing regulations.

56. The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 1003.19 lays out bond procedures, and § 1003.19(h)(2) delineates categories of noncitizens who are subject to mandatory detention and not entitled to a bond hearing. The fact that noncitizens within the United States who are subject to inadmissibility grounds are not

included on this list shows that the agencies did not intend them to be subject to mandatory detention. The BIA's interpretation thus violates the regulations and unlawfully denies Rene a bond hearing.

**THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**Violation of the Administrative Procedure Act**  
**Contrary to Law and Arbitrary and Capricious Agency Policy**

57. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the above paragraphs.
58. 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).
59. The mandatory detention provision at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) does not apply to all noncitizens residing in the United States who are subject to grounds of inadmissibility. Specifically, it does not apply to Rene, who has been living in the United States since 2003. Rene is detained under § 1226(a) and is eligible for release on bond. Respondents’ unlawful application of § 1225(b)(2) to Rene violates the INA.
60. In taking a contrary position, the BIA has reversed decades of prior practice, and “would expand § 1225(b) face beyond how it has been enforced historically, potentially subjecting millions more undocumented immigrants to mandatory detention, while simultaneously narrowing § 1226(a) such that it would have extremely limited (if any) application.” *Lopez Benitez*, 2025 2371588, at \*8.

Respondents have failed to articulate reasoned explanations for their 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 problem; and have offered explanations for their decisions that run counter to the evidence before the agencies.

61. The application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner is arbitrary, capricious, and not in accordance with law, and as such, it violates the APA. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 706(2).

**FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**Violation of the Fifth Amendment Due Process Clause**  
**Substantive Due Process**

62. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the above paragraphs.

63. The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment forbids the government from depriving any "person" of liberty "without due process of law." U.S. Const. amend. V. Substantive due process requires that immigration detention without a bond hearing be reasonably related to the goals of ensuring the appearance of noncitizens at future proceedings and preventing danger to the community. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 690.

64. The BIA's application of mandatory detention under § 1225(b)(2) is not reasonably related to those goals and thus violates substantive due process. Since his entry in 2003, Rene has lived peacefully in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with his wife and surrounded by family, including two adult children. He has filed an Application for U Nonimmigrant Status as he was the victim of a crime

in the United States. Rene is neither a danger to the community nor a flight risk. He has held steady employment, and has owned his own construction business for over twenty years. Rene is an active member of his church, participating in bible studies, volunteering, and working with his church to feed the homeless.

**FIFTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**Violation of the Fifth Amendment Due Process Clause**  
**Procedural Due Process**

65. Petitioner re-alleges and incorporates by reference the above paragraphs.
66. The Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment forbids the government from depriving any “person” of liberty “without due process of law.” U.S. Const. amend. V. Courts apply the *Mathews v. Eldridge* balancing test to determine what procedures the due process clause requires. *Gayle*, 12 F.4th at 331.
67. The first factor is the private interest that will be affected by the official action. *Id.* Here, the deprivation of Rene’s liberty is a particularly weighty interest. Rene is being held despite being bond eligible and despite having no criminal record in the United States or anywhere in the world.
68. The second factor is the risk of erroneous deprivation of such interest through the procedures used, and the probable value, if any, of additional safeguards. *Id.* Here, there is a great risk of unnecessary detention because the BIA’s interpretation of the statute does not permit any individualized determination of whether detention during removal proceedings is necessary. *See Ashley*, 288 F. Supp. 2d at 670. Rene and his wife filed an application for U nonimmigrant

status in October 2025, and being detained hampers his ability to contact witnesses, gather evidence, and work with his attorneys. *See Ex. C.* At a hearing, Rene could show that his detention is not necessary because he is neither a danger to society nor a flight risk. Rene has no criminal contact or history of violence and is not a danger to society. Further, Rene has lived peacefully in Philadelphia for over twenty years and has filed for immigration relief. All this reasonably supports a grant of bond. A hearing at which the government bears the burden of proof by clear and convincing evidence would protect the substantial liberty interest at stake. *German Santos*, 965 F.3d at 213-14.

69. The final factor is the Government's interest. *Gayle*, 12 F.4th at 331. The government has no legitimate interest in detaining Rene when detention is not necessary to ensure appearance at future hearings or protect the community, and less restrictive measures like a reasonable bond would serve those purposes. *Hernandez-Lara*, 10 F.4th at 32-33; *see Ousman D. v. Decker*, No. 20-9646, 2020 WL 5587441, at \*4 (holding that due process requires consideration of less restrictive alternatives to detention that would address the government's legitimate purpose); *Hechavarria v. Whitaker*, 358 F. Supp. 3d 227, 241-42 (W.D.N.Y. 2019) (same). Therefore, the government does not have an interest in detaining Rene without a bond hearing that outweighs his substantial liberty interest in such an individualized determination.

70. Respondents' detention of Petitioner without any hearing to determine whether that detention is necessary violates procedural due process.

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

71. WHEREFORE, Petitioner respectfully requests that this Court:

72. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;

73. Order that the Petitioner not be moved out of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

74. Declare that Petitioner's continued detention violates the Immigration and Nationality Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A); and/or the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution;

75. Issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus and order Petitioner's immediate release from custody;

76. Award Petitioner his costs and reasonable attorney fees in this action as provided for by the Equal Access to Justice Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. § 504 and 28 U.S.C. § 2412, and on any other basis justified under law; and

Grant such further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: January 22, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Pretty S. Martinez

Pretty S. Martinez, PA Bar ID: 329658  
Law Office of Matthew Archambeault  
216 Haddon Avenue, Suite 402  
Haddon Township, NJ 08108-2812  
prettysmartinez@archambeaultlaw.com  
(856) 890-9320

**VERIFICATION BY SOMEONE ACTING ON PETITIONER'S BEHALF**  
**PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 2241**

I am submitting this verification on behalf of the Petitioner because I am one of Petitioner's attorneys, and I have discussed the claims with Petitioner's legal team.

Based on those discussions, I hereby verify that the statements made in the attached Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

<b>EXHIBIT</b>	<b>DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION</b>
A	Passport of Rene Gutierrez Flores
B	ICE Detainee Locator last visited Jan. 22, 2026
C	Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status delivered to USCIS on Oct. 10, 2025

Dated: January 22, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Pretty S. Martinez  
 Pretty S. Martinez  
*Counsel for Petitioner*  
 PA Bar ID 329658