

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
WEST PALM BEACH DIVISION**

Case No. 0:26-cv-60208-EA

BENITO HERNANDEZ ROCHAS,

Petitioner,

v.

KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as Secretary of  
the Department of Homeland Security;  
PAMELA BONDI, in her official capacity as  
Attorney General of the United States,  
TODD M. LYONS, in his official capacity as  
Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement;  
GARRETT RIPA, in his official capacity as Field  
Office Director of Immigration and Customs  
Enforcement and Removal Operations Miami Field Office; and  
WARDEN of BROWARD TRANSITIONAL CENTER,  
in his official capacity,

Respondents.

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**RESPONSE TO ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

Respondents<sup>1</sup> file this Return to Petitioner, Armando Luzardo Doria's Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus [D.E. 1] (hereinafter the "Petition") and Response to Court's Order to Show Cause, entered January 27, 2026 [D.E. 3]. As set forth below, this action should be dismissed as Petitioner is properly detained pursuant to INA § 235(b)(2), 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A).

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<sup>1</sup> A writ of habeas corpus must "be directed to the person having custody of the person detained." 28 USC § 2243. In cases involving present physical confinement, the Supreme Court reaffirmed in *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426 (2004), that "the immediate custodian, not a supervisory official who exercises legal control, is the proper respondent." *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426, 439 (2004). Petitioner is currently detained at the Broward Transitional Center. *See* Exh. D. Any other named Respondents *i.e.*, Kristi Noem, Pamela Bondi, Todd Lyons, and Garret Ripa, must be dismissed as improper parties.

## I. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner, Benito Hernandez Rochas (Petitioner) is a native and citizen of Mexico, who entered the United States illegally at an unknown location on or about October 6, 2004. *See* Exh. A, Form I-213, Record of Deportable/Inadmissible Alien, (Form I-213), dated December 1, 2025. On October 9, 2016, Petitioner was arrested for simple assault. *See id.* On October 12, 2016, the charge was dismissed. *See id.*

On December 1, 2025, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) encountered Petitioner, determined he had no lawful status in the United States, and took him into custody. *See id.*; *see also* Exh. B, Form I-200, Warrant of Arrest, dated December 1, 2025; Exh. C, Detention History. On December 9, 2025, DHS filed the Notice to Appear (NTA), with EOIR Immigration Court, charging Petitioner with inadmissibility under INA §§212(a)(6)(A)(i) and 212(a)(7)(A)(i)(I). *See* Exh. D, Notice to Appear, dated December 1, 2025.

On December 17, 2025, Petitioner requested a custody hearing before EOIR Immigration Court and on December 22, 2025, the Immigration Judge issued an order noting that the request was withdrawn. *See* Exh. E, Immigration Judge Order, dated December 22, 2025. On December 23, 2025, Petitioner was transferred to Broward Transitional Center (BTC). *See* Exh. C, Detention History. On January 23, 2026, Petitioner requested a custody hearing before Krome Immigration Court, and at the custody hearing on January 29, 2026, Petitioner's counsel asked for the custody determination to be addressed at BTC, and the Immigration Judge then issued an order taking no action. *See* Exh. F, Immigration Judge Order, dated January 29, 2026. The Petitioner did not reserve appeal. *See id.* Petitioner has not requested a bond hearing at BTC. *See* Exh. G, Declaration.

Petitioner is currently detained at BTC. *See* Exh. D, Detention History. He has an individual hearing scheduled for March 9, 2026, before the BTC Immigration Court. *See* Exh. H, Notice of Hearing, dated February 5, 2026. Petitioner has filed only one application, Cancellation of Removal for Certain Non-Permanent Residents (Form 42-B), with EOIR Immigration Court. *See* Exh. G, Declaration. It is currently pending before the court. *See* Exh. G, Declaration.

## II. ARGUMENT

### A. **Petitioner is an Applicant for Admission subject to Detention pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and discretionary detention under § 1226(a) is Inapplicable as Clarified in the BIA’s Decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*.**

Petitioner is properly detained as an applicant for admission subject to mandatory detention pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A). *See Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. 25-20496, 25-40701, \_\_\_ F. 4th \_\_\_, 2026 WL 323330 (5th Cir. Feb. 6 2026); *Iraheta Morales v. Noem*, et al., Case No. 25-62598-CIV-SINGHAL, ECF No. 10 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 29, 2026) (concluding that habeas petitioner who entered the United States without inspection in 2004 is an “applicant for admission” governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) and rejecting petitioner’s argument the government must grant a bond hearing under 8 U.S.C. § 1226); *Perez Morales v. Noem*, et al., No.26-60251-CIV DIMITROULEAS, ECF No. 15 (S.D. Fla. Feb. 9, 2026)(same, adopting the analysis of the Fifth Circuit majority opinion in *Buenrostro-Medina*). The Fifth Circuit in *Buenrostro-Mendez* recognized that “[s]ince DHS began to detain unadmitted aliens under § 1225(b)(2)(A), well over a thousand aliens have filed habeas corpus petitions seeking bond hearings[] [and,] [i]n most of these cases, the district court found in favor of the petitioner.” *Id.* at \*3. Nevertheless, the court concluded that presence without admission renders an individual like Petitioner to be both an “applicant for admission” and “seeking admission” under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) and therefore

subject to mandatory detention--regardless of how much time the individual has been present in the United States. *Buenrostro-Mendez*, at \*4-9.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Government submits the following arguments in good faith, supported by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals' recent decision in *See Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. 25-20496, 25-40701, \_\_\_ F. 4th \_\_\_, 2026 WL 323330 (5th Cir. Feb. 6 2026) and decisions previously rendered in other cases in this District. *See, e.g., Iraheta Morales v. Noem*, et al., Case No. 25-62598-CIV-SINGHAL, ECF No. 10 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 29, 2026) (concluding that habeas petitioner who entered the United States without inspection in 2004 is an "applicant for admission" governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) and rejecting petitioner's argument the government must grant a bonf hearing under 8 U.S.C. § 1226)). Nevertheless, the government acknowledges that Judges in this District have reached the opposite conclusion on the legal issues presented. *See, e.g., Aguilar Merino v. Ripa*, No. 25-23845-CIV-MARTINEZ, 2025 WL 2941609, at \*3, 8 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 15, 2025) ("§ 1226(a), not § 1225(b)(2), governs Petitioner's detention"); *Gil-Paulino v. Sec'y of the U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec.*, 25-24292-CIV-WILLIAMS, ECF No. 41, (S.D. Fla. Oct. 10, 2025) ("§ 1226 governs Petitioner's detention"); *Alvarez Puga v. Assistant Field Office Director Krome*, et al., No. 25-24535-CIV-ALTONAGA (S.D. Fla. Oct. 15, 2025) (concluding that "prudential exhaustion requirements are excused for futility" and finding that "section 1226(a) and its implementing regulations govern Petitioner's detention, not section 1225(b)(2)(A)"); *Zamora Policarpo v. Parra*, Case No. 25-25236-CIV-COHN, ECF No. 8 (S.D. Fla. Dec. 22, 2025) (finding good cause to excuse Petitioner's failure to exhaust administrative remedies where it is evident the BIA will reject Petitioner's request for a bond hearing or release and that Petitioner is subject to detention under § 1226(a) and entitled to a bond hearing before an immigration judge); *Penagos Quintero v. Ripa*, et al., Case No. 25-25746-CIV-BECERRA, ECF NO.14 (Jan. 5, 2026) (concluding that jurisdiction is not barred by 8 U.S.C. § 1252, exhaustion was not required, and that the petitioner's detention is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), not 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)); *Martinez v. Field Off. Dir.*, No. 25-26026-CIV-LEIBOWITZ, ECF No. 7 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 14, 2026) ("Pending the Eleventh Circuit's resolution of this issue, the Court continues to side with the clear weight of existing authority in finding that Petitioner here is entitled to a prompt, individualized bond hearing under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)"); *Espinal Encarnacion v. ICE Field Office Director*, et al., No. 25-61898-CIV-DAMIAN, ECF No. 29 (Dec. 23, 2025) ("this Court finds that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) and its implementing regulations govern Petitioner's detention, and not Section 1225(b)"); *Ocegueda Gonzalez v. Noem*, et al., No. 25-62261-CIV-MIDDLEBROOKS/AGUSTIN-BIRCH, ECF No. 25 (Dec. 23, 2025) ("Having concluded that Petitioner's detention is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), Petitioner is entitled to an individualized bond hearing before an immigration judge."); *Acosta v. Ripa*, et al., Case No. 25-62360-CIV-DIMITROULEAS, ECF No. 19 at 7 (S.D. Fla. Dec. 26, 2025) ("§ 1226(a) and its implementing regulations govern Petitioner's detention, not § 1225(b)(2)(A)"); and *Fuentes Granados v. Secretary of Homeland Security*, Case No. 26-60020-CIV-SMITH, ECF No. 7 (S.D. Fla. Jan. 27, 2026) ("Petitioner is being unlawfully detained due to his improper classification as "an alien who is an applicant for admission" pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A);] . . .Petitioner's proper classification is a detainee pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)").

“As with any question of statutory interpretation, [the] analysis begins with the plain language of the statute.” *Jimenez v. Quarterman*, 555 U.S. 113, 118 (2009) (citing *Lamie v. U.S. Tr.*, 540 U.S. 526, 534 (2004)). Section 1225(a)(1) defines an “applicant for admission” as an “alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or who arrives in the United States (whether or not at a designated port of arrival . . . ) . . . .” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1); see *Buenrostro-Mendez*, at 2 (“an alien's status as an applicant for admission does not turn on where or how the alien entered the United States”); *Matter of Velasquez-Cruz*, 26 I&N Dec. 458, 463 n.5 (BIA 2014) (“[R]egardless of whether an alien who illegally enters the United States is caught at the border or inside the country, he or she will still be required to prove eligibility for admission.”).

By its very definition, the term “applicant for admission” includes two categories of aliens: (1) arriving aliens, and (2) aliens present without admission. See *Dep't of Homeland Sec. v. Thuraissigiam*, 591 U.S. 103, 140 (2020) (explaining that “an alien who tries to enter the country illegally is treated as an ‘applicant for admission’”); *Matter of Lemus*, 25 I&N Dec. 734, 743 (BIA 2012) (“Congress has defined the concept of an ‘applicant for admission’ in an unconventional sense, to include not just those who are expressly seeking permission to enter, but also those who are present in this country without having formally requested or received such permission . . . .”); *Matter of E-R-M- & L-R-M-*, 25 I&N Dec. 520, 523 (BIA 2011) (stating that “the broad category of applicants for admission . . . includes, *inter alia*, any alien present in the United States who has not been admitted”). An arriving alien is defined, in pertinent part, as “an applicant for admission coming or attempting to come into the United States at a port-of-entry [(“POE”)] . . . .” 8 C.F.R. §§ 1.2, 1001.1(q).

All aliens who are applicants for admission “shall be inspected by immigration officers.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(3); see also 8 C.F.R. § 235.1(a) (“Application to lawfully enter the United

States shall be made in person to an immigration officer at a U.S. [POE] when the port is open for inspection . . .”). An applicant for admission at a United States POE “must present whatever documents are required and must establish to the satisfaction of the inspecting officer that the alien is not subject to removal . . . and is entitled, under all of the applicable provisions of the immigration laws . . . to enter the United States.” 8 C.F.R. § 235.1(f)(1); *see also* 8 U.S.C. § 1229a(c)(2)(A) (explaining that an applicant for admission has the burden to establish that he or she is clearly and beyond doubt entitled to be admitted and is not inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182 in removal proceedings pursuant to § 1229a). “An alien present in the United States who has not been admitted or paroled or an alien who seeks entry at other than an open, designated [POE] . . . is subject to the provisions of [8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)] and to removal under [8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)] or [8 U.S.C. § 1229a].” 8 C.F.R. § 235.1(f)(2).

Petitioner did not present himself at a POE but instead entered the United States without having been admitted or paroled after inspection by an immigration officer. *See* Record of Deportable/Inadmissible Alien, attached hereto as Exhibit A. Petitioner is, therefore, an alien present in the United States without admission or parole and, consequently, an applicant for admission. *See Buenrostro-Mendez*, at \*2, 4-5 (explaining that “an alien’s status as an applicant for admission does not turn on where or how the alien entered the United States” and that an “applicant for admission” is necessarily “seeking admission,” as contemplated in 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2))).

The decision issued by the BIA in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado* is similarly instructive. In *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, the BIA rejected the alien’s argument that “because he has been residing in the interior of the United States for almost 3 years . . . he cannot be considered as ‘seeking admission.’” 29 I&N Dec. at 221. The BIA determined that this argument “is not supported by the plain language of the INA” and creates a “legal conundrum.” *Id.* If the alien “is not admitted to the

United States (as he admits) but he is not ‘seeking admission’ (as he contends), then what is his legal status?” *Id.* (parentheticals in original). The BIA’s decision is consistent not only with the plain language of § 1225(b)(2), but also with the Supreme Court’s decision in *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281 (2018), and subsequent caselaw post *Jennings*. Specifically, in *Jennings*, the Supreme Court explained that § 1225(b) applies to all applicants for admission, noting that the language of § 1225(b)(2) is “quite clear” and “unequivocally mandate[s]” detention. 583 U.S. at 300, 303.

Additionally, in *Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I&N Dec. 66 (BIA 2025), the BIA held that an alien who unlawfully entered the United States between POEs, was arrested and detained without a warrant while arriving, and was previously released from DHS custody pursuant to an 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A) parole is detained under § 1225(b) upon re-detention. 29 I&N Dec. at 70-71. This ongoing evolution of the law makes clear that all applicants for admission in various procedural postures are subject to detention under § 1225(b). *Cf. Niz-Chavez v. Garland*, 593 U.S. 155, 171 (2021) (stating that “no amount of policy-talk can overcome a plain statutory command”); *see generally Florida v. United States*, 660 F. Supp. 3d 1239, 1275 (N.D. Fla. 2023) (explaining that “the 1996 expansion of § 1225(b) to include illegal border crossers would make little sense if DHS retained discretion to apply § 1226(a) and release illegal border crossers whenever the agency saw fit”). *Florida’s* conclusion “that § 1225(b)’s ‘shall be detained’ means what it says and . . . is a mandatory requirement . . . flows directly from *Jennings*.” *Florida*, 660 F. Supp. 3d at 1273.

**B. Petitioner is an Applicant for Admission in 8 U.S.C. § 1229a Removal Proceedings and as such his Detention Pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) is Proper.**

Both arriving aliens and aliens present without admission or parole, as applicants for admission, may be removed from the United States by, *inter alia*, expedited removal procedures under § 1225(b)(1) or removal proceedings before an immigration judge under § 1229a. §§

1225(b)(1), (b)(2)(A). *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 287 (describing how “applicants for admission fall into one of two categories, those covered by § 1225(b)(1) and those covered by § 1225(b)(2)”). For aliens subject to expedited removal, immigration officers have discretion to apply expedited removal under § 1225(b)(1) or to initiate removal proceedings before an immigration judge under § 1229a. *See also Matter of Q. Li*, 29 I&N Dec. 66, 68 (BIA 2025) (“DHS may place aliens arriving in the United States in either expedited removal proceedings under [8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)], or full removal proceedings under [8 U.S.C. § 1229a]” (citations omitted)). *Matter of E-R-M- & L-R-M*, 25 I&N Dec. 520, 523 (BIA 2011), also states that DHS has the discretion to place applicants for admission in 240 removal proceedings even if the alien was subject to expedited removal proceedings under section 235(b)(1)(A)(i).

Petitioner is currently in § 1229a removal proceedings and is subject to detention under § 1225(b)(2)(A). *See* Exh. D, Notice to Appear. Hence, under § 1225(b)(2)(A), “an alien who is an applicant for admission” “*shall be detained* for a proceeding under [8 U.S.C. § 1229a]” “if the examining immigration officer determines that [the] alien seeking admission is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted.” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) (emphasis added); 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(b)(3) (providing that an alien placed into § 1229a removal proceedings in lieu of expedited removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1225 “shall be detained” pursuant to § 1225(b)(2)). As the Supreme Court observed in *Jennings*, nothing in § 1225(b)(2)(A) “says anything whatsoever about bond hearings.” 583 U.S. at 297. Further, there is no textual basis for arguing that § 1225(b)(2)(A) applies only to arriving aliens as no provision therein refers to “arriving aliens,” or limits that paragraph to arriving aliens. Where Congress means for a rule to apply only to “arriving aliens,” it uses that specific term of art or similar phrasing. *See, e.g.*, 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(9)(A)(i), 1225(c)(1).

**C. Section 1226 does Not Impact the Detention Authority that Governs with respect to Applicants for Admission in removal proceedings.**

Petitioner urges the Court to find that his detention is authorized only by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), but that is incorrect. Section 1226(a) is the applicable detention authority for aliens who have been admitted and are subject to removal proceedings under § 1229, and it does not impact the directive in § 1225(b)(2)(A) that “if the examining immigration officer determines that an alien seeking admission is not clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted, the alien shall be detained for a proceedings under [8 U.S.C. § 1229a].” 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A). Section § 1226(a) “applies to aliens already present in the United States” and “creates a default rule for those aliens by permitting—but not requiring—the [Secretary] to issue warrants for their arrest and detention pending removal proceedings.” *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 289, 303; *Q. Li*, 29 I&N Dec. at 70. As the Fifth Circuit observed in *Buenrostro-Mendez*, § 122(a) “does work independent from § 1225(b)(2)(A) because only § 1226(a) applies to admitted aliens who overstay their visas, become deportable on many different grounds, or were admitted erroneously due to fraud or some other error.” *Buenrostro-Mendez*, at \*7.

Generally, such aliens may be released on bond or their own recognizance, also known as “conditional parole.” 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a); *Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 303, 306. Section 1226(a) does not, however, confer the *right* to be released on bond; rather, both DHS and immigration judges have broad discretion in determining whether to release an alien on bond as long as the alien establishes that he or she is not a flight risk or a danger to the community. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1(c)(8), 1236.1(c)(8); *Matter of Guerra*, 24 I&N Dec. 37, 39 (BIA 2006); *Matter of Adeniji*, 22 I&N Dec. 1102 (BIA 1999). To interpret § 1225(b)(2)(A) as not applying to all applicants for admission would render it meaningless. As explained above, Congress expanded § 1225(b) in 1996 to apply to a broader category of aliens, including those aliens who crossed the border illegally.

There would have been no need for Congress to make such a change if § 1226(a) was meant to apply to aliens present without admission.

**D. Applicants for Admission may Only be Released from Detention on an 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5) Parole.**

DHS has the exclusive authority to temporarily release on parole “any alien applying for admission to the United States” on a “case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.” 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5); *see* 8 C.F.R. § 212.5(b). In *Jennings*, the Supreme Court placed significance on the fact that § 1182(d)(5) is the specific provision that authorizes temporary release from detention under § 1225(b). 583 U.S. at 300.

Parole, like an admission, is a factual occurrence. *See Hing Sum*, 602 F.3d at 1098; *Matter of Roque-Izada*, 29 I&N Dec. 106 (BIA 2025) (treating whether an alien was paroled as a question of fact). The parole authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5) is “delegated solely to the Secretary of Homeland Security.” *Matter of Castillo-Padilla*, 25 I&N Dec. 257, 261 (BIA 2010); *see* 8 C.F.R. § 212.5(a). Thus, neither the BIA nor immigration judges have authority to parole an alien into the United States under § 1182(d)(5). *Castillo-Padilla*, 25 I&N Dec. at 261; *see also Matter of Arrabally and Yerrabelly*, 25 I&N Dec. 771, 777 n.5 (BIA 2002) (indicating that “parole authority [under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)] is now exercised exclusively by the DHS” and “reference to the Attorney General in [8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)] is thus deemed to refer to the Secretary of Homeland Security”). Lastly, because DHS has exclusive jurisdiction to parole an alien into the United States, the manner in which DHS exercises its parole authority may not be reviewed by an immigration judge or the BIA. *Castillo-Padilla*, 25 I&N Dec. at 261; *see Matter of Castellon*, 17 I&N Dec. 616, 620 (BIA 1981) (noting that the BIA does not have authority to review the way DHS exercises its parole authority).

**E. Petitioner failed to Exhaust his Administrative Remedies**

Lastly, the Court should dismiss the petition for writ of habeas corpus for failure to exhaust administrative remedies. A habeas petitioner must normally exhaust administrative remedies before seeking federal court intervention. The exhaustion requirement “aims to provide the agency with a chance to correct its own errors, ‘protect[] the authority of administrative agencies,’ and otherwise conserve judicial resources by ‘limiting interference in agency affairs, developing the factual record to make judicial review more efficient, and resolving issues to render judicial review unnecessary.” *Beharry v. Ashcroft*, 329 F.3d 51, 62 (2d Cir. 2003) (Sotomayor, J.).

Petitioner has not availed himself of the administrative remedies available to him (*see* Exh. G, ¶¶12-13) and instead seeks an order requiring a bond hearing in the first instance from this Court. By regulation, the BIA has authority to review IJ custody determinations. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.1(b)(7), 1003.19(f), 1003.38, 1236.1(d)(3). An Immigration Judge’s denial is a decision appealable to the BIA who “plainly has jurisdiction to determine whether an IJ properly denied an alien detainee’s motion for bond redetermination.” *J.G. v. Warden, Irwin Cnty. Det. Ctr.*, 501 F. Supp. 3d 1331, 1349 (M.D. Ga. 2020) (holding that habeas petitioner failed exhaust his administrative remedies in appealing an IJ’s denial of bond redetermination to the BIA). As set forth in the EOIR Policy Memo 25-45, the BIA and IJs can consider constitutional challenges to the INA – such could include a Fifth Amendment challenge to the BIA’s interpretation of 235(b)(2) in *Yajure Hurtado*. *See* <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/eoir-policy-manual/memoranda-pm-list>. Here, Petitioner’s removal proceedings are pending, thus he has not availed himself of the administrative process and remedies available to him before proceeding to this Court in hopes of shopping for a more favorable forum. Accordingly, the Petition should be dismissed for failure to exhaust administrative remedies.

Petitioner also does not have standing to bring a claim pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. *See* Petition, ¶11. By the APA's terms, it is available only for final agency action "for which there is no other adequate remedy in court." 5 U.S.C. § 704. Thus, Petitioner's APA claim is independently barred by this limitation in 5 U.S.C. § 704.

In *Trump v. J.G.G.*, the Supreme Court held that where the claims for relief, as here, "necessarily imply the invalidity of their confinement" those claims "must be brought in habeas." 145 S. Ct. 1003, 1005 (2025) (cleaned up) (internal quotation marks and citation omitted). As noted by Justice Kavanaugh in his concurrence in *J.G.G.*, "given 5 U.S.C. § 704, which states that claims under the APA are not available when there is another adequate remedy in court, I agree with the Court that habeas corpus, not the APA, is the proper vehicle here." *Id.* at 1007 (Kavanaugh, J. concurring). Here, as in *J.G.G.*, habeas is an "adequate remedy" through which Petitioner can challenge his detention. Even if Petitioner's APA claim had merit, which it does not, the result would be the same as that in habeas – release from detention. The Supreme Court's holding is consistent with well-established law that habeas is generally the only possible district court vehicle for challenges brought pursuant to the immigration statutes. *Id.* (citing *Heikkila v. Barber*, 345 U.S. 229, 234-35 (1953)).

**F. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) bars review of Petitioner's claims.**

Section 1252(g) categorically bars jurisdiction over "*any* cause or claim by or on behalf of any alien *arising from* the decision or action by the [Secretary of Homeland Security] to *commence proceedings*, adjudicate cases, or execute removal orders against any alien." 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) (emphasis added). The Secretary of Homeland Security's decision to *commence removal proceedings*, including the decision to detain an alien pending such removal proceedings, squarely falls within this jurisdictional bar. In other words, detention clearly "aris[es] from" the decision to

commence removal proceedings against an alien. *See Alvarez v. ICE*, 818 F.3d 1194, 1203 (11<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2016) (“By its plain terms, [§ 1252(g)] bars us from questioning ICE’s discretionary decisions to commence removal” and also to review “ICE’s decision to take [plaintiff] into custody and to detain him during removal proceedings”); *Tazu v. Att’y Gen. U.S.*, 975 F.3d 292, 298 (3d Cir. 2020) (“The text of § 1252(g)... strips us of jurisdiction to review... [T]o perform or complete a removal, the [Secretary of Homeland Security] must exercise [her] discretionary power to detain an alien for a few days. That detention does not fall within some other part of the deportation process.”) (cleaned up) (internal quotations and citations omitted); *Valencia-Mejia v. United States*, No. CV 08–2943 CAS (PJWx), 2008 WL 4286979, at \*4 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 15, 2008) (“The decision to detain plaintiff until his hearing before the Immigration Judge *arose from* this decision to commence proceedings[.]”) (emphasis added); *Wang v. United States*, No. CV 10-0389 SWW (RCx), 2010 WL 11463156, at \*6 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 18, 2010) (citing *Khorrami v. Rolince*, 493 F. Supp. 2d 1061 (N.D. Ill. 2007) (“[Plaintiff’s] detention necessarily *arises from* the decision to initiate removal proceedings against him.”) (emphasis added); *Herrera-Correra v. United States*, No. CV 08-2941 DSF (JCx), 2008 WL 11336833, at \*3 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 11, 2008) (citing *Sissoko v. Rocha*, 509 F.3d 947, 949 (9th Cir. 2007) (“The [Secretary] may arrest the alien against whom proceedings are commenced and detain that individual until the conclusion of those proceedings. ... Thus, an alien’s detention throughout this process *arises from* the [Secretary]’s decision to commence proceedings[.]” and review of claims arising from such detention is barred under § 1252(g)) (emphasis added). Put in the Supreme Court’s words, detention pending removal is a “specification” of the decision to commence proceedings. *See Reno v. Am.-Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.* (“AADC”), 525 U.S. 471, 485 n.9 (1999) (“§ 1252(g) covers” a

“specification of the decision to ‘commence proceedings’”). As such, judicial review of the Petitioner’s claims is barred by § 1252(g).

**G. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9) bars review of Petitioner’s claims.**

Under § 1252(b)(9), “judicial review of all questions of law . . . including interpretation and application of statutory provisions . . . arising from any action taken . . . to remove an alien from the United States” is only proper before the appropriate court of appeals in the form of a petition for review of a final removal order. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9); *Reno v. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.*, 525 U.S. 471, 483 (1999) (“*AADC*”). Section 1252(b)(9) is an “unmistakable ‘zipper’ clause” that “channels judicial review of all [claims arising from deportation proceedings]” to a court of appeals in the first instance. *Id.*; *see Lopez v. Barr*, No. CV 20-1330 (JRT/BRT), 2021 WL 195523, at \*2 (D. Minn. Jan. 20, 2021) (citing *Nasrallah v. Barr*, 590 U.S. 573, 579–80 (2020)). Moreover, § 1252(a)(5) provides that a petition for review is the exclusive means for judicial review of immigration proceedings. Notwithstanding any other provision of law (statutory or nonstatutory), . . . a petition for review filed with an appropriate court of appeals in accordance with this section shall be the sole and exclusive means for judicial review of an order of removal entered or issued under any provision of this chapter, except as provided in subsection (e) [concerning aliens not admitted to the United States]. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(5). “Taken together, § 1252(a)(5) and § 1252(b)(9) mean that *any* issue—whether legal or factual—arising from *any* removal-related activity can be reviewed *only* through the [petition-for-review] process.” *J.E.F.M. v. Lynch*, 837 F.3d 1026, 1031 (9th Cir. 2016) (emphasis in original); *see id.* at 1035 (“§§ 1252(a)(5) and [(b)(9)] channel review of all claims, including policies-and-practices challenges . . . whenever they ‘arise from’ removal proceedings”); *accord Ruiz v.*

*Mukasey*, 552 F.3d 269, 274 n.3 (2d Cir. 2009) (only when the action is “unrelated to any removal action or proceeding” is it within the district court’s jurisdiction); *cf. Xiao Ji Chen v. U.S. Dep’t of Justice*, 434 F.3d 144, 151 n.3 (2d Cir. 2006) (a “primary effect” of the REAL ID Act is to “limit all aliens to one bite of the apple” (internal quotation marks omitted)).

Critically, “[§] 1252(b)(9) is a judicial channeling provision, not a claim-barring one.” *Aguilar v. ICE*, 510 F.3d 1, 11 (1st Cir. 2007). Indeed, 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a)(2)(D) provides that “[n]othing . . . in any other provision of this chapter . . . shall be construed as precluding review of constitutional claims or questions of law raised upon a petition for review filed with an appropriate court of appeals in accordance with this section.” *See also Ajlani v. Chertoff*, 545 F.3d 229, 235 (2d Cir. 2008) (“[J]urisdiction to review such claims is vested exclusively in the courts of appeals[.]”). The petition-for-review process before the court of appeals ensures that aliens have a proper forum for claims arising from their immigration proceedings and “receive their day in court.” *J.E.F.M.*, 837 F.3d at 1031–32 (internal quotations omitted); *see also Rosario v. Holder*, 627 F.3d 58, 61 (2d Cir. 2010) (“The REAL ID Act of 2005 amended the [INA] to obviate . . . Suspension Clause concerns” by permitting judicial review of “nondiscretionary” BIA determinations and “all constitutional claims or questions of law.”).

In evaluating the reach of subsections (a)(5) and (b)(9), the Second Circuit explained that jurisdiction turns on the substance of the relief sought. *Delgado v. Quarantillo*, 643 F.3d 52, 55 (2d Cir. 2011). Those provisions divest district courts of jurisdiction to review both direct and indirect challenges to removal orders, including decisions to detain for purposes of removal or for proceedings. *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95 (section 1252(b)(9) includes challenges to the “decision to detain [an alien] in the first place or to seek removal[.]”). Here, Petitioner challenges the decision and action to detain him, which arises from DHS’s decision to commence removal

proceedings, and is thus an “action taken . . . to remove [him/her] from the United States.” *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9); *see also, e.g., Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 294–95; *Velasco Lopez v. Decker*, 978 F.3d 842, 850 (2d Cir. 2020) (finding that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(e) did not bar review in that case because the petitioner did not challenge “his initial detention”); *Saadulloev v. Garland*, No. 3:23-CV-00106, 2024 WL 1076106, at \*3 (W.D. Pa. Mar. 12, 2024) (recognizing that there is no judicial review of the threshold detention decision, which flows from the government’s decision to “commence proceedings”). As such, the Court lacks jurisdiction over this action. The reasoning in *Jennings* outlines why the Petitioner’s claims cannot be reviewed by the Court.

While holding that it was unnecessary to comprehensively address the scope of § 1252(b)(9), the Supreme Court in *Jennings* provided guidance on the types of challenges that may fall within the scope of § 1252(b)(9). *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 293–94. The Court found that “§1252(b)(9) [did] not present a jurisdictional bar” in situations where “respondents . . . [were] not challenging the decision to detain them in the first place.” *Id.* at 294–95. In this case, the Petitioner *does* challenge the government’s decision to detain him in the first place. Though the Petitioner frames his challenge as relating to detention authority, rather than a challenge to DHS’s decision to detain him in the first instance, such creative framing does not evade the preclusive effect of § 1252(b)(9).

The fact that Petitioner is challenging the basis upon which he is detained is enough to trigger § 1252(b)(9) because “detention *is* an ‘action taken . . . to remove’ an alien.” *See Jennings*, 583 U.S. at 319 (Thomas, J., concurring); 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9). The Court should dismiss the Petitioner’s claims for lack of jurisdiction under § 1252(b)(9). Petitioner must present his claims before the appropriate court of appeals because he challenges the government’s decision or action

to detain him, which must be raised before a court of appeals, not this Court. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(9).

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Based upon the foregoing, the Petition should be dismissed because detention is lawful under § 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b) and Petitioner has failed to exhaust his administrative remedies before seeking relief from the Court. Additionally, given that Respondents are not Petitioner's immediate custodians, they must be dropped/dismissed as parties.

Dated: February 10, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

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