

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

Luis Efrain Vargas Valverde,

Petitioner,

v.

Todd LYONS, in his capacity as Acting
Director, Immigration and Customs
Enforcement; Kristi NOEM, Secretary, U.S.
Department of Homeland Security; Pamela
BONDI, U.S. Attorney General; Executive
Office for Immigration Review;
David EASTERWOOD, Field Office
Director of St. Paul Field Office for U.S.
Department of Homeland Security, United
States Immigration and Customs
Enforcement, Enforcement and Removal
Operations,

Respondents.

Case No. 0:26-cv-00898
(DWF/EMB)

**REPLY TO RESPONDENTS'
RESPONSE TO PETITION
FOR WRIT OF HABEAS
CORPUS**

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CORPUS**

Petitioner submits this reply to address Respondent's violation of the Order requesting them to file an Answer to the court by February 2, 2026 at 12:00PM. (ECF No. 3 "Order").

On January 30, 2026, Petitioner filed a petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus. Also on January 30, 2026, the Court provided an Order, which ordered in part that Respondents must file an answer by February 2, 2026 certifying the true cause and proper duration of Petitioner's confinement and showing why the writ should not be granted in this case. (ECF No. 3 "Order"). Further, the Order request the Respondents to provide any supporting documentation that may be needed to establish the lawfulness of Petitioner's arrest and/or continued confinement. *Id.* The Respondents did not comply with the Court's Order and did not file any answer or other document to the court on the Court ordered deadline. As the Respondents have missed the court ordered deadline and have not provided to the court any proof that the Petitioner is lawfully detained, the Petitioner respectfully requests that court order his immediate release.

I. The Respondents have not provided any argument that immediate release is an unwarranted remedy.

Respondents have not responded to the Petition and have not provided any argument against immediate release of the Petitioner. Additionally, they have not identified a valid statutory basis for the detention of the Petitioner. Opinion and Order on Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus at 5, *Juan U. and L.E. v. Bondi*, No. 26-cv-642 (ECT/DLM) (D. Minn Jan. 30, 2026) ECF No. 8. This district has held, "where the record shows that Respondents have not identified a valid statutory bases for detention in the first place, the remedy is not to supply one through further proceedings." *Id.* see *Chogollo Chafila*, --- F. Supp. 3d ---, 2025 WL 2688541, at *11 ("Since the Government did not comply with the plain language of section 1226(a), [petitioners'] immediate release is justified."); *J.A.C.P.*, 2025 WL 3013328, at *8 (same); *Chiliquinga Yumbillo*, 2025 WL 2783642, at *5 (reaching same conclusion); see also *Munaf*, 553 U.S. at 693 ("Habeas is at its core a remedy

for unlawful executive detention. The typical remedy for such detention is, of course, release.” (citation modified)).

II. Petitioner was not issued a warrant for his arrest, and therefore should be ordered to be immediately released.

Under § 1226(a), “on a warrant issued by the Attorney General, an alien may be arrested and detained pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States.” Here, Respondents have not produced a warrant for Petitioner’s arrest.

This Court has previously found that the appropriate remedy for an arrest under section 1226(a) without a warrant is immediate release. In *Adriano L.V.*, the Court explained that, “the warrant requirement should not come as a surprise to Respondents, since it is plainly in the text of Section 1226(a), and it has been the basis for several orders for the immediate release of other, similarly situated, petitioners in this district.” *R. & R. adopted*, No. 26-269 (MJD/DJF), 2026 WL 194401 (D. Minn. Jan. 23, 2026)). Petitioner is similarly situated to the petitioner in *Adriano L.V.*, as there is “not even a hint of a warrant” being obtained prior to Petitioner’s arrest and detention. *Id.* As Respondents have not provided proof of a warrant in Petitioner’s case, he should be ordered to be immediately released from their custody. This district has held that “release is an available and appropriate remedy for detention that lacks a lawful predicate.” Opinion and Order on Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus at 5, *Juan U. and L.E. v. Bondi*, No. 26-cv-642 (ECT/DLM) (D. Minn. Jan. 30, 2026) ECF No. 8.

III. Petitioner is entitled to a discretionary bond hearing under § 1226.

If the Court finds that the appropriate remedy in Petitioner’s case is not immediate release, the Court should find that Petitioner is entitled to a bond hearing under section 1226. The issue in this case is whether Petitioner, who entered the United States three years ago and was not apprehended upon arrival, is to be treated as an “applicant for admission” under § 1225, and

therefore subject to mandatory detention, or as “an alien” who was “arrested and detained pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States” under § 1226, and therefore entitled to a bond hearing before the immigration judge.

The Court should determine that Petitioner’s situation is substantially similar to many cases that the Court has decided recently, and find that Petitioner is “an alien” who was “arrested and detained pending a decision on whether the alien is to be removed from the United States” under § 1226, and therefore entitled to a bond hearing before the immigration judge. “Courts have overwhelmingly rejected Respondents’ interpretation that section 1225(b)(2) requires the mandatory detention of all noncitizens living in the country who are ‘inadmissible’ because they entered the United States without inspection.” *Martin R. v. Noem*, No. 26-CV-168 (JMB/LIB), 2026 WL 115024 at *2 (D. Minn. Jan. 15, 2026). The Court here should adopt the statutory analysis in *Martin R.* and the many other cases rejecting Respondents’ position about 1225 vs. 1226 detention, and find that Petitioner is entitled to a bond hearing with the immigration court.

IV. Petitioner is a member of the Maldonado Class, and thus not subject to Mandatory Detention.

The Respondents’ response argues that Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2). Petitioner’s petition for writ of habeas corpus addressed the arguments presented in Respondents’ response. Here, Petitioner will summarily focus on why he is not subjected to the mandatory detention, and instead, is a member of the class of persons established in *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, 5:25-cv-01873 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 18, 2025 (ECF No. 92)).

In the alternative to immediate release, Petitioner requests that the court find that he is detained under § 1226(a) and order that he be given a bond hearing under § 1226(a) before the immigration court. The Maldonado class, certified by the federal court, includes: “All noncitizens of the United States without lawful status who (1) have entered or will enter the United States

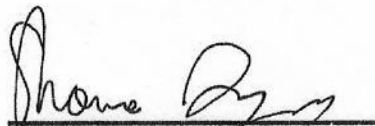
without inspection; (2) were not or will not be apprehended upon arrival; and (3) are not or will not be subject to detention under INA § 236(c) or § 241 at the time the Department of Homeland Security makes an initial custody determination.” *Id.* Petitioner entered the United States without inspection, was apprehended upon arrival, and is not subject to detention under INA § 236(c) or § 241, and therefore Petitioner squarely meets the criteria for class membership in *Maldonado*. This District has previously determined that noncitizens in the same position as the Petitioner are detained under § 1226 and are therefore entitled to a bond hearing.

CONCLUSION

As discussed above, Petitioner respectfully requests that he be immediately released in from immigration detention. Additionally, the Petitioner requests that the court declare that he is not subject to mandatory detention under U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).

In the alternative, as per the Petition, Petitioner requests that the court provide Petitioner with a bond hearing pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) in the District of Minnesota within 7 days, enjoin Respondents from denying Petitioner a bond hearing under U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2), and should the Immigration Judge grant a bond, enjoin Respondents from invoking the auto-stay provision found at 8 C.F.R. § 1003.19(i)(2) during the pendency of any bond appeal, and grant any other and further relief that this Court deems just and proper.

DATED this 3 February 2026



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