

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

Vijay VIJAY,

Petitioner,

v.

Russell HOLT, Field Office Director
of Enforcement and Removal
Operations, Chicago Field Office,
Immigration and Customs
Enforcement;
KRISTI NOEM, Secretary of the
Department of Homeland Security
("DHS");
Pamela BONDI, Attorney General of
the United States;
Scarlet GRANT, Warden of
Cimarron Correctional Facility, in his
official capacity,

Respondents.

Case No.

**PETITION FOR WRIT OF
HABEAS CORPUS**

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INTRODUCTION

1. Petitioner Vijay Vijay is in the physical custody of Respondents at the Cimarron Correctional Facility Center. He now faces unlawful detention because the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) have concluded Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention.

2. Mr. Vijay is charged by DHS with, inter alia, having entered the United States without admission or inspection. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i). Based on this allegation in Mr. Vijay's removal proceedings, DHS denied Mr. Vijay release from immigration custody, consistent with a new DHS policy issued on July 8, 2025, instructing all Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) employees to consider anyone inadmissible under § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i)—i.e., those who entered the United States without admission or inspection—to be subject to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and therefore ineligible to be released on bond.

3. Thereafter, on September 5, 2025, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA or Board) issued a precedent decision, binding on all immigration judges (IJs), holding that an immigration judge has no authority to consider bond requests for any person who entered the United States without admission. *See Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). The Board determined that such individuals are subject to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and, therefore, ineligible to be released on bond.

4. Mr. Vijay's detention on this basis violates the plain language of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Section 1225(b)(2)(A) does not apply to individuals like Mr. Vijay who previously entered and are now residing in the United States. Instead, such individuals are subject to a different statute, § 1226(a), that allows for release on conditional parole or bond. That statute expressly applies to people who, like Mr. Vijay, are charged as inadmissible for having entered the United States without inspection.

5. Respondents' new legal interpretation is plainly contrary to the statutory framework and contrary to decades of agency practice applying § 1226(a) to people like Mr. Vijay.

6. Accordingly, Mr. Vijay seeks a writ of habeas corpus requiring that he be released or, in the alternative, that Respondents provide him a bond hearing under § 1226(a) within seven days.

JURISDICTION

7. Petitioner is in the physical custody of Respondents. Petitioner is detained at the Cimarron Correctional Facility, located in Cushing, Oklahoma.

8. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(5) (habeas corpus), 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), and Article I, section 9, clause 2 of the United States Constitution (the Suspension Clause).

9. This Court may grant relief pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201 *et seq.*, and the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1651.

VENUE

10. Pursuant to *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426, 442-43 (2004), venue lies in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, the judicial district in which Mr. Vijay is currently detained.

11. Venue is also properly in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e) because Respondents are employees, officers, and agencies of the United States, and because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred in the Western District of Oklahoma.

REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. § 2243

12. The Court must grant the petition for writ of habeas corpus or order Respondents to show cause “forthwith,” unless the petitioner is not entitled to relief. 28 U.S.C. § 2243. If an order to show cause is issued, Respondents must file a return “within three days unless for good cause additional time, not exceeding twenty days, is allowed.” *Id.*

13. Habeas corpus is “perhaps the most important writ known to the constitutional law . . . affording as it does a *swift* and imperative remedy in all cases of illegal restraint or confinement.” *Fay v. Noia*, 372 U.S. 391, 400 (1963) (emphasis added). “The application for the writ usurps the attention and displaces the calendar of the judge or justice who entertains it and receives prompt action from him within the four

corners of the application.” *Yong v. I.N.S.*, 208 F.3d 1116, 1120 (9th Cir. 2000) (citation omitted).

PARTIES

14. Petitioner Vijay Vijay is a citizen of India who has been in immigration detention since January 23, 2026.

15. Respondent Russell HOLT, is the acting Director of the Chicago’s Field Office of ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations division. As such, she is Petitioner’s immediate custodian and is responsible for Petitioner’s detention and removal. She is named in her official capacity.

16. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. She is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and oversees ICE, which is responsible for Mr. Vijay’s detention. Ms. Noem has ultimate custodial authority over Petitioner and is sued in her official capacity.

17. Respondent Pamela Bondi is the Attorney General of the United States. She is responsible for the Department of Justice, of which the Executive Office for Immigration Review and the immigration court system it operates is a component agency. She is sued in her official capacity.

18. Respondent Scarlet Grant is the Warden of the Cimarron Correctional Facility, where Mr. Vijay is detained. She has immediate physical custody of Mr. Vijay. She is sued in her official capacity.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

19. The INA prescribes three basic forms of detention for the vast majority of noncitizens in removal proceedings.

20. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1226 authorizes the detention of noncitizens in standard removal proceedings before an IJ. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1229a. Individuals in § 1226(a) detention are generally entitled to a bond hearing at the outset of their detention, *see* 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.19(a), 1236.1(d), while noncitizens who have been arrested, charged with, or convicted of certain crimes are subject to mandatory detention, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c).

21. Second, the INA 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 referred to under § 1225(b)(2).

22. Last, the INA also provides for detention of noncitizens who have been ordered removed, including individuals in withholding-only proceedings, *see* 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)–(b).

23. This case concerns the detention provisions at §§ 1226(a) and 1225(b)(2).

24. 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(a) was most recently amended earlier this year by the Laken Riley Act, Pub. L. No.119-1, 139 Stat. 3 (2025).

25. 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).

26. Thus, in the decades that followed, most people who entered without inspection and were placed in standard removal proceedings received bond hearings, unless their criminal history rendered them ineligible pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c). That practice was consistent with many more decades of prior practice, in which noncitizens who were not deemed “arriving” were entitled to a custody hearing before an IJ or other hearing officer. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(a) (1994); *see also* H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 229 (1996) (noting that § 1226(a) simply “restates” the detention authority previously found at § 1252(a)).

27. On July 8, 2025, ICE, “in coordination with” DOJ, announced a new policy that rejected well-established understanding of the statutory framework and reversed decades of practice.

28. The new policy, entitled “Interim Guidance Regarding Detention Authority for Applicants for Admission,”¹ claims that all persons who entered the United States without inspection shall now be subject to mandatory detention provision under § 1225(b)(2)(A). The policy applies regardless of when a person is apprehended, and affects those who have resided in the United States for months, years, and even decades.

29. On September 5, 2025, the BIA adopted this same position in a published decision, *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*. There, the Board held that all noncitizens who entered the United States without admission or parole are subject to detention under § 1225(b)(2)(A) and are ineligible for IJ bond hearings. *Id.*

30. Since Respondents adopted their new policies, dozens of federal courts have rejected their new interpretation of the INA’s detention authorities. Courts have likewise rejected *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, which adopts the same reading of the statute as ICE.

31. Even before ICE or the BIA introduced these nationwide policies, IJs in the Tacoma, Washington, immigration court stopped providing bond hearings for persons who entered the United States without inspection and who have since resided here. There, the U.S. District Court in the Western District of Washington found that such a reading of the INA is likely unlawful and that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to noncitizens who

¹ Available at

<https://www.aila.org/library/ice-memo-interim-guidance-regarding-detention-authority-for-applicants-for-admission>.

are not apprehended upon arrival to the United States. *Rodriguez Vazquez v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239 (W.D. Wash. 2025).

32. Subsequently, court after court has adopted the same reading of the INA's detention authorities and rejected ICE and EOIR's new interpretation. *See, e.g., Escarcega v. Olson*, No. CIV-25-1129-J, 2025 WL 3243438 (W.D. Okla. Nov. 20, 2025); *Diaz Colin v. Holt*, No. CIV-25-1189-D, 2025 WL 3645176 (W.D. Okla. Dec. 16, 2025); *Dominguez Vega v. Thompson*, 5:25-cv-01439 (W.D. Tex. Nov. 19, 2025); *Galdamez Martinez v. Noem*, 2025 WL 3471575 (WD Tex. Nov. 26, 2025); *Rodriguez Cortina v. De Anda-Ybarra*, 2025 WL 3218682 (W.D. Tex. Nov. 18, 2025); *Becerra Vargas v. Bondi*, No. 5:25-cv-1023 (S.D. Tex. Nov. 12, 2025); *Gonzalez Martinez v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2965859 (W.D. Tex. Oct. 21, 2025); *Lopez-Arevelo v. Ripa*, 2025 WL 2691828 (W.D. Tex. Sept. 22, 2025); *Cabrera-Hernandez v. Bondi*, (S.D. Tex. Dec. 2, 2025); *Espinoza Andres v. Noem*, 2025 WL 3458893 (S.D. Tex. Dec. 2, 2025); *Cardenas Perez v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-181 (S.D. Tex. Nov. 20, 2025); *Cruz Gutierrez v. Thompson*, 2025 WL 3187521 (S.D. Tex. Nov. 14, 2025); *Mejia Juarez v. Bondi*, No. 4:25cv-3937 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 27, 2025); *Hernandez Lucero v. Noem*, No. 4:25-cv-3981 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 23, 2025); *Ortega-Aguirre v. Noem*, No. 4:25-cv-4332 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 10, 2025); *Padron Covarrubias v. Vergara*, 2025 WL 2950097 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 8, 2025); *Buenrostro Mendez v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 2886346 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 7, 2025); *Orellana Cantarero v. Bondi*, 2025 WL 3252402 (E.D. Tex. Nov. 20, 2025); *Gomes v. Hyde*, No. 1:25-CV-11571-JEK, 2025

WL 1869299 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025); *Diaz Martinez v. Hyde*, No. CV 25-11613-BEM, --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 2084238 (D. Mass. July 24, 2025); *Rosado v. Figueroa*, No. CV 25-02157 PHX DLR (CDB), 2025 WL 2337099 (D. Ariz. Aug. 11, 2025), *report and recommendation adopted*, No. CV-25-02157-PHX-DLR (CDB), 2025 WL 2349133 (D. Ariz. Aug. 13, 2025); *Lopez Benitez v. Francis*, No. 25 CIV. 5937 (DEH), 2025 WL 2371588, at *1 (S.D.N.Y. Aug. 13, 2025); *Maldonado v. Olson*, No. 0:25-cv-03142-SRN-SGE, 2025 WL 2374411 (D. Minn. Aug. 15, 2025); *Arrazola-Gonzalez v. Noem*, No. 5:25-cv-01789-ODW (DFMx), 2025 WL 2379285 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 2025); *Romero v. Hyde*, No. 25-11631-BEM, 2025 WL 2403827 (D. Mass. Aug. 19, 2025); *Leal-Hernandez v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-02428-JRR, 2025 WL 2430025 (D. Md. Aug. 24, 2025); *Kostak v. Trump*, No. 3:25-cv-01093-JE-KDM, 2025 WL 2472136 (W.D. La. Aug. 27, 2025); *Jose J.O.E. v. Bondi*, No. 25-CV-3051 (ECT/DJF), --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 2466670, at *8 (D. Minn. Aug. 27, 2025) *Lopez-Campos v. Raycraft*, No. 2:25-cv-12486-BRM-EAS, 2025 WL 2496379 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 29, 2025); *Vasquez Garcia v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-02180-DMS-MM, 2025 WL 2549431 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 3, 2025); *Zaragoza Mosqueda v. Noem*, No. 5:25-CV-02304 CAS (BFM), 2025 WL 2591530 (C.D. Cal. Sept. 8, 2025); *Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, No. 25-CV-12546, 2025 WL 2609425 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 9, 2025); *see also, e.g., Palma Perez v. Berg*, No. 8:25CV494, 2025 WL 2531566 at *2 (D. Neb. Sept. 3, 2025) (noting that “[t]he Court tends to agree” that § 1226(a) and not § 1225(b)(2) authorizes detention); *Jacinto v.*

Trump, No. 4:25-cv-03161-JFB-RCC, 2025 WL 2402271 at *3 (D. Neb. Aug. 19, 2025) (same); *Anicasio v. Kramer*, No. 4:25-cv-03158-JFB-RCC, 2025 WL 2374224 at *2 (D. Neb. Aug. 14, 2025) (same).

33. Moreover, on December 18, 2025, the District of California granted final judgment on behalf of a certified nationwide class and extended declaratory judgment to the certified class. *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, No. 5:25-CV-01873-SSS-BFM, --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 3713987, at *32 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 18, 2025). The declaratory judgment held that the Bond Denial Class members are detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), and thus may not be denied consideration for release on bond under §1225(b)(2)(A). *Id.*

34. Courts have uniformly rejected DHS's and EOIR's new interpretation because it defies the INA. As the *Rodriguez Vazquez* court and others have explained, the plain text of the statutory provisions demonstrates that § 1226(a), not § 1225(b), applies to people like Petitioner.

35. Section 1226(a) applies by default to all persons "pending a decision on whether the [noncitizen] is to be removed from the United States." These removal hearings are held under § 1229a, to "decid[e] the inadmissibility or deportability of a[] [noncitizen]."

36. The text of § 1226 also explicitly applies to people charged as being inadmissible, including those who entered without inspection. *See* 8 U.S.C. §

1226(c)(1)(E). Subparagraph (E)’s reference to such people 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*, 779 F. Supp. 3d at 1257 (citing *Shady Grove Orthopedic Assocs., P.A. v. Allstate Ins. Co.*, 559 U.S. 393, 400 (2010)); see also *Gomes*, 2025 WL 1869299, at *7.

37. Section 1226, therefore, leaves no doubt that it applies to people who face charges of being inadmissible to the United States, including those who are present without admission or parole.

38. By contrast, § 1225(b) applies to people arriving at U.S. ports of entry or who 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). 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 v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 287 (2018).

39. Accordingly, the mandatory detention provision of § 1225(b)(2)(A) does not apply to people like Mr. Vijay, who have already entered and were residing in the United States at the time they were apprehended.

FACTS

40. Mr. Vijay entered the United States on July 27, 2018, without admission or parole after inspection to seek protection in the United States. (Ex. 1 - Notice to Appear)

41. He was detained and later released by Respondents pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226. (Ex. 2 - Notice of Custody Determination and Warrant for Arrest of Alien).

42. ICE placed Mr. Vijay in removal proceedings pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1229a by issuing a Notice to Appear (NTA) that they filed with the immigration court. (Ex. 1 - Notice to Appear). ICE charged Mr. Vijay with, inter alia, being inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i) as someone who entered the United States without inspection. *Id.* On or around April 30, 2019, Petitioner filed an I-589 Application for Asylum and Withholding of Removal with the Immigration Court.

43. On January 26, 2026, Mr. Vijay was taken into custody by ICE in Oklahoma. Following ICE's arrest and transfer of Mr. Vijay to the Cimarron Correctional Facility, ICE issued a custody determination to continue Mr. Vijay's detention without an opportunity to post bond or be released on other conditions. (Ex 3 - Notice to EOIR).

44. Last year, the BIA issued its precedential decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, which is binding on Immigration Judges and holds that individuals who entered the United States without admission or parole are not eligible for a bond hearing. Therefore, under controlling BIA authority, the Petitioner is ineligible for bond redetermination. *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 2016 (BIA 2025).

45. As a result, Mr. Vijay remains in detention at the Cimarron Correctional Facility. Without relief from this court, he faces the prospect of months or even years in immigration custody.

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT I

Violation of the INA

46. Petitioner incorporates by reference the allegations of fact set forth in the preceding paragraphs.

47. 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 the grounds of inadmissibility. As relevant here, it does not apply to those who previously entered the country and have been residing in the United States prior to being apprehended and placed in removal proceedings by Respondents. Such noncitizens are detained under § 1226(a), unless they are subject to § 1225(b)(1), § 1226(c), or § 1231.

48. The application of § 1225(b)(2) to Mr. Vijay unlawfully mandates his continued detention and violates the INA.

COUNT II

Violation of Due Process

49. Petitioner repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference each and every allegation in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.

50. The government may not deprive a person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. U.S. Const. amend. V. “Freedom from imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty that the Clause protects.” *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678, 690, 121 S.Ct. 2491, 150 L.Ed.2d 653 (2001).

51. Mr. Vijay has a fundamental interest in liberty and being free from official restraint.

52. The government’s detention of Mr. Vijay without a bond redetermination hearing to determine whether he is a flight risk or danger to others violates his right to due process.

53. Due process requires that government action be rational and non-arbitrary. *See U.S. v. Trimble*, 487 F.3d 752, 757 (9th Cir. 2007). While the government has discretion to detain individuals under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) and to revoke custody decisions under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(b), this discretion is not “unlimited” and must comport with constitutional due process. *Zadvydas*, 533 U.S. at 698. Here, Respondents have chosen to revoke Mr. Vijay’s release in an arbitrary manner and not based on a rational and individualized determination of whether he is a safety or flight risk, in violation of due process. Because no individualized custody revocation has been made and no circumstances have changed to make Mr. Vijay’s a flight risk or a danger to the

community, Respondents' revocation of Mr. Vijay's release violates his right to procedural due process.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioner prays that this Court grant the following relief:

- a. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
- b. Order that Petitioner shall not be transferred outside the Western District of Oklahoma while this habeas petition is pending;
- c. Issue an Order to Show Cause ordering Respondents to show cause why this Petition should not be granted within three days;
- d. Issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus requiring that Respondents release Petitioner or, in the alternative, provide Petitioner with a bond hearing pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) within five days;
- e. Declare that Petitioner's detention is unlawful;
- f. Award Petitioner attorney's fees and costs under the Equal Access to Justice Act ("EAJA"), as amended, 28 U.S.C. § 2412, and on any other basis justified under law; and
- g. Grant any other and further relief that this Court deems just and proper.

DATED this 29th day of January, 2026.

/S/Christine Hoffman
Christine Hoffman, OB#35023
Gilarranz-Hoffman Law, PLLC
5830 NW Expressway, #177

Oklahoma City, OK 73132
Telephone: 405-726-1075
Attorney for Petitioner

VERIFICATION PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 2242

I represent Petitioner, Vijay Vijay, and submit this verification on his behalf. I hereby verify that the factual statements made in the foregoing Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated this 29th day of January, 2026.

/S/Christine Hoffman
Christine Hoffman, OB#35023