

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

ALEXANDER PEREZ-VASQUEZ)	
Petitioner,))Case No. 1:26-cv-20791-KMM (Lead)
))Original Case No.: 1:26-cv-20934-KMM
v.)	
)	
ROGER MORRIS, in his official capacity as Acting)	
Warden of the Miami Federal Detention Center;)	
GARRET RIPA, in his official capacity as Miami)	
Field Office Director, Immigration and Customs)	
Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal)	
Operations; TODD LYONS, in his official capacity)	
as Acting Director of Immigration and Customs)	
Enforcement; KRISTI NOEM, in her official)	
capacity as Secretary of the Department of)	
Homeland Security; PAMELA BONDI, in her)	
official capacity as Attorney General; and)	
EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR IMMIGRATION)	
REVIEW.)	
)	
Respondents.)	

PETITIONER ALEXANDER PEREZ VASQUEZ'S REPLY

INTRODUCTION

Petitioner filed a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus and Request for Order to Show Cause on February 11, 2026. The Court then issued an order consolidating Petitioner's case with the lead case 1:26-cv-20791-KMM. (Doc. 8). This Court issued an Order to Show Cause in the

Lead Case requiring a Response by February 17, 2026. (Doc. 3). Federal Respondents filed a Response on February 17, 2026. (Doc 10). Petitioner Perez Vasquez¹ is replying to Respondent's Response *See* Doc. 3; Doc. 10.

ARGUMENT

I. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) and §1252(b)(9) Do Not Bar Review of Petitioner's Claim.

8 U.S.C. § 1252(g) bars jurisdiction “only to three discrete actions that the Attorney General may take: her ‘decision or action’ to ‘commence proceedings, *adjudicate* cases, or *execute* removal orders.” *Reno v. American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.*, 525 U.S. 471, 482 (1999) (emphasis in original); *see also Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 294 (2018) (“We did not interpret this language to sweep in any claim that technically can be said to ‘arise from’ the three listed actions of the Attorney General. Instead, we read the language to refer to just those three specific actions themselves.”). “When asking if a claim is barred by § 1252(g), courts must focus on the action being challenged.” *Canal A Media Holding, LLC v. United States Citizenship and Immigr. Servs.*, 964 F.3d 1250, 1258 (11th Cir. 2020). Petitioner is not challenging the discretionary decision to commence removal proceedings; the issue of the present case is whether Petitioner is detained mandatorily under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) or discretionarily under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a). *See Patel v. Hardin, et al*, No 2:25-cv-870-JES-NPM, 2025 WL 3442706 at *3 (M.D. Fla. Dec. 1, 2025); *Vasquez Carcamo v. Noem*, No. 2:25- cv-922-SPC-NPM, 2025 WL 3119263 (M.D. Fla. Nov. 7, 2025); *Hinojosa Garcia v. Noem*, No. 2:25-CV-879-SPC-NPM, 2025 WL 3041895 (M.D. Fla. Oct. 31, 2025); *see also Duvallon Boffill v.*

¹ Petitioner is Guatemalan. The reference to Petitioner being Mexican in Doc. 1 was a scrivener's error.

Field Off. Dir., Miami Field Off., U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't, et al, No. 25-cv-25179, 2025 WL 3246868 at *3;4 (S.D. Fla. Nov. 20, 2025)

This claim is not barred by 8 U.S.C. §1252(b)(9) either given that Petitioner is not requesting a review of a removal order. *See Madu v. U.S. Atty. Gen.*, 470 F.3d 1362, 1365 (11th Cir. 2006) (holding the INA did not divest the district court of jurisdiction over a § 2241 challenge to detention of the petitioner pending deportation); *see also Patel v. Hardin, et al*, No 2:25-cv-870-JES-NPM, 2025 WL 3442706 at *3 (M.D. Fla. Dec. 1, 2025); *Vasquez Carcamo v. Noem*, No. 2:25-cv-922-SPC-NPM, 2025 WL 3119263 (M.D. Fla. Nov. 7, 2025); *Hinojosa Garcia v. Noem*, No. 2:25- CV-879-SPC-NPM, 2025 WL 3041895 (M.D. Fla. Oct. 31, 2025); *see also Duvallon Boffill v. Field Off. Dir., Miami Field Off., U.S. Immigr. and Customs Enf't, et al*, No. 25-cv-25179, 2025 WL 3246868 at *4 (S.D. Fla. Nov. 20, 2025)

II. Seeking Administrative Relief Would be Futile.

Respondents' mention the lack of administrative exhaustion, however, the exhaustion requirement under 8 USC § 1251(d)(1) "is not jurisdictional," but prudential. *Kemokai v. U.S. Atty Gen.*, 83 F.4th 886, 891 (11th Cir. 2023) (acknowledging the abrogation of prior Eleventh Circuit precedent interpreting § 1252(d)(1) as a jurisdictional bar by *Santos-Zacaria v. Garland*, 598 U.S. 411, 413 (2023)). Additionally, pursuing the administrative relief would be futile given the Board of Immigration Appeal's Decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (B.I.A. 2025).

In *Yajure Hurtado*, decided just in September, the BIA rejected the precise argument raised in this case. 29 I&N Dec. at 220 ("Under the plain reading of the INA, we affirm the [IJ]'s determination that he did not have authority over the bond request because aliens who are present in the United States without admission are applicants for admission as defined under . . .

8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), and must be detained for the duration of their removal proceedings.”). Administrative “exhaustion is not required where . . . an administrative appeal would be futile.” *Linfors v. United States*, 673 F.2d 332, 334 (11th Cir. 1982) (citing *Von Hoffberg v. Alexander*, 615 F.2d 633, 638 (5th Cir. 1980)). The result of any “bond appeal to the BIA is nearly a foregone conclusion under [*Yajure Hurtado*], any prudential exhaustion requirements are excused for futility.” *Puga v. Assistant Field Off. Dir., Krome North Serv. Processing Ctr.*, 25-cv-24535, 2025 WL 2938369, at *2 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 15, 2025); *see also Jefry Josue Del Cid Del Cid and Marlon Letona Marroquin Marroquin v. Pamela Bondi*, 2025 WL 2985150, at *13 (W.D. Pa. Oct. 23, 2025); *Guerrero Orellana v. Moniz*, --F. Supp. 3d--, 2025 WL 2809996, at *4 n.2 (D. Mass. Oct. 3, 2025); *Inlago Tocagon v. Moniz*, --F. Supp. 3d--, 2025 WL 2778023, at *2 (D. Mass. Sep. 29, 2025); *Roman v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-01684, 2025 WL 2710211, at *5 (D. Nev. Sep. 23, 2025); *Vazquez v. Feeley*, No. 25-cv-01542, 2025 WL 2676082, at *9–10 (D. Nev. Sep. 17, 2025); *Patel v. Hardin, et al*, No 2:25-cv-870-JES-NPM, 2025 WL 3442706 at *3 (M.D. Fla. Dec. 1, 2025).

III. Petitioner is Being Detained Pursuant to 8 USC § 1226.

There are three relevant statutes to authorize detention. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1226 authorizes the detention of noncitizens in standard removal proceedings before an Immigration Judge. *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). 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). Third, 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).

In the present case, Petitioner has not been ordered removed and is not in expedited removal proceedings, as evidenced by the pending § 1229a proceedings against him. *See* Exh. A. Furthermore, § 1225(b) applies to people arriving at U.S. ports of entry or who recently entered the United States. The statute is built around the idea that these individuals are subject to border inspections because they are “seeking admission” to the United States. For that reason, it makes little sense to apply § 1225 to someone who has been living inside the United States for over 20 years, as Petitioner has, because such an individual is no longer in the posture of an arriving applicant for admission.

Petitioner has been present in the United States for at over 20 years before his apprehension by ICE, which makes “his detention is governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), which allows for the release of noncitizens on bond,” *Puga*, 2025 WL 2938369, at *3, not § 1225(b)(2), applicable to noncitizen “applicant[s] for admission” to the United States. § 1225(b)(2)(A). While Petitioner acknowledges the court’s decision in *Lopes Costa v. Noem*, 25-cv-1384, 2026 WL 456771 (M.D. Fla. Feb. 18, 2025), that case is materially distinguishable. Mr. Lopes Costa was encountered by ICE at entry, whereas Petitioner was not encountered by ICE until nearly 20 years after his entry.

It has been found by courts throughout the country that Respondents’ interpretation of the INA to expand the scope of 8 USC §1225 detention, “directly contravenes the statute, disregards decades of settled precedent,” and is erroneous. *Hernandez Alvarez v. Morris*, 25-24806 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 27, 2025), ECF 6 at 5; *Cerro Perez v. Parra*, 25-24820 (S.D. Fla. Oct 27, 2025), ECF 9 at 6, *Gil-Paulino v. Sec’y of the U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec.*, 25-cv-24292 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 10,

2025), ECF 41 at 10; *see also Pizarro Reyes v. Raycraft*, No. 25-cv-12546, 2025 WL 2609425, at *7 (E.D. Mich. Sep. 9, 2025) (“Finally, the BIA’s decision to pivot from three decades of consistent statutory interpretation and call for Pizarro Reyes’ detention under § 1225(b)(2)(A) is at odds with every District Court that has been confronted with the same question of statutory interpretation.”); *see also Patel v. Hardin, et al*, No 2:25-cv-870-JES-NPM, 2025 WL 3442706 at *5 (M.D. Fla. Dec. 1, 2025); *Puga*, 2025 WL 2938369, at *3–6; *Merino v. Ripa*, No. 25-23845, 2025 WL 2941609, at *3 (S.D. Fla. Oct. 15, 2025); *Lopez v. Hardin*, No. 25-cv830, 2025 WL 2732717, at *2 (M.D. Fla. Sep. 25, 2025); *Guerra v. Joyce*, No. 25-cv-00534, 2025 WL 2986316, at *3 (D. Me. Oct. 23, 2025); *Lomeu v. Soto*, 25-cv-16589, 2025 WL 2981296, at *7–8 (D.N.J. Oct. 23, 2025); *Maldonado v. Cabezas*, No. 25-13004, 2025 WL 2985256, at *4 (D.N.J. Oct. 23, 2025); *Loa Caballero v. Baltazar*, No. 25-cv-03120, 2025 WL 2977650, at *5–6 (D. Colo. Oct. 22, 2025); *Aguiar v. Moniz*, No. 25-cv-12706, 2025 WL 2987656, at *3 (D. Mass. Oct. 22, 2025); *Rivera v. Moniz*, 25-cv-12833, 2025 WL 2977900, at *1–2 (D. Mass. Oct. 22, 2025); *Avila v. Bondi*, No. 25-3741, 2025 WL 2976539, at *5–7 (D. Minn. Oct. 21, 2025); *Maldonado de Leon v. Baker*, No. 25-3084, 2025 WL 2968042, at *7 (D. Md. Oct. 21, 2025); *Miguel v. Noem*, 25-11137, 2025 WL 2976480, at *6 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 21, 2025); *Pineda v. Simon*, No. 25-cv-01616, 2025 WL 2980729, at *2 (E.D. Va. Oct. 21, 2025); *Matheus Araujo DA Silva v. Bondi*, No. 25-cv-12672, 2025 WL 2969163, at *2 (D. Mass. Oct. 21, 2025); *H.G.V.U. v. Smith*, No. 25-cv-10931, 2025 WL 2962610, at *4–6 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 20, 2025); *Polo v. Chestnut*, No. 25-cv01342, 2025 WL 2959346, at *11 (E.D. Cal. Oct. 17, 2025); *Sanchez v. Minga Wofford, Warden, Mesa Verde Immigr. Processing Ctr.*, No. 25-cv-01187, 2025 WL 2959274, at *3 (E.D. Cal. Oct. 17, 2025); *Alvarez v. Noem*, No. 25-cv-1090, 2025 WL 2942648, at *4–6 (W.D. Mich. Oct. 17, 2025); *Zamora v. Noem*, No. 25-12750, 2025 WL 2958879, at *1 (D.

Mass. Oct. 17, 2025); *Pacheco Mayen v. Raycraft*, 25-cv-13056, 2025 WL 2978529, at *6–9 (E.D. Mich. Oct. 17, 2025); *Diaz Sandoval v. Raycraft*, No. 25-cv-12987, 2025 WL 2977517, at *6–9 (E.D. Mich. Oct. 17, 2025); *Contreras-Cervantes v. Raycraft*, No. 25-cv-13073, 2025 WL 2952796, at *6–8 (E.D. Mich. Oct. 17, 2025); *Ochoa v. Noem*, No. 25-10865, 2025 WL 2938779, at *4–6 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 16, 2025); *Hernandez v. Crawford*, No. 25-cv-01565, 2025 WL 2940702, at *2 (E.D. Va. Oct. 16, 2025); *Piña v. Stamper*, No. 25-cv-00509, 2025 WL 2939298, at *3 (D. Me. Oct. 16, 2025); *Sequen v. Albarran*, No. 25-cv-06487, 2025 WL 2935630, at *8 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 15, 2025); *Teyim v. Perry*, No. 25-cv-01615, 2025 WL 2950184, at *2–3 (E.D. Va. Oct. 15, 2025); *Singh v. Lyons*, 25-cv-01606, 2025 WL 2932635, at *2–3 (E.D. Va. Oct. 14, 2025); *Alejandro v. Olson*, 25-cv-02027, 2025 WL 2896348, at *7–9 (S.D. Ind. Oct. 11, 2025); *Chavez v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-06984, 2025 WL 2909526, at *5 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 9, 2025); *Donis v. Chestnut*, No. 25-01228, 2025 WL 287514, at *11 (E.D. Cal. Oct. 9, 2025); *Eliseo A.A. v. Olson*, No. 25-3381, 2025 WL 2886729, at *2–4 (D. Minn. Oct. 8, 2025); *Covarrubias v. Vergara*, No. 25-cv-112, 2025 WL 2950097, at *3 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 8, 2025); *Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. 25-3726, 2025 WL 2886346, at *3 (S.D. Tex. Oct. 7, 2025); *S.D.B.B. v. Johnson*, No. 25-cv-882, 2025 WL 2845170, at *5 (M.D.N.C. Oct. 7, 2025); *Gonzalez v. Bostock*, 25-cv-01404, 2025 WL 2841574, at *3–4 (W.D. Wash. Oct. 7, 2025); *Hyppolite v. Noem*, No. 25-4304, 2025 WL 2829511, *12 (E.D.N.Y. Oct. 6, 2025); *Artiga v. Genalo*, No. 25-5208, 2025 WL 2829434, at *7 (E.D.N.Y. Oct. 5, 2025); *Cordero Pelico v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-07826, 2025 WL 2822876, at *15 (N.D. Cal. Oct. 3, 2025); *Orellana v. Moniz*, 25-cv-12664, 2025 WL 2809996, at *5 (D. Mass. Oct. 3, 2025).

At least 373 judges in over 3,500 cases have rejected Respondents’ position, as opposed to a lopsided minority of 28 judges who have adopted it. *See* Kyle Cheney, *Even Trump’s own*

appointees are ruling against ICE's mass detention strategy, Politico (Feb. 12, 2026), <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/02/12/donald-trump-judges-mandatory-detention-rulings-00778256>. Petitioner is aware of the split-decision *Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. 25-20496, 2026 WL 323330 (5th Cir. Feb. 6, 2026), but respectfully maintains that that decision, which takes the minority position on this issue, was wrongly decided. Most importantly, that decision is not binding on this court. Petitioner also apprises the Court of an additional relevant change in the case law. To the extent Respondents rely on the BIA's decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025), that reliance is misplaced now that a district court has vacated that decision under the Administrative Procedure Act. *Maldonado Bautista v. Santacruz*, 5:25-cv-1873-SSS-BFM, -- F. Supp. 3d --, 2026 WL 468284, at *12 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 18, 2026). As such, whatever authority that case might previously have had, it can no longer be considered persuasive.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons and those expressed in the Petition for Habeas Corpus and Request for Order to Show Cause, this Court should grant the petition.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kenia Garcia

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Dated: February 24, 2026

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on February 24, 2026, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court by using the CM/ECF system.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kenia Garcia

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