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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
COLUMBUS DIVISION

MARIA JUDITH IZARA AGUILAR,



Petitioner,

v.

JASON STREEVAL, Warden of the
Stewart Detention Center

Respondent.

Case No. 4:26-cv-542

**PETITION FOR WRIT OF
HABEAS CORPUS**

INTRODUCTION

1
2 1. Petitioner Maria Judith Izara Aguilar is in the custody of Respondent at
3 the Stewart Detention Center. Petitioner faces unlawful detention because the
4 Department of Homeland Security and the Executive Office of Immigration Review
5 have concluded Petitioner is subject to mandatory detention.
6

7 2. Petitioner is charged with, inter alia, having entered the United States
8 without admission or inspection. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i).

9 3. Based on this allegation in Petitioner's removal proceedings, DHS
10 denied Petitioner release from immigration custody, consistent with a new DHS
11 policy issued on July 8, 2025, instructing all Immigration and Customs Enforcement
12 (ICE) employees to consider anyone inadmissible under § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i)—i.e.,
13 those who entered the United States without admission or inspection—to be subject
14 to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and therefore ineligible for bond.
15

16 4. Similarly, on September 5, 2025, the Board of Immigration Appeals
17 (BIA or Board) issued a precedent decision, binding on all immigration judges,
18 holding that an immigration judge has no authority to consider bond requests for any
19 person who entered the United States without admission. *See Matter of Yajure*
20 *Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 216 (BIA 2025). In *Yajure Hurtado*, the BIA determined
21 that such individuals are subject to detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) and
22 therefore ineligible to be released on bond.
23
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1 10. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(5) (habeas
2 corpus), 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), and Article I, section 9, clause 2 of the
3 United States Constitution (the Suspension Clause).

4
5 11. This Court may grant relief pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241, the
6 Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201 *et seq.*, and the All Writs Act, 28 U.S.C.
7 § 1651.

8 **VENUE**

9 12. Pursuant to *Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Court of Kentucky*, 410 U.S.
10 484, 493- 500 (1973), venue lies in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of
11 Georgia, Columbus Division, the judicial district in which Petitioner is detained.

12
13 13. Venue is also properly in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e)
14 because Respondent is an employee, officer, and agent of the United States, and
15 because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims
16 occurred in the Middle District of Georgia.

17 **REQUIREMENTS OF 28 U.S.C. § 2243**

18
19 14. The Court must grant the petition for writ of habeas corpus or order
20 Respondents to show cause “forthwith,” unless the petitioner is not entitled to relief.
21 28 U.S.C. § 2243. If an order to show cause is issued, Respondents must file a return
22 “within three days unless for good cause additional time, not exceeding twenty days,
23 is allowed.” *Id.*

1 15. Habeas corpus is “perhaps the most important writ known to the
2 constitutional law . . . affording as it does a *swift* and imperative remedy in all cases
3 of illegal restraint or confinement.” *Fay v. Noia*, 372 U.S. 391, 400 (1963)
4 (emphasis added). “The application for the writ usurps the attention and displaces
5 the calendar of the judge or justice who entertains it and receives prompt action from
6 him within the four corners of the application.” *Yong v. I.N.S.*, 208 F.3d 1116, 1120
7 (9th Cir. 2000) (citation omitted).
8

9 **PARTIES**

10 16. Petitioner Ms. Maria Judith Izara Aguilar is native and citizen of
11 Guatemala who has been in immigration detention since 2006. After arresting
12 Petitioner, ICE did not set bond and Petitioner is unable to obtain review of her
13 custody by an Immigration Judge, pursuant to the Board’s decision *Yajure Hurtado*,
14 29 I. & N. Dec. 216 (BIA 2025).
15

16 17. Respondent Jason Streeval is employed by Core Civic Group as
17 Warden of the Stewart Detention Center, where Petitioner is detained. She has
18 immediate physical custody of Petitioner. He is sued in his official capacity.
19

20 **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

21 18. The Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) establishes several
22 detention schemes for noncitizens in removal proceedings.
23
24

1 19. First, 8 U.S.C. § 1226 governs the detention of individuals placed in
2 standard removal proceedings under § 1229a. Noncitizens detained under § 1226(a)
3 are generally entitled to a custody redetermination before an Immigration Judge
4 unless they fall into the narrow mandatory-detention categories of § 1226(c).
5

6 20. Second, 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)–(2) provides for mandatory detention of
7 certain individuals seeking admission who are inspected at the border and
8 determined not “clearly and beyond a doubt entitled to be admitted.” This detention
9 framework is tied to the process of arrival inspection performed by an examining
10 immigration officer.

11 21. Third, 8 U.S.C. § 1231 governs detention of individuals who are subject
12 to final orders of removal.
13

14 22. This case turns on the proper application of § 1226(a) versus §
15 1225(b)(2) for a noncitizen like Petitioner—an individual who entered the United
16 States years ago, resided here, and was apprehended within the interior, *not* at a port
17 of entry.

18 23. Historically, individuals who entered without inspection and were later
19 placed in § 1229a removal proceedings were treated as detained under § 1226, not §
20 1225. EOIR regulations following IIRIRA confirm that such individuals were not
21 considered “arriving” and therefore were eligible for bond hearings. *See* 62 Fed.
22 Reg. 10312, 10323 (Mar. 6, 1997).
23
24

1 24. For decades, consistent with this framework and prior immigration law,
2 noncitizens who entered without inspection and were apprehended inside the United
3 States received custody redeterminations unless subject to § 1226(c). *See* former 8
4 U.S.C. § 1252(a) (1994); H.R. Rep. No. 104-469, pt. 1, at 229 (1996).

5
6 **The Government’s Recent Policy Shift**

7 25. On July 8, 2025, ICE—“in coordination with” DOJ—issued guidance
8 declaring that all individuals who entered without inspection must now be detained
9 under § 1225(b)(2)(A), regardless of when they entered the United States or whether
10 they were ever inspected by an immigration officer.

11
12 26. On September 5, 2025, the BIA adopted this new position in *Matter of*
13 *Yajure Hurtado*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 216 (BIA 2025), holding that any noncitizen who
14 entered without admission is subject to § 1225(b)(2)(A) and categorically barred
15 from a bond hearing.

16 **This Court Has Rejected Respondents’ Interpretation**

17 27. This Court has already rejected the government’s reading of §
18 1225(b)(2). In *J.A.M. v. Streeval*, Case No. 4:25-cv-342 (CDL), 2025 WL 3050094
19 (M.D. Ga. Nov. 1, 2025) and *P.R.S. v. Streeval*, No. 4:25-cv-330-CDL, 2025 WL
20 3269947 (M.D. Ga. Nov. 24, 2025), the Court held that § 1225(b)(2) applies only to
21 noncitizens who are “seeking admission” in the context of an arrival inspection by
22 an examining immigration officer.
23
24

1 28. *J.A.M.* and *P.R.S.* explained that “seeking admission” requires an
2 affirmative act at or near the time of arrival to obtain legal entry, coupled with
3 contemporaneous inspection. This Court rejected DHS’s argument that individuals
4 apprehended years after entering the United States may be treated as if they were
5 seeking admission. *Id.* at 3.

7 29. Applying that interpretation, *J.A.M.* and *P.R.S.* held that § 1225(b)(2)
8 does not apply to individuals like Petitioner, whose alleged inadmissibility is based
9 on conduct occurring long after entry and *not* in connection with an arrival
10 inspection.

11 **Courts Nationwide Have Rejected the Government’s Theory**

13 30. Federal courts across the country have agreed that § 1226(a)—not §
14 1225(b)—governs detention of individuals apprehended inside the United States,
15 even when they originally entered without inspection. *See, e.g., Rodriguez Vazquez*
16 *v. Bostock*, 779 F. Supp. 3d 1239 (W.D. Wash. 2025); *Gomes v. Hyde*, 2025 WL
17 1869299 (D. Mass. July 7, 2025); *Diaz Martinez v. Hyde*, 2025 WL 2084238 (D.
18 Mass. July 24, 2025); *Rosado v. Figueroa*, 2025 WL 2337099 (D. Ariz. Aug. 11,
19 2025); *Ramirez Clavijo v. Kaiser*, 2025 WL 2419263 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025);
20 *Vasquez Garcia v. Noem*, 2025 WL 2549431 (S.D. Cal. Sept. 3, 2025); *Pizarro*
21 *Reyes v. Raycraft*, 2025 WL 2609425 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 9, 2025).

1 31. These courts uniformly conclude that Respondent's interpretation
2 contradicts the statutory text, structure, and decades of agency practice.

3 **Stewart Immigration Court's Continued Refusal to Exercise Jurisdiction**
4

5 32. Despite this Court's recent decisions, the Stewart Immigration Court
6 continues to decline jurisdiction over custody redeterminations for noncitizens like
7 Petitioner, based on the BIA's erroneous decision in *Matter of Yajure Hurtado*.

8 33. Because Petitioner has no administrative avenue to challenge her
9 custody, habeas corpus is the only remedy capable of addressing the ongoing
10 violation of federal law.



11 **FACTUAL BACKGROUND**
12

13 34. Petitioner entered the United States in 2006 without inspection and
14 admission. Since that time, she has established a life and family in the United States.

15 35. Petitioner is the primary caretaker of her United States Citizen
16 grandchild—after the untimely death of the grandchild's father in 2019—who lives
17 with Petitioner along with Petitioner's adult daughter.

18 36. Petitioner has no criminal history, notwithstanding prior arrests for
19 driving without license.
20

21 37. Petitioner's ongoing detention imposes severe financial and emotional
22 hardship on her U.S. citizen family.
23
24

1 38. Prior to her detention, Petitioner worked full-time at the 
2  located in Rome, Georgia, as a housekeeper since 2009. She is known as
3 a hard-working individual who supports her family and contributes to her
4 community.

5
6 39. Petitioner poses no danger to the community and is not a flight risk. Her
7 family ties, employment history, lack of disqualifying criminal record, and
8 consistent community involvement demonstrate that she is an appropriate candidate
9 for release under § 1226(a).

10
11 40. Petitioner's continued detention also violates due process because it is
12 based on an unlawful statutory interpretation already rejected by this Court and by a
13 certified nationwide class action. In *J.A.M. and P.R.S.* this Court held that 8 U.S.C.
14 § 1225(b)(2) applies only when a noncitizen is "seeking admission" in the context
15 of an arrival inspection by an examining immigration officer. Petitioner, however,
16 was apprehended inside the United States years after her entry and falls squarely
17 within the detention framework of § 1226(a), which entitles her to a bond hearing.

18
19 41. Nevertheless, ICE continues to detain Petitioner under § 1225(b)(2),
20 and the Stewart Immigration Court refuses to exercise jurisdiction to conduct a bond
21 hearing. Because Petitioner is a long-term resident with deep family ties, no
22 disqualifying criminal history, her prolonged imprisonment without any opportunity
23
24

1 for individualized custody review violates the fundamental requirements of due
2 process and reinforces the necessity of habeas relief.

3
4 **CLAIMS FOR RELIEF**

5 **COUNT I**
6 **Violation of the INA**

7 42. Petitioner incorporates by reference the allegations of fact set forth in
8 the preceding paragraphs.

9 43. The mandatory detention provision at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) does not
10 apply to all noncitizens residing in the United States who are subject to the grounds
11 of inadmissibility. As relevant here, it does not apply to those who previously
12 entered the country and have been residing in the United States prior to being
13 apprehended and placed in removal proceedings by Respondents. Such noncitizens
14 are detained under § 1226(a), unless they are subject to § 1225(b)(1), § 1226(c), or
15 § 1231.
16

17 44. The application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner unlawfully mandates her
18 continued detention and violates the INA.

19 **COUNT II**

20 **Violation of the Bond Regulations**

21 45. Petitioner incorporates by reference the allegations of fact set forth in
22 preceding paragraphs.
23
24

1 46. In 1997, after Congress amended the INA through IIRIRA, EOIR and
2 the then-Immigration and Naturalization Service issued an interim rule to interpret
3 and apply IIRIRA. Specifically, under the heading of “Apprehension, Custody, and
4 Detention of [Noncitizens],” the agencies explained that “[d]espite being applicants
5 for admission, [noncitizens] who are present without having been admitted or
6 paroled (formerly referred to as [noncitizens] who entered without inspection) will
7 be eligible for bond and bond redetermination.” 62 Fed. Reg. at 10323 (emphasis
8 added). The agencies thus made clear that individuals who had entered without
9 inspection were eligible for consideration for bond and bond hearings before IJs
10 under 8 U.S.C. § 1226 and its implementing regulations.
11

12
13 47. Nonetheless, pursuant to *Yajure Hurtado*, EOIR has a policy and
14 practice of applying § 1225(b)(2) to individual like Petitioner.

15 48. The application of § 1225(b)(2) to Petitioner unlawfully mandates her
16 continued detention and violates 8 C.F.R. §§ 236.1, 1236.1, and 1003.19.
17

18 **COUNT III**
Violation of Due Process

19 49. Petitioner repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference each and
20 every allegation in the preceding paragraphs as if fully set forth herein.
21

22 50. The government may not deprive a person of life, liberty, or property
23 without due process of law. U.S. CONST. AMEND. V. “Freedom from
24 imprisonment—from government custody, detention, or other forms of physical

1 restraint—lies at the heart of the liberty that the Clause protects.” *Zadvydas v. Davis*,
2 533 U.S. 678, 690 (2001).

3 51. Petitioner has a fundamental interest in liberty and being free from
4 official restraint.

5 52. The government’s detention of Petitioner without a bond
6 redetermination hearing to determine whether she is a flight risk or danger to others
7 violates her right to due process.
8

9 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

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

- 11
- 12 a. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
 - 13 b. Order that Petitioner shall not be transferred outside the Southern
14 District of Georgia while this habeas petition is pending;
 - 15 c. Issue an Order to Show Cause ordering Respondents to show cause why
16 this Petition should not be granted within three days;
 - 17 d. Issue a Writ of Habeas Corpus requiring that Respondents release
18 Petitioner or, in the alternative, provide Petitioner with a bond hearing
19 pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) within seven days;
 - 20 e. Declare that Petitioner’s detention is unlawful;
 - 21 f. Award Petitioner attorney’s fees and costs under the Equal Access to
22 Justice Act (“EAJA”), as amended, 28 U.S.C. § 2412, and on any other
23 basis justified under law; and
 - 24 g. Grant any other and further relief that this Court deems just and proper.

1 DATED this 3rd day of April, 2026.
2

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