

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Julio Jesus Buitrago Murzi v. Kristi Noem, Secretary, U.S.
Department of Homeland Security, Pam Bondi, U.S. Attorney
General, Todd M. Lyons, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and
Customs Enforcement, and Dawn Ceja, Warden of Denver Contract
Detention Facility

Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-00359-CNS (D. Colo. Feb. 12, 2026) · No. 1:26-cv-00359-CNS · Decided February
12, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the District of Colorado granted Julio Jesus Buitrago Murzi’s petition for a writ of habeas corpus, concluding that his detention was improperly governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1225 rather than § 1226. The court ordered his immediate release, denied his motion for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction as moot, and imposed conditions on any future re-detention.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the District of Colorado
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Charlotte N. Sweeney
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the District of Colorado
DECIDED	February 12, 2026
DOCKET	1:26-cv-00359-CNS
DISPOSITION	writ_granted
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Petitioner sought habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 from immigration detention and separately moved for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court resolved the legal issue presented under the governing immigration-detention statutes and considered habeas relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(3).
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	district court order; precedential status unknown
PARTIES	Julio Jesus Buitrago Murzi v. Kristi Noem, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Pam Bondi, U.S. Attorney General, Todd M.

TOPICS

immigration detention

removal proceedings

due process

statutory interpretation

injunctions

PRACTICE AREAS

immigration law

habeas corpus

constitutional law

civil procedure

remedies

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Petitioner's detention was governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1225 or 8 U.S.C. § 1226 after he had been paroled into the United States and released pending removal proceedings.
2. Whether the detention violated due process.
3. Whether the appropriate remedy was immediate release or a bond hearing.

HOLDINGS

1. Because Petitioner had been paroled into the United States after arriving at a port of entry and had thereafter lived in the United States, his detention was governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226 rather than 8 U.S.C. § 1225. His detention under the § 1225 framework was therefore improper.
2. Petitioner's continued detention was unlawful and violated due process, or at minimum established a likelihood of success on the merits of his due-process claim.
3. Immediate release, rather than a bond hearing, was the appropriate remedy because Respondents did not identify evidence that Petitioner posed a flight risk or danger to the community.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“Critically, here, as Respondents acknowledge, following his arrival at a port of entry, Petitioner was released on parole.” (Analysis)

“Respondents SHALL RELEASE Petitioner from custody immediately, but no later than within 12 hours of this Order” (Conclusion)

“Respondents are further ENJOINED AND RESTRAINED from re-arresting or re-detaining in any form Petitioner unless they demonstrate, by clear and convincing evidence at a pre-deprivation bond hearing before a neutral decisionmaker, that Petitioner is a flight risk or danger to the community such that his physical custody is legally justified.” (Conclusion)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Petitioner entered the United States through a port of entry and presented himself as an applicant for admission. Following processing for a notice to appear, he was paroled into the United States pending a removal hearing

and lived in the United States. ICE later assumed custody after his arrest by Wyoming police for a minor traffic-related matter. Respondents did not argue that Petitioner posed a flight risk or danger to the community.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The petition was filed in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado and was fully briefed. The court declined to hold a hearing because the challenge was fundamentally legal, granted the habeas petition, denied the temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction motion as moot, and ordered Petitioner's immediate release subject to specified restrictions on any future detention.

DISPOSITION

writ_granted

CASES CITED

- Depelian v. Baltazar, No. 25-cv-03765-SKC-TPO, ECF No. 18 at 8-9
- Sidqui v. Almodovar, No. 25-CV-9349 (VSB), 2026 WL 251929, at *10, *17 (S.D.N.Y. Jan. 30, 2026)
- Aviles-Mena v. Kaiser, No. 25-cv-06783-RFL, 2025 WL 2578215, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 5, 2025)
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights v. Noem, Case No. 25-cv-872 (JMC), 2025 WL 2192986, at *27 (D.D.C. Aug. 1, 2025)
- Ahmadi v. Becerra, Case No. 1:25-cv-01044-CDB (HC), 2026 WL 309561, at *10, *12-13 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 5, 2026)
- Valencia Zapata v. Kaiser, 801 F. Supp. 3d 919, 935 n.4 (N.D. Cal. 2025)
- Ramirez Clavijo v. Kaiser, No. 25-cv-06248-BLF, 2025 WL 2419263, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025)
- Castellon, 2025 WL 2373425, at *9, *12
- Garcia v. Andrews, No. 1:25-cv-01006-JLT-SAB, 2025 WL 2420068, at *5, *7 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025)
- Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi, No. 25-20496, 2026 WL 323330 (5th Cir. Feb. 6, 2026)
- Singh v. Baltazar, No. 1:26-cv-00336-CNS, 2026 WL 352870, at *3-6
- Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo, 603 U.S. 369, 400 (2024)

OPINION

JULIO JESUS BUITRAGO MURZI v. KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, PAM BONDI, U.S. Attorney General, TODD M. LYONS, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and DAWN CEJA, Warden of Denver Contract Detention Facility

PER CURIAM.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO

Judge Charlotte N. Sweeney Civil Action No. 1:26-cv-00359-CNS

JULIO JESUS BUITRAGO MURZI,

Petitioner, v. KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, PAM BONDI, U.S. Attorney General, TODD M. LYONS, Acting Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and DAWN CEJA, Warden of Denver Contract Detention Facility, Respondents.

ORDER

Before the Court is Petitioner's fully briefed Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, ECF No. 1, and Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction, ECF No. 2. As Petitioner's challenge is fundamentally legal in nature, the Court declines to hold a hearing, see 28 U.S.C. § 2243, GRANTS the petition and DENIES as moot the temporary restraining order motion.

I. ANALYSIS

The parties acknowledge this case is substantially similar to cases the Court and other courts in this judicial district have previously considered regarding the applicability of 8 U.S.C. § 1225, but with a specific distinction: "Unlike many petitioners in those cases, the Petitioner here came into the United States via a port of entry, where he presented himself as an applicant for admission." ECF No. 11 at 2. See also *id.* (characterizing this case as "materially different from many of the cases recently brought in this district"); ECF No. 13 at 4; ECF No. 1 at 4. This fact does not compel a contrary outcome to the one the Court has reached previously: Petitioner's detention is improper. See, e.g., ECF No. 1 at 5. Respondents argue that, based on this case's factual background, Petitioner is an applicant for admission whose detention is governed by § 1225. See ECF No. 11 at 2 ("Petitioner presented himself at a port of entry, was designated at that point as an 'arriving alien' who had 'applied for admission.'"); *id.* at 4. The Court disagrees and is unpersuaded by the case Respondents cite in support of this proposition. See *id.* In that case, the court concluded that a habeas petitioner was detained under § 1225 because he, in the court's eyes, was an applicant for admission. See *Depelian v. Baltazar et al.*, No. 25-cv-03765-SKC-TPO, ECF No. 18 at 8. Therefore, *Depelian's* petitioner was detained under § 1225 and not entitled to a bond hearing. *Id.* at 9. But *Depelian's* analysis of this issue does not demand that the Court reach the same conclusion. Critically, here, as Respondents acknowledge, following his arrival at a port of entry, Petitioner was released on parole. See ECF No. 11 at 2 ("Petitioner was placed into removal proceedings and paroled into the United States."). The "Record of Deportable/Inadmissible Alien" that Petitioner submitted with his petition confirms this: "Subject was processed for an NTA and paroled into the U.S. pending a 240 hearing." ECF No. 1-1 at 11. Other courts considering habeas petitions against substantially similar backgrounds have concluded that paroled petitioners who go on to live in the United States have been released on their own recognizance, and therefore that § 1226, rather than § 1225, applies. See, e.g., *Sidqui v. Almodovar, et al.*, No. 25-CV-9349 (VSB), 2026 WL 251929, at *10 (S.D.N.Y. Jan. 30, 2026) ("Petitioner's release on parole, and not the humanitarian parole in § 1182(d)(5)(A), constitutes strong evidence that he was released under § 1226(a) and not under § 1225(b).") (citation modified)); *Aviles-Mena v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-06783-RFL, 2025 WL 2578215, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 5, 2025) ("Yet, the government also concedes that Aviles-Mena was paroled out of ICE

custody on May 23, 2022. The Court concurs with other courts that have found that section 1225(b)(1) does not authorize designation for expedited removal of any noncitizen who has, at any point in time, been paroled into the United States Thus, under the plain meaning of section 1225(b)(1), Aviles-Mena no longer qualifies for expedited removal because he was ‘paroled’ into the United States and has been living and working in the United States for three years.” (citation modified)); *Coal. for Humane Immigrant Rts. v. Noem*, Case No. 25-cv-872 (JMC), --- F. Supp. 3d ----, 2025 WL 2192986, at *27 (D.D.C. Aug. 1, 2025) (“The Arriving Aliens Provision Does Not Authorize Expedited Removal of Parolees.”); *Ahmadi v. Becerra, et al.*, Case No. 1:25-cv-01044-CDB (HC), 2026 WL 309561, at *10 (E.D. Cal. Feb. 5, 2026) (“8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) attaches as the governing legal scheme. Because Petitioner [was] released on [his] own recognizance after [his] initial detention at the border, [he is] also ineligible for expedited removal proceedings as [he has] been ‘paroled’ within the meaning of section 1225(b)(1).” (citation modified)); *Valencia Zapata v. Kaiser*, 801 F. Supp. 3d 919, 935 n.4 (N.D. Cal. 2025). Simply stated, Depelican did not contend with these cases, and the Court finds their reasoning more persuasive. It adopts that reasoning now, concluding that Petitioner’s detention is improper. See ECF No. 13 at 10. Other courts have concluded that such improper detention amounts to a due process violation—or, at a bare minimum, such detention shows petitioners have shown a likelihood of success on the merits as to such a due process claim. *Ramirez Clavijo v. Kaiser*, No. 25-cv-06248-BLF, 2025 WL 2419263, at *4 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025) (“[B]ecause the Government . . . released Petitioner on her own recognizance Petitioner has a protected liberty interest, and the Due Process Clause protects her from unlawful detention.” (citation modified)); *Castellon*, 2025 WL 2373425, at *9.1 The Court finds their thorough reasoning persuasive, adopts it, and reaches the same conclusion.² See, e.g., *Garcia v. Andrews*, No. 1:25-cv-01006 JLT SAB, 2025 WL 2420068, at *7 (E.D. Cal. Aug. 21, 2025) (collecting cases); *Sidqui*, 2026 WL 251929, at *17; *Ahmadi*, 2026 WL 309561, at *12–13. Therefore, the Court need not address Petitioner’s remaining claims. See generally ECF No. 1; *Sidqui*, 2026 WL 251929, at *17. 1 Petitioner directs the Court to *Buenrostro-Mendez v. Bondi*, No. 25-20496, --- F.4th ----, 2026 WL 323330 (5th Cir. Feb. 6, 2026), contending that it does not control or compel a contrary outcome. See ECF No. 13 at 9. The Court agrees and has previously explained why *Buenrostro-Mendez* is neither controlling nor persuasive. See *Singh v. Baltazar*, No. 1:26-cv-00336-CNS, 2026 WL 352870, at *3–6. At bottom, all statutes “no matter how impenetrable, do—in fact, must—have a single, best meaning.” *Loper Bright Enters. v. Raimondo*, 603 U.S. 369, 400 (2024). And the best meaning of the statutes at issue here—the same numerous courts have interpreted—demonstrate that Petitioner’s detention is improper. 2 The Court’s conclusion is bolstered by the fact that ICE assumed custody over Petitioner following his arrest by Wyoming police for a “minor-traffic related matter.” ECF No. 1 at 4. See also ECF No. 2 at 8. As discussed further below, Respondents do not argue that an arrest for such a traffic incident makes Petitioner a flight risk or danger to the community. The only question that remains is whether to grant Petitioner relief in the form of

immediate release or a bond hearing. See ECF No. 1 at 26. Immediate release is the appropriate remedy. “To be released on conditional parole/ own recognizance, there must be a finding that the immigrant does not pose a risk of flight or danger to the community,” Garcia, 2025 WL 2420068, at *5 (citation modified), and Respondents do not otherwise argue that Petitioner poses such risk or danger, see generally ECF No. 11. See also Castellon, 2025 WL 2373425, at *12 (“[T]he immigrant’s initial release reflected a determination by the government that the noncitizen is not a danger to the community or a flight risk.”); Sidqui, 2026 WL 251929, at *17 (concluding the government’s “inability to point to any evidence of risk of flight or danger [supported] granting” habeas petition as the “most appropriate remedy” and ordering government to “immediately release [the petitioner] from custody” (citation modified)).

II. CONCLUSION

Consistent with the above analysis, Petitioner’s Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, ECF No. 1, is GRANTED and the Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction, ECF No. 2, is DENIED AS MOOT. Pursuant to the Court’s authority under 28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(3), it is FURTHER ORDERED THAT: • Respondents SHALL RELEASE Petitioner from custody immediately, but no later than within 12 hours of this Order, and may not impose any conditions of release or supervision that were not imposed in the original grant of parole; • Respondents SHALL FILE a status report within TWO DAYS of this order to certify compliance; and • Respondents are further ENJOINED AND RESTRAINED from re-arresting or re-detaining in any form Petitioner unless they demonstrate, by clear and convincing evidence at a pre-deprivation bond hearing before a neutral decisionmaker, that Petitioner is a flight risk or danger to the community such that his physical custody is legally justified. At any such bond hearing, the government shall bear the burden of proof. Petitioner shall be allowed to have counsel present at any such hearing. DATED this 12th day of February 2026. BY T Yio NL he Charlot pf SF eeney United States District sudge