

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

Chavez v. Billet

Chavez · No. 1:24-cv-01501-SAB-HC · Decided March 14, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of California recommends dismissing without prejudice a civil detainee’s habeas petition for failure to exhaust state judicial remedies. The court also directs the clerk to randomly assign the action to a district judge and advises the petitioner regarding objections to the recommendation.

OPINION

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 8 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
9 10 JUAN DANIEL CHAVEZ, Case No. 1:24-cv-01501-SAB-HC 11 Petitioner, FINDINGS
AND RECOMMENDATION TO DISMISS PETITION WITHOUT 12 v. PREJUDICE 13
JEFFERY BILLET, ORDER DIRECTING CLERK OF COURT TO RANDOMLY ASSIGN
DISTRICT 14 Respondent. JUDGE 15 16 Petitioner is a civil detainee proceeding pro se with a
petition for writ of habeas corpus 17 challenging his current commitment to the state hospital.

18 On December 2, 2024, Petitioner filed the instant petition in the Sacramento Division of 19 the
United States District Court for the Eastern District of California. (ECF No. 1.) It was 20
transferred to the Fresno Division. (ECF No. 4.)

On December 11, 2024, this Court ordered 21 Petitioner to show cause why the petition should
not be dismissed for failure to exhaust state 22 court remedies. (ECF No. 7.) Although the Court
granted an extension of time, (ECF No. 10), to 23 date, no response has been filed, and the time
for doing so has passed. 24 Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases¹ requires
preliminary review of a 25 habeas petition and allows a district court to dismiss a petition before
the respondent is ordered 26 to file a response, if it “plainly appears from the petition and any
attached exhibits that the 27 1 The Court may apply any or all of these rules to habeas corpus
petitions that are not brought under 28 U.S.C. 1 petitioner is not entitled to relief in the district
court.” Rule 4, Rules Governing Section 2254 2 Cases in the United States District Courts, 28
U.S.C. foll. § 2254.

3 Habeas petitions are subject to an exhaustion requirement—either a judicially-created 4
prudential one under 28 U.S.C. § 2241, *Dominguez v. Kernan*, 906 F.3d 1127, 1135 n.9 (9th Cir. 5
2018), or a statutory one under 28 U.S.C. § 2254(b).

The exhaustion doctrine is based on comity 6 to the state court and gives the state court the initial opportunity to correct the state's alleged 7 constitutional deprivations. *Coleman v. Thompson*, 501 U.S. 722, 731 (1991); *Rose v. Lundy*, 455 U.S. 509, 518 (1982). A petitioner in state custody can satisfy the exhaustion requirement by 9 providing the highest state court with a full and fair opportunity to consider each claim before 10 presenting it to the federal court.

O'Sullivan v. Boerckel, 526 U.S. 838, 845 (1999); *Duncan v. Henry*, 513 U.S. 364, 365 (1995); *Picard v. Connor*, 404 U.S. 270, 276 (1971). "Where a 12 petitioner seeks pre-conviction habeas relief, this exhaustion prerequisite serves two purposes: 13 (1) to avoid isolating state courts from federal constitutional issues by assuring those courts an 14 ample opportunity to consider constitutional claims; and (2) to prevent federal interference with 15 state adjudication, especially state criminal trials." *Carden v. Montana*, 626 F.2d 82, 83 (9th Cir.

16 1980).² 17 Here, the petition states that none of Petitioner's four grounds for relief were presented in 18 appeals. (ECF No. 1 at 6–7.3) Petitioner claims that these grounds were "[r]ecent discoveries," 19 "appeals were for the criminal process," and because he is challenging his "present confinement 20 not supported by a valid warrant," "[a]ppealing [p]rocess that is void from the start appears 21 redundant." (Id. at 7.)

It is possible that Petitioner presented his claims to the California Supreme 22 Court and failed to indicate this to the Court. However, Petitioner has failed to file a response to 23 the order to show cause. As it appears Petitioner has not sought relief in the California Supreme 24 Court, the petition is unexhausted and the Court cannot proceed to the merits of his claims.

28 25 U.S.C. § 2254(b)(1). 26 /// 27 2 It is unclear from the petition whether Petitioner is being detained pending a civil commitment proceeding, or if a commitment order has been issued. 1 Accordingly, the Court HEREBY RECOMMENDS that the petition for writ of habeas 2 | corpus be DISMISSED without prejudice for failure to exhaust state judicial remedies. 3 Further, the Clerk of Court is DIRECTED to randomly assign this action to a District 4 | Judge.

5 This Findings and Recommendation is submitted to the assigned United States District 6 | Court Judge, pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636 (b)(1)(B) and Rule 304 of the Local 7 | Rules of Practice for the United States District Court, Eastern District of California. Within 8 | THIRTY (30) days after service of the Findings and Recommendation, Petitioner may file 9 | written objections with the Court, limited to fifteen (15) pages in length, including any 10 | exhibits.

Such a document should be captioned "Objections to Magistrate Judge's Findings and 11 | Recommendation." The assigned United States District Court Judge will then review the 12 | Magistrate Judge's ruling pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C).

The parties are advised that 13 | failure to file objections within the specified time may waive the right to appeal the District 14 | Court's order. *Wilkerson v. Wheeler*, 772 F.3d 834, 839 (9th Cir.

2014) (citing Baxter _v. 15 | Sullivan, 923 F.2d 1391, 1394 (9th Cir. 1991)). 16 17 IT IS SO
ORDERED. DAM Le 1g | Dated: _ March 14, 2025 STANLEY A. BOONE 19 United States
Magistrate Judge 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28