IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO
District Judge Gordon P. Gallagher

Civil Action No. 26-cv-03106-GPG

MONICA CASALLAS MENDOZA,

Petitioner,

v.

JUAN BALTAZAR, Warden of the Denver Contract Detention Facility, Aurora, Colorado, in his official capacity;
GEORGE VALDEZ, Field Office Director, Denver Field Office, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, in his official capacity;
MARKWAYNE MULLIN, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in his official capacity;
DAVID VENTURELLA, Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, in his official capacity;
TODD BLANCHE, Acting Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, in his official capacity,

Respondents.

ORDER

Before the Court is Petitioner's Verified Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus (D. 1). Petitioner seeks release or, in the alternative, a bond hearing (*id.*). Because the Petitioner's challenge is fundamentally legal in nature, the Court declines to hold a hearing regarding Petitioner's challenge. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2243.

A district court may grant a writ of habeas corpus to any person who demonstrates she is "in custody in violation of the Constitution or laws . . . of the United States." 28 U.S.C. § 2241. The individual in custody bears the burden of proving that their detention is unlawful. *Walker v. Johnston*, 312 U.S. 275, 286 (1941).

Based on the allegations in the Complaint, this case is one of numerous garden-variety cases in this District and across the country seeking habeas relief for immigrants detained within the United States but denied bond hearings under a new interpretation of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1225, 1226.[1] *E.g., Garcia Cortes v. Noem*, No. 1:25-cv-02677-CNS, 2025 WL 2652880 (D. Colo. Sept. 16, 2025); *Batz Barreno v. Baltasar*, No. 025-cv-03017-GPG-TPO, 2025 WL 3190936 (D. Colo. Nov. 14, 2025). The Tenth Circuit has now conclusively resolved the interpretation of this statute in favor of Petitioner. *Santillan Quiroz v. Mullin*, --- F.4th ----, No. 26-6019, 2026 WL 1876709, at *8 (10th Cir. June 30, 2026).

For the foregoing reasons, Petitioner's Petition (D. 1) is GRANTED IN PART, to the extent Petitioner seeks a bond hearing at which Respondents bear the burden of proof of showing Petitioner's continued detention is proper and was proper at the time of Petitioner's arrest. *See Batz Barreno*, 2025 WL 3190936, *3 (holding that the government must prove risk of flight by a preponderance of the evidence and must prove dangerousness to any other person or to the community by clear and convincing evidence). Respondents shall provide Petitioner with a bond hearing under § 1226(a) within SEVEN DAYS of receiving notice of this Order and Respondents have the responsibility to ensure that the government applies those burdens and provides a sufficient record for review. Additionally, Respondents SHALL notify Petitioner and any counsel who has entered an appearance in this action of the date, time, and place of the hearing no less than 24 hours prior to the beginning of the hearing. Respondents are ENJOINED from denying bond to Petitioner on the basis that Petitioner is detained pursuant to § 1225(b)(2)(A). Respondents are

[1] In a slight variation from previous garden variety § 1225 vs. § 1226 cases, Petitioner here was paroled pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5) and was taken into custody after reporting for a routine appointment for her parole (D. 1 at ¶ 1). However, Respondents do not argue this means she is in custody pursuant to § 1225 or oppose her petition (D. 10).

further ORDERED to file a status report within FIVE DAYS of Petitioner's bond hearing, stating whether Petitioner has been granted bond, and, if Petitioner's request for bond was denied, the reasons for that denial. Such status update shall also include as an attachment any warrant justifying Petitioner's detention at the time he was detained.

DATED July 17, 2026.

BY THE COURT:



Gordon P. Gallagher
United States District Judge