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20 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
21 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**
22 **EASTERN DIVISON**

23 IMMIGRANT DEFENDERS LAW
24 CENTER, *et al.*,

25 Plaintiffs,

26 vs.

27 CHAD WOLF, *et al.*,

28 Defendants.

Case No.: 2:20-CV-09893-JGB-SHK

**UNOPPOSED MOTION BY
IMMIGRATION LAW
PROFESSORS FOR LEAVE TO
FILE *AMICI CURIAE* BRIEF
IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS'
MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY
INJUNCTION**

Judge: Honorable Jesus G. Bernal

Date: December 14, 2020

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Crtrm:1

1 Proposed *amici* are professors with expertise in immigration law. They
2 hereby move for leave to file a brief as *amici curiae* in support of Plaintiffs’
3
4 Emergency Motion for a Preliminary Injunction. Plaintiffs and Defendants have
5 consented to this motion (Defendants have provided blanket consent to *amici*
6
7 briefs). A copy of the proposed order granting this motion, along with a copy of
8 the proposed brief, are submitted herewith.

9
10 Proposed *amici* teach both doctrinal and experiential courses in
11 immigration law, have written numerous scholarly articles on immigration law,
12 and understand the practical aspects of immigration law through client
13 representation, particularly asylum law and asylum processing at the border.
14 They have expertise in the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) and the
15 detention scheme it sets forth. They submit this brief to demonstrate that
16 noncitizens placed in the Migrant Protection Protocols (“MPP”) are considered
17 detained under the INA, regulations, and Department of Homeland Security
18 (“DHS”) guidance on MPP, as well as by the Executive Office for Immigration
19 Review (“EOIR”); at a minimum, they should be considered in constructive
20 custody under relevant caselaw.
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25 Showing that noncitizens in MPP are detained both while in Mexico and
26 while in the United States is relevant to this case because DHS has special
27 obligations to protect access to counsel for detained noncitizens. *See Orantes-*
28

1 *Hernandez v. Thornburgh*, 919 F.2d 549, 566 (9th Cir. 1990); *Torres v. United*
2 *States Dep't of Homeland Security*, 411 F.Supp.3d 1036, 1061 (C.D. Cal. 2019);
3 ICE, Performance Based National Detention Standards (2011) at 385 (Standard
4 5.6 on Telephone Access), 398 (Standard 5.7 on Visitation), 421-428 (Standard
5 6.3 on Law Libraries and Legal Materials), 435-440 (Standard 6.4 on Legal
6 Rights Group Presentations).

7
8
9 For the foregoing reasons, proposed *amici* immigration law professors
10 respectfully request that the court grant leave to file an *amici curiae* brief in
11 support of Plaintiffs' Emergency Motion for a Preliminary Injunction.
12

13 DATED: November 20, 2020

14 Respectfully submitted,

15 /s/ Fatma E. Marouf
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Case No.: 2:20-CV-09893-JGB-SHK

**[PROPOSED] ORDER GRANTING
IMMIGRATION LAW
PROFESSORS' UNOPPOSED
MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE
AMICI CURIAE BRIEF**

Judge: Honorable Jesus G. Bernal
Date: December 14, 2020
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Crtrm:1

1 Immigration Law Professors' Unopposed Motion for Leave to File *Amici*
2 *Curiae* Brief in support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction is hereby
3
4 GRANTED.

5 IT IS SO ORDERED.
6
7

8 Dated: _____ 2020 _____
9 The Honorable Jesus G. Bernal
10 United States District Judge
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BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE
IMMIGRATION LAW
PROFESSORS IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

2 **TABLE OF AUTHORITIES** i

3

4 **INTEREST OF *AMICI CURIAE***..... 1

5 **ARGUMENT**..... 1

6

7 **I. INDIVIDUALS SUBJECTED TO MPP ARE DETAINED UNDER**

8 **THE INA AND ITS REGULATIONS**..... 1

9 **A. The Structure of the INA Creates a Comprehensive Detention**

10 **Scheme that Classifies Noncitizens in MPP as Detained During**

11 **Their Entire Removal Proceedings, Without Any Exception**

12 **Based on Location in Mexico**..... 1

13 **B. 8 C.F.R. § 253.3(d) Plainly States that Noncitizens in MPP Are**

14 **“Considered Detained.”** 4

15 **C. DHS Guidance Confirms that Noncitizens in MPP are Considered**

16 **Detained Throughout Their Proceedings**..... 6

17 **D. The Immigration Courts and Board of Immigration Appeals Treat**

18 **Noncitizens in MPP as Detained**..... 8

19 **II. CUSTODY DOES NOT REQUIRE PHYSICAL DETENTION** 9

20 **CONCLUSION** 12

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

CASES

Abu Ali v. Ashcroft,
350 F.Supp.2d 28 (D.D.C. 2004)..... 11

Barry v. Bergen County Probation Department,
128 F.3d 152 (3d Cir. 1997)..... 11

Casas-Castrillon v. Department of Homeland Sec.,
535 F.3d 942 (9th Cir. 2008) 3

Contreras v. Schiltgen,
122 F.3d 30 (9th Cir. 1997)..... 10

Diouf v. Napolitano,
634 F.3d 1081 (9th Cir. 2011) 3

Dow v. Circuit Court of the First Circuit Through Huddy,
995 F.3d 922 (9th Cir. 1993)..... 11

Duncan v. Walker,
533 U.S. 167 (2001)..... 5

Hensley v. Mun. Court, San Jose Milpitas Judicial Dist., Santa Clara Cty., Cal.,
411 U.S. 345 (1973)..... 10

Hillman v. Maretta
133 S. Ct. 1943 (2013) 4

Jennings v. Rodriguez,
138 S.Ct. 830 (2018) 3

Johnson v. Gill,
883 F.3d 756 (9th Cir. 2018)..... 9

Jones v. Cunningham,
371 U.S. 236 (1963)..... 9

1 *Justices of Boston Municipal Ct. v. Lydon,*
 2 466 U.S. 294 (1984)..... 10

3 *K.M.H.C. v. Barr,*
 4 437 F. Supp. 3d 786 (S.D. Cal. 2020)..... 11-12

5 *Miranda v. Reno,*
 6 238 F.3d 1156 (9th Cir. 2001) 12

7 *Orantes-Hernandez v. Thornburgh,*
 8 919 F.2d 549 (9th Cir. 1990) 12-13

9 *Sosa v. Alvarez-Machain,*
 10 542 U.S. 692 (2004) 6

11 *Torres v. United States Dep’t of Homeland Security,*
 12 411 F.Supp.3d 1036 (C.D. Cal. 2019) 13

13 *United States v. Dist. Director of Immigration,*
 14 634 F.2d 964 (5th Cir. 1981) 10

15 *Williams v. Taylor,*
 16 529 U.S. 362 (2000) 5

17 **STATUTES**

18

19 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1) 1, 2

20 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii) 3

21

22 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) passim

23 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) 2, 5, 9, 11

24 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(C) 2, 4, 5

25

26 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a) 3

27 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c) 3

28

1 **OTHER AUTHORITIES**

2

3 CBP, MPP Guiding Principles (January 28, 2019) 9

4 ICE, Performance Based National Detention Standards (2011).....13

5 Memorandum from Nathalie R. Asher to [ICE] Field Office Directors, “Migrant

6 Protection Protocols Guidance,” Feb. 12, 2019 6-8

7 Oxford English Dictionary Online (2020)..... 5

8

9 TRAC, *Details on MPP (Remain in Mexico) Deportation Proceedings* (Sept.

10 2020)..... 7

11 **REGULATIONS**

12 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(a) 6

13

14 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(c) 4

15 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d) 4-6, 9

16

17 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(e) 6

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INTEREST OF AMICI CURIAE

Amici are professors with expertise in immigration law. They teach both doctrinal and experiential courses in immigration law, have written numerous scholarly articles on immigration law, and understand the practical aspects of immigration law through client representation, particularly asylum law and asylum processing at the border. They have expertise in the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) and the detention scheme it sets forth. They submit this brief to demonstrate that noncitizens placed in the Migrant Protection Protocols (“MPP”) are considered detained under the INA, regulations, and Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) guidance on MPP; at a minimum, they should be considered in constructive custody under relevant caselaw.

ARGUMENT

I. INDIVIDUALS SUBJECTED TO MPP ARE DETAINED UNDER THE INA AND ITS REGULATIONS.

A. The Structure of the INA Creates a Comprehensive Detention Scheme that Classifies Noncitizens in MPP as Detained During Their Entire Removal Proceedings, Without Any Exception Based on Location in Mexico.

The INA authorizes detention of noncitizens seeking admission to the United States under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1) and 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2). DHS invokes 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2) as the basis for returning noncitizens to Mexico during their removal proceedings under MPP. This portion of the statute foresees

1 detention throughout removal proceedings, whether or not the noncitizen is
2 returned to Mexico during those proceedings. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2).
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4 Specifically, DHS relies on § 1225(b)(2)(C) as providing legal authority
5 for MPP, which cross-references and expands on the general provision in
6 § 1225(b)(2)(A) by allowing for the return of certain noncitizens arriving by land
7 to a contiguous territory for the pendency of the removal proceedings in
8 immigration court. Under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), requires detention “*for a*
9 *[removal] proceeding*” regardless of whether the noncitizen is returned to a
10 contiguous territory. 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A) (emphasis added). Nothing about
11 the contiguous territory provision at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(C) vitiates that
12 detention lasts throughout the removal proceeding, even if the noncitizen is
13 located in Mexico while the removal proceeding is ongoing.
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18 No other part of the INA’s detention scheme alters this classification of
19 noncitizens in MPP as detained throughout their removal proceedings. The other
20 provision covering arriving noncitizens, at 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), is not
21 applicable or applied to those in MPP. It pertains to those subjected to expedited
22 removal and provides that individuals who pass a credible fear interview “shall
23 be detained for further consideration of the application for asylum.” 8 U.S.C. §
24 1225(b)(1)(B)(ii). As the Supreme Court has explained, “[noncitizens] who are
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1 covered by § 1225(b)(2) are detained pursuant to a different process” than those
2 detained under § 1225(b)(1). *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 138 S.Ct. 830, 837 (2018).
3

4 For noncitizens who have already entered the United States, as opposed to
5 those seeking admission, detention authority during removal proceedings comes
6 from 8 U.S.C. § 1226, rather than 8 U.S.C. § 1225. *Jennings*, 138 S. Ct. at 837.
7

8 With certain exceptions, the Attorney General “may release” a noncitizen
9 detained under § 1226(a) “on bond . . . or conditional parole.” 8 U.S.C. §
10 1226(a); *see also* 8 U.S.C. § 1226(c) (setting forth exceptions based on criminal
11 offenses. Once a noncitizen is subject to a final order of removal, detention
12 authority shifts to § 1231(a)(6). *See Diouf v. Napolitano*, 634 F.3d 1081, 1085
13 (9th Cir. 2011). This statutory detention classification scheme is complex, as it
14 “is not static; rather, the Attorney General’s authority over an alien’s detention
15 shifts as the alien moves through different phases of administrative and judicial
16 review.” *Casas-Castrillon v. Department of Homeland Sec.*, 535 F.3d 942, 945
17 (9th Cir. 2008) (finding that detention authority had shifted from § 1226(c) to §
18 1226(a) during judicial review after the BIA affirmed the order of removal).
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23 When a statute provides such a comprehensive and detailed detention
24 scheme, and noncitizens in MPP clearly fit within the category described in
25 § 1225(b)(2)(C), a court should not second-guess Congress’s unambiguous
26 language that noncitizens in that category are detained throughout their removal
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1 proceedings. There is no exception to detention based on being located in
2 Mexico, and inventing exceptions not set forth by Congress would undermine the
3 statutory scheme. *See Hillman v. Maretta*, 133 S. Ct. 1943, 1953 (2013) (“Where
4 Congress explicitly enumerates certain exceptions to a general prohibition,
5 additional exceptions are not to be implied, in the absence of evidence of a
6 contrary legislative intent.”) (citations omitted). If Congress had wanted to create
7 an exception to detention for individuals returned to contiguous territories under
8 § 1225(b)(2)(C), it could have done so, but it did not.

12 **B. 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d) Plainly States that Noncitizens in MPP Are**
13 **“Considered Detained.”**

14 The regulation implementing the relevant statutory provisions, 8 C.F.R.
15 § 235.3(d), makes even more explicit that individuals in MPP are detained
16 throughout their removal proceedings, even while they are in Mexico. This
17 regulation provides that DHS “will assume custody of any alien subject to
18 detention under paragraph (b) or (c) of this section.” 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d).
19 Paragraph (c), referenced in § 235.3(d), pertains to “arriving aliens placed in
20 proceedings under section 240 of the Act,” which includes those placed in MPP
21 pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), (C). 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(c). The regulation
22 further states that “[i]n its discretion, [DHS] may require any alien who appears
23 inadmissible and who arrives at a land border port-of-entry from Canada or
24 Mexico, to remain in that country while awaiting a removal hearing.” 8 C.F.R.
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1 § 235.3(d). Critically, the regulation continues, “such alien shall be *considered*
2 *detained for a proceeding within the meaning of section 235(b) of the Act.*” 8
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4 C.F.R. § 235.3(d) (emphasis added). The plain text of this regulation states
5 “*considered* detained,” instead of simply “detained,” which indicates that the
6 noncitizen does not need to be in an ICE detention center to be classified as
7 detained under the statute. The ordinary meaning of “considered” in this context
8 would be to *regard* or *deem* those in MPP as detained, even while they are in
9 Mexico. *See* Oxford English Dictionary Online (2020) (defining consider as “to
10 regard in a certain light or aspect; to look upon (as), think (to be), take for”).
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14 The Supreme Court has stressed the importance of “giv[ing] effect, if
15 possible, to every clause and word of a statute.” *Duncan v. Walker*, 533 U.S. 167,
16 174 (2001) (internal quotation omitted) (rejecting an interpretation of a statute
17 “that would render the word ‘State’ insignificant, if not wholly superfluous”); *see*
18 *also Williams v. Taylor*, 529 U.S. 362, 404 (2000) (describing this rule against
19 surplusage as a “cardinal principle of statutory construction”). The same
20 interpretive rule should be applied to a regulation. Here, requiring detention in an
21 ICE detention center to establish that detention is taking place would render the
22 word “considered” wholly superfluous.
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26 Similarly, several other parts of 8 C.F.R. § 235.3 use the word “detained”
27 to reference detention specifically in a facility or vessel, but that language is not
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1 used at 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d), making clear that individuals in MPP are considered
2 detained under 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d) even where they are not in a detention center.
3
4 *See, e.g.*, 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(a) (“shall be detained aboard the vessel”); 8 C.F.R. §
5 235.3(e) (“detained at a facility”). Under the interpretive rule of meaningful
6 variation, “considered detained” should be interpreted differently than “detained
7 at a facility” or “detained aboard the vessel.” *See Sosa v. Alvarez-Machain*, 542
8 U.S. 692, 711 n. 9 (2004) (applying “the usual rule that ‘when the legislature
9 uses certain language in one part of the statute and different language in another,
10 the court assumes different meanings were intended’”) (citing 2A N. Singer,
11 Statutes and Statutory Construction § 46:06, p. 194 (6th rev.ed.2000)).
12
13 Accordingly, under the government’s scheme, a noncitizen placed in MPP is
14 initially detained under § 1225(b)(2) and should still be “considered detained”
15 pursuant to that provision when returned to Mexico even though the noncitizen is
16 not incarcerated in a traditional immigration detention center.
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21 **C. DHS Guidance Confirms that Noncitizens in MPP are**
22 **Considered Detained Throughout Their Proceedings.**

23 DHS’s guidance confirms that noncitizens in MPP are considered detained
24 throughout their removal proceedings, including when they are in Mexico, as
25 well as when they present themselves at the port of entry for a hearing. *See*
26 Memorandum from Nathalie R. Asher to [ICE] Field Office Directors, “Migrant
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1 Protection Protocols Guidance,” Feb. 12, 2019, at 2, *available at*
2 <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20sheet/2019/ERO->
3 [MPP-Implementation-Memo.pdf](https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Fact%20sheet/2019/ERO-MPP-Implementation-Memo.pdf) (“Asher Memorandum”). The memo provides
4 that noncitizens in MPP appearing for their hearings are “paroled into the United
5 States by CBP” and then “detained in ICE custody.” *Id.* at 2. This parole is
6 pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 212(d)(5) and enables the noncitizen to physically enter
7 the United States while, as a practical matter, remaining in detention throughout.
8 The detention authority, under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), simply transfers from
9 one entity to another. CBP controls detention in Mexico and upon arrival at a
10 port of entry, while ICE controls detention during the time that an asylum seeker
11 in MPP is in the United States for a hearing. *Id.* CBP’s “MPP Guiding
12 Principles” confirm that “[Ports of Entry] will coordinate with ICE ERO to
13 establish transfer of custody and expeditious transportation from the POE and
14 court location, as well as the handling of the alien during all court proceedings.”
15 *See* CBP, MPP Guiding Principles (January 28, 2019), *available at*
16 <https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2019->
17 [Jan/MPP%20Guiding%20Principles%201-28-19.pdf](https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2019-Jan/MPP%20Guiding%20Principles%201-28-19.pdf).

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25 Once the noncitizen has been paroled into the United States, ICE is
26 “responsible for maintaining custody of the alien” during transportation to and
27 from the hearing, as well as during the hearing itself. Asher Memorandum at 3

1 After the hearing, if the proceedings are not concluded, CBP officers again “take
2 custody of the alien to return the alien to Mexico to await further proceedings.”

3
4 *Id.* at 2. This means that the noncitizen is once again “considered detained” by
5 CBP in Mexico under § 1225(b)(2)(A) and the regulations. If someone in MPP is
6 granted relief by the immigration court, the memo instructs ICE’s record to state
7
8 ““MPP, Granted Relief, *Released from Custody.*”” *Id.* at 4 (emphasis added).

9
10 **D. The Immigration Courts and Board of Immigration Appeals
11 Treat Noncitizens in MPP as Detained.**

12 The Executive Office for Immigration Review (“EOIR”) also treats
13 individuals in MPP as detained. Until they were suspended altogether, hearings
14 in immigration courts in MPP cases were expedited as detained cases. The
15 Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (“TRAC”), an organization based
16 at Syracuse University that obtains immigration data from EOIR through FOIA
17 requests, confirms that the custody status for MPP cases is “detained.” *See*
18
19 *TRAC, Details on MPP (Remain in Mexico) Deportation Proceedings* (Sept.
20 2020), available at <https://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/mpp/> (sorting by
21
22 “custody” shows 60,842 MPP cases in immigration courts listed as “detained”).
23
24 The BIA likewise recognizes individuals in MPP as detained, even when they are
25 in Mexico, by placing their appeals on the detained docket and requiring
26 simultaneous briefing.
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1 **II. CUSTODY DOES NOT REQUIRE PHYSICAL DETENTION.**

2 Because the plain language of 8 C.F.R. § 235.3(d) states that individuals
3 subjected to MPP “shall be considered detained,” the Court need look no further
4 to decide that they are in custody. However, an examination of the concept of
5 constructive custody further supports this conclusion. “Constructive custody” is
6 defined as “custody of a person . . . whose freedom is controlled by a legal
7 authority but who is not under direct physical control.” *Johnson v. Gill*, 883
8 F.3d 756, 761 (9th Cir. 2018) (quoting *Black’s Law Dictionary’s* definition of
9 “constructive custody”). For purposes of habeas jurisdiction, an individual is “in
10 custody” if there are significant restraints on his or her personal liberty that are
11 “not shared by the public generally.” *Jones v. Cunningham*, 371 U.S. 236, 237-
12 239 (1963) (holding that a parolee was in custody). Although the present case is
13 not a petition for writ of habeas corpus, the jurisprudence in this area is
14 informative for the Court’s analysis of constructive custody, as it makes clear
15 that a person can be considered to be in custody even if they are not in
16 conventional incarceration (in a detention facility).

17 Just as the parolee in *Jones* was found to be in custody because of his
18 reporting requirements, individuals in MPP must comply with what Plaintiffs call
19 DHS’s “Presentation Requirement” by appearing repeatedly at a specified port of
20 entry at a specified time for hearings and other proceedings. This “Presentation
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1 Requirement” effectively restrains their mobility in Mexico and creates the
2 constructive custody that is considered detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A)
3 and 8 C.F.R. § 253.3(d). The limited amount of freedom of movement in Mexico
4 does not undercut the constructive custody created by the Presentation
5 Requirement. *Cf. Contreras v. Schiltgen*, 122 F.3d 30 (9th Cir. 1997) (noncitizen
6 released on bond was still in “constructive custody”); *Justices of Boston*
7 *Municipal Ct. v. Lydon*, 466 U.S. 294, 300-01 (1984) (petitioner in custody
8 where he was required to appear for trial and “at any subsequent time to which
9 the case may be continued”); *United States v. Dist. Director of Immigration*, 634
10 F.2d 964, 971 (5th Cir. 1981) (noncitizen on supervised parole who had to report
11 periodically to immigration authorities was in custody); *Hensley v. Mun. Court,*
12 *San Jose Milpitas Judicial Dist., Santa Clara Cty., Cal.*, 411 U.S. 345, 348
13 (1973) (petitioner released on his own recognizance was in custody where he was
14 required to appear “at all times and places as ordered”).

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21 Even if one were to consider only the time periods where the noncitizen is
22 at the port of entry waiting to be paroled in, and then physically under ICE’s
23 control for transportation to and from each hearing and during the hearing, that
24 would be sufficient to establish custody throughout the entire removal
25 proceeding. The Ninth Circuit has held that a sentence requiring a habeas
26 petitioner to attend just *fourteen hours of alcohol rehabilitation classes* over a
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28

1 period of several days amounted to custody because it required his “physical
2 presence at a particular place” and “significantly restrain[ed] [his] liberty.” *Dow*
3 *v. Circuit Court of the First Circuit Through Huddy*, 995 F.3d 922, 923 (9th Cir.
4 1993) (per curiam); *see also Barry v. Bergen County Probation Department*, 128
5 F.3d 152, 161 (3d Cir. 1997) (finding that a sentence of community service that
6 required being “in a certain place—or in one of several places—to attend
7 meetings or to perform services” amounted to custody). MPP imposes at least as
8 much restraint on liberty as fourteen hours of classes or community service.
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12 Being located outside the geographical United States does not undercut
13 this custody analysis. Courts have refused to “carve out an exception” to custody
14 “where the physical custodian is a foreign body,” or where “the executive is
15 allegedly working through the intermediary of a foreign ally.” *Abu Ali v.*
16 *Ashcroft*, 350 F.Supp.2d 28, 49 (D.D.C. 2004) (holding that an individual was in
17 the constructive custody of the United States where he was detained in a prison
18 in Saudi Arabia “at the behest and ongoing supervision of the United States”).
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22 In *K.M.H.C. v. Barr*, the Southern District of California erred in finding
23 that a petitioner subjected to MPP awaiting an immigration court hearing was not
24 in custody. 437 F.Supp.3d 786, 791-92 (S.D. Cal. 2020). There, the court
25 reasoned that the petitioner was “at liberty to determine where to reside outside
26 of the U.S., where to travel outside of the U.S., and whether to appear at the
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1 designated port of entry for her immigration court hearing.” *K.M.H.C.*, 437
2 F.Supp.3d at 791. The court erred by failing to consider the individual’s
3 detention classification under the INA, as discussed in Part I above. The court
4 erroneously relied on Ninth Circuit precedent holding that individuals who have
5 *already been removed* to their home countries are no longer subject to any
6 control by U.S. authorities for purposes of a habeas petition. *Miranda v. Reno*,
7 238 F.3d 1156, 1159 (9th Cir. 2001). The INA’s detention classification scheme
8 clearly differentiates between someone who is already removed (and therefore is
9 excluded from the detention scheme) and someone who is being detained during
10 removal proceedings pursuant to 1225(b)(2)(A), which is the case for people in
11 MPP. Additionally, asylum seekers subject to MPP are far from living freely in
12 their home countries or any other country. They are trapped in Mexico near the
13 U.S. border awaiting further proceedings in their removal cases and must comply
14 with numerous restrictions on their liberty, as described above.
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21 CONCLUSION

22 Based on the foregoing, *amici* urge the Court to consider individuals in
23 MPP in custody throughout their removal proceedings, both in Mexico and in the
24 United States. One critical implication of being in custody is that DHS has
25 special obligations to protect access to counsel for noncitizens in MPP regardless
26 of location. *See Orantes-Hernandez v. Thornburgh*, 919 F.2d 549, 566 (9th Cir.
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1 1990) (affirming the district court’s finding that immigration authorities have an
2 obligation to provide detained noncitizens with legal assistance, including access
3 to counsel); *Torres v. United States Dep’t of Homeland Security*, 411 F.Supp.3d
4 1036, 1061 (C.D. Cal. 2019) (recognizing that if access to counsel for detained
5 noncitizens is not protected, other “statutory rights would never be realized”).¹
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¹ See also ICE, Performance Based National Detention Standards (2011) at 385 (Standard 5.6 on Telephone Access), 398 (Standard 5.7 on Visitation), 421-428 (Standard 6.3 on Law Libraries and Legal Materials), 435-440 (Standard 6.4 on Legal Rights Group Presentations).

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