February 17, 2026

CONTACT:
Mike Truppa
(312) 286-5077 (voice/text)
mtruppa@miketruppa.com

JUDGE DENIES REQUEST TO RELEASE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED PENNSYLVANIA MAN FROM ICE DETENTION

ATTORNEYS FOR SUBU VEDAM WILL APPEAL DECISION

Subramanyam "Subu" Vedam, a Pennsylvania man who spent 44 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit – only to be seized and detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as he was on the cusp of freedom – will remain in a federal detention facility after an U.S. immigration judge Tuesday rejected his request for release.

U.S. Immigration Judge Tamar Wilson declined to grant Vedam a bond request less than two weeks after a federal appeals judge characterized Vedam's history as an "exceptional situation" that warranted re-opening his immigration case so he could contest a deportation order that was instituted decades before he was exonerated of a wrongful murder conviction.

Vedam's attorneys plan to appeal Judge Wilson's decision to the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) later Tuesday.

"We're disappointed that the judge denied Subu's request for release from ICE lock-up after he has already served 43 years in a maximum-security prison for a crime he didn't commit," said Saraswathi Vedam, Subu Vedam's sister. "The recent Board of Appeals ruling in Subu's case nullified the deportation order pending against him, which means the government has not proven valid grounds to remove him from the country. Under these circumstances, and coupled with the fact that Subu compiled an exemplary record of good conduct during more than four decades of wrongful imprisonment, we had hoped the court would agree that Subu did not need to remain in ICE detention while waiting for an immigration hearing.

"Subu is nothing if not resilient, and we're resolved to emulate the example he sets for us by focusing on the next step in his fight for freedom. We continue to believe his immigration case is strong and look forward to the day we can be together again."

Vedam, a 64-year-old resident of State College, PA who was wrongfully convicted of murder in 1983; exonerated last October; and then seized by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

as he was on the brink of his release from prison. ICE subsequently sent Vedam to a detention facility in Philipsburg, PA where he is currently confined.

In its opinion explaining why the BIA determined the case should be re-opened, BIA Temporary Appellate Immigration Judge Paul A. McCloskey wrote, “Given the facts and circumstances in this particular case, we conclude that the record before us presents an exceptional situation.”

The board’s ruling follows the collapse of the wrongful murder case against Vedam after documents surfaced showing that the prosecutor who tried to scapegoat him for the 1980 death of a Pennsylvania resident had unlawfully concealed evidence that could have proved he was innocent. In the wake of that discovery, a Pennsylvania court voided Vedam’s wrongful conviction last August, prompting local prosecutors to officially withdraw charges against him on October 2nd.

But before Vedam could physically cross the threshold into freedom for the first time in more than four decades, ICE agents took him into custody under a deportation order that had been entered against him more than 25 years before he was exonerated.

In contesting the antiquated deportation order, Vedam's attorneys argued that his vindication in the murder case, combined with his sterling record of conduct during more than four decades of wrongful imprisonment, should entitle him to a new hearing where he can seek relief.