NOT FOR PUBLICATION

FILED

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U.S. COURT OF APPEALS

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

LUIS ARMANDO SAINZ-ARAGON, Petitioner, v. TODD BLANCHE, Acting Attorney General, Respondent.	No. 20-73508 Agency No. A208-055-658 MEMORANDUM*

On Petition for Review of an Order of the
Board of Immigration Appeals

Submitted October 27, 2026**
Phoenix, Arizona

Before: GRABER, HURWITZ, and BADE, Circuit Judges.

Petitioner Luis Armando Sainz-Aragon, a native and citizen of Mexico, timely seeks review of the Board of Immigration Appeals' ("BIA") denial of his applications for cancellation of removal, withholding of removal, and protection under the Convention Against Torture ("CAT"). We have jurisdiction under 8

* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by Ninth Circuit Rule 36-3.

** The panel unanimously concludes this case is suitable for decision without oral argument. See Fed. R. App. P. 34(a)(2).

U.S.C. § 1252(a), and we review for substantial evidence the BIA's ruling that Petitioner failed to establish eligibility for those forms of relief. See Gonzalez-Juarez v. Bondi, 137 F.4th 996, 1003 (9th Cir. 2025) (the hardship standard for cancellation of removal); Duran-Rodriguez v. Barr, 918 F.3d 1025, 1028 (9th Cir. 2019) (the standards for withholding of removal and CAT protection). The agency's determinations are "conclusive unless any reasonable adjudicator would be compelled to conclude to the contrary." 8 U.S.C. § 1252(b)(4)(B). We deny the petition.

1. The agency permissibly denied cancellation of removal on the ground that Petitioner's removal would not cause "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship," 8 U.S.C. § 1229(b)(1)(D), to his children who were qualifying relatives. Despite the financial and emotional effects of removal described in the record and acknowledged by the BIA in its decision, we are not compelled to reach the contrary conclusion. See Gonzalez-Juarez, 137 F.4th at 1007 ("[T]he hardship determination requires hardship that deviates, in the extreme, from the hardship that ordinarily occurs in removal cases").

Nor did the BIA legally err by disregarding evidence pertinent to the hardship determination. The BIA specifically noted, for example, that Petitioner's youngest child "has asthma and uses an inhaler and a nebulizer as needed" and that the older qualifying child has a history of medical issues and received special-

education services. We reject, as unsupported by the record, Petitioner's argument that the BIA failed to account for that evidence when assessing hardship.

2. Next, the agency permissibly denied withholding of removal on the ground that Petitioner failed to show a nexus between the harm that he fears and the alleged protected ground, a particular social group described as his familial relationship to his ex-girlfriend. See Rodriguez-Zuniga v. Garland, 69 F.4th 1012, 1018 (9th Cir. 2023) (holding that an applicant must demonstrate a nexus between past or feared harm and a protected ground). The agency permissibly concluded that any past harm suffered by Petitioner, and his fear of future harm, were "because of a personal dispute, unrelated to a protected ground." See Pagayon v. Holder, 675 F.3d 1182, 1191 (9th Cir. 2011) (per curiam) (holding that a personal dispute, standing alone, is not persecution on account of a protected ground). The record does not compel a contrary conclusion.

3. Finally, the agency permissibly denied CAT protection on the ground that Petitioner failed to show that he more likely than not would be tortured by, or with the consent or acquiescence of, the Mexican government. See Xochihua-Jaimes v. Barr, 962 F.3d 1175, 1183 (9th Cir. 2020) (stating that, to be eligible for CAT relief, an applicant must show that torture would occur with the consent or acquiescence of a public official). The record does not compel the conclusion that Petitioner more likely than not will be tortured with the consent or acquiescence of

governmental officials. Petitioner's past attacker has died; when Petitioner was brought before a judge after having been arrested and imprisoned, the judge released him because he was not guilty of any crime; and the government has prosecuted police officers for acts of torture, which are illegal in Mexico.

PETITION DENIED.