



Testimony  
of

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before the

U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security

on

*“Oversight Hearing – U.S. Customs and Border Protection”*

May 15, 2025  
Washington, DC

## Introduction

Chairman Amodei, Ranking Member Underwood, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to proudly discuss U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) operational priorities and highlight recent accomplishments. As the nation's unified border security agency, CBP's critical mission is clear—protect the American people by securing our borders from threats, enforcing our immigration and trade laws, and facilitating lawful trade and travel.

Through a series of Executive Actions, President Trump has taken aim at strengthening U.S. border security and ensuring fair and competitive trade for American manufacturing and businesses. On January 20, 2025, President Trump declared a national emergency at the southern border.<sup>1</sup> This proclamation and subsequent Executive Orders direct departments and agencies to deploy all lawful means to secure the nation's borders and prevent illegal immigration into the United States.

Executive Orders 14159 and 14165, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion and Securing Our Borders*, direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its components to strengthen border security by implementing all measures to prevent illegal immigration, human trafficking, and drug smuggling to safeguard the American people. These orders direct the Secretary to expand the use of expedited removal and direct investments in infrastructure, technology, equipment, and CBP law enforcement positions. Furthermore, on April 2, 2025, the President proclaimed a *National Emergency to Increase our Competitive Edge, Protect our Sovereignty, and Strengthen our National and Economic Security* directing the implementation of baseline and reciprocal tariffs on foreign trading partners.

In the past four months, CBP has steadfastly implemented the President's actions<sup>2</sup> and has made significant strides across every area of our operations. I am proud to share with you just some of our recent accomplishments, including that border encounters have reached the lowest levels ever recorded, as we remain unwavering in our mission to prioritize American safety, secure the border, and enforce consequences for those who violate U.S. law.

## Securing our Borders and Enforcing Immigration Laws

Border security is national security and remains a primary focus area for the Administration and DHS. With the termination of the CBP One app's scheduling function on January 20, 2025, CBP's Office of Field Operations began redirecting resources at our ports of entry away from processing illegal aliens for release into the country to critical border security operations. Starting January 21, 2025, immigration processing actions at ports of entry decreased by 99 percent<sup>3</sup> compared to the same time frame in 2024. Office of Field Operations saw a 93 percent decrease in inadmissibility encounters at Southwest Border ports of entry, including a 94 percent decrease in unaccompanied alien children.

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential Proclamation 10886

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions>

<sup>3</sup> As of April 15, 2025.

Between the ports of entry, the U.S. Border Patrol and Air and Marine Operations continue to experience a dramatic and historic decline in illegal border crossings. Border Patrol encountered 8,193 illegal aliens in March 2025, representing a 73 percent decrease from 30,127 encounters in January 2025 and a 94 percent decrease from the 139,124 encounters in March 2024.<sup>4</sup> This administration has ended catch-and-release and these illegal aliens are either quickly returned or detained. Border Patrol encountered 646 unaccompanied alien children in March 2025, a 92 percent decrease from 7,951 encountered in March 2024. We have also experienced a 95 percent decrease in the number of estimated gotaways.<sup>5</sup> This unprecedented reduction in illegal crossings is a result of Executive Orders, increased enforcement efforts by Border Patrol agents as well as the increased patrols, infrastructure, personnel, and technology support provided by the Department of Defense (DoD). As a result of these decreases, CBP was able to transfer one and demobilize six temporary soft-sided facilities on the Southwest border, saving CBP approximately \$84 million per month. Additionally, traditional migrant corridors are seeing historically low numbers. For example, the number of migrants passing through the Darién Gap in Panama decreased 99.5 percent from 36,841 in March 2024 to 194 in March of 2025.

In line with the President's priorities, between January 20 and April 29, 2025, Air and Marine Operations conducted 11,800 land patrol hours with Border Patrol and 1,400 immigration enforcement-related flight hours with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Marshals Service – a 32 percent increase from the same period last year. Joint operations with ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations include 240 flight hours supporting alien transportation and removal missions for more than 820 aliens. Air and Marine Operations has also shifted maritime patrol aircraft from foreign deployments to domestic coastline operations. This realignment, along with an increase in maritime patrol hours,<sup>6</sup> has boosted Air and Marine Operations' overall aviation maritime operations by 9 percent leading to increased apprehensions, such as a 71 percent increase in maritime apprehensions in Southern California. Since January 20, 2025, Air and Marine Operations' efforts have contributed to a 25 percent increase in criminal arrests and the seizure of more than 400 pounds of fentanyl, a 52 percent increase from the same period last year.

CBP has also stepped up its efforts to interdict narcotics at the border. For about six weeks starting in January 2025, CBP participated in joint enforcement operations in Arizona, California, and the Pacific Northwest alongside its federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and international partners.<sup>7</sup> During these operations, CBP and its partners seized more than 13,348 pounds of illegal drugs, \$1.97 million in illicit U.S. currency, and 180 weapons, and arrested 317 individuals affiliated with transnational criminal organizations. It's clear that the increased frontline security presence by CBP and DoD, and increased enforcement by our Mexican and Canadian counterparts, in the past four months has deterred and disrupted transnational criminal organization activity. However, the amount of illegal drugs approaching our border is still alarmingly high.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/nationwide-encounters>

<sup>5</sup> A gotaway is an illegal entry that was detected and that all efforts to continue tracking the entry have stopped.

<sup>6</sup> AMO logged 19,800 maritime patrol hours between January 20 and April 29, 2025, a 7 percent increase compared to the same period in 2024.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-releases-february-2025-monthly-update>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/drug-seizure-statistics>

Complementing these enforcement activities, and as a key element of the President’s EOs related to achieving operational control of the Southwest Border, CBP is taking immediate steps to plan and construct border barriers in areas where there are gaps in infrastructure and/or areas of high activity. CBP awarded a contract on March 15, 2025, for the construction of approximately seven miles of new border wall in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Sector.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the Administration has requested billions of dollars through reconciliation to address border barrier system priorities along the Southwest Border, which include new primary and secondary border wall systems, waterborne barrier systems, and barrier attributes where wall is currently installed but barrier attributes – such as lighting, roads, and technology – are needed to complete the barrier system. More than 85 miles of new border barrier system is already in various stages of planning and construction, to include 17 miles of waterborne barrier. In addition, CBP is working with DoD and the Texas National Guard to deploy temporary barriers such as concertina and other razor wire, chain link fencing, and Normandy-style barriers.

## **Securing and Facilitating Trade and Travel**

At our nation’s 328 land, air, and sea POEs and our 10 Centers of Excellence and Expertise, as well as our preclearance and pre-inspection locations around the world, CBP prevents dangerous people and contraband from entering the United States, while facilitating the lawful flow of international trade and travel. Our operations incorporate a combination of personnel, technology, intelligence, information, targeting, and international cooperation.

CBP’s trade enforcement and facilitation roles are critical to our nation’s economic security. We continue to implement an approach that ensures a fair and competitive trade environment, where the benefits of trade compliance exceed the costly consequences of violating U.S. trade law. CBP was ready to immediately enforce new tariffs, including President Trump’s April 2, 2025, national emergency proclamation regarding fair trade,<sup>10</sup> with every tool at our disposal, including updating the Automated Commercial Environment, performing targeted inspections, reviewing tariff filings, and providing clear field guidance to frontline officers and revenue specialists. Since January 20, 2025, CBP has successfully implemented 21 tariff-related presidential actions<sup>11</sup> collecting more than \$32 billion in tariff-related revenue. In Antidumping and Countervailing Duties (AD/CVD) revenue collection, CBP secured \$7.6 billion in additional revenue as a result of targeted reviews of shipments that were detected as discrepant for Antidumping and Countervailing Duties payment. CBP also secured \$5.5 million in additional revenue as a result of targeted reviews of 601 shipments for undervaluation, misclassification, and other indicators of duty evasion.

With the strong support of this Subcommittee, CBP ensures that Automated Commercial Environment – the system through which all U.S. import and export data are reported – remains highly reliable and available. Like any complex system, updates and enhancements are needed to improve efficiency and prevent interruptions, and we look forward to working with Congress to ensure Automated Commercial Environment is appropriately funded. Utilizing the funds

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-awards-first-border-wall-contract-president-trumps-second-term>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/04/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-declares-national-emergency-to-increase-our-competitive-edge-protect-our-sovereignty-and-strengthen-our-national-and-economic-security/>

<sup>11</sup> As of April 25, 2025.

provided by Congress for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025, CBP has been able to allocate \$189 million for Automated Commercial Environment modernization and updates.

In addition to tariff implementation, CBP continues to enforce all U.S. trade laws, including those that protect consumers and aim to eradicate forced labor from supply chains. For example, in March, CBP stopped 435 shipments valued at more than \$2.8 million for further examination of suspected forced labor violations. Shipments suspected of forced labor may be subject to a Withhold Release Order, Forced Labor Finding, or the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act's rebuttable presumption, and are prohibited from importation in the United States under 19 U.S.C. § 1307. CBP also seizes millions of counterfeit and potentially dangerous products every year. In February alone, CBP seized 1,815 shipments that contained counterfeit goods valued at more than \$525 million had they been genuine.

## **Conclusion**

Although this Administration has managed – in just a matter of weeks – to reduce illegal immigration to historic lows, the more than 60,000 men and women of CBP continue to do difficult work in a complex and dynamic operational environment. With your support, CBP will remain resilient and responsive to any new threats or challenges. We will continue to prioritize investments that strengthen border security and facilitate lawful travel and trade, while enforcing the immigration laws, degrading the threat of transnational criminal organizations and terrorists, and protecting American businesses and workers from unfair foreign competition.

I look forward to your questions.