

HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS MEMBER DAY REMARKS
Rep. Wasserman Schultz | Thursday, March 26, 2026 (5 min)

Thank you, Chairman Amodei and Ranking Member Cuellar.

It goes without saying that finding a path forward for DHS that also meets our security needs without sacrificing our values and ideals is one of the greatest challenges we face.

I know we have many disagreements about how the Trump Administration approaches immigration enforcement, and the way the Department was run over the last year.

And I'll continue to fight for a better way: by putting badly needed, common-sense reforms into law, to ensure ICE respects our constitutional rights and makes us feel safer, not more afraid.

But I want to talk about areas of bipartisan agreement in this bill where I hope we can find a path forward.

<<Nonprofit Security>>

First, the explosive rise in antisemitism over the last few years poses a grave and growing threat to the promise of religious freedom in America.

We saw 55% of Jewish Americans in a recent survey say they experienced antisemitism in 2024 and 2025.

According to the FBI, Jews were victims of two-thirds of religion-based hate crimes in 2024, and 15% of all hate crimes were directed against Jews—despite being just two percent of the population.

We need to fully fund the nonprofit security grant program and quickly deliver funding to congregations in need.

Just two weeks ago, a terrorist armed with explosives drove into one of the nation's largest synagogues while more than 100 preschoolers were in the building.

Thanks to resources from the Nonprofit Security Grant program, the synagogue's security officers, teachers, and staff were able to save the lives of those children.

But we must recognize the disturbing facts:

While attacks against the Jewish community rise, the majority of Nonprofit Security grant applicants come away empty handed due to limited funding.

Many grant recipients who were already approved are facing years-long waits for funding.

And there's a confusing application process, with new, politicized rules that have nothing to do with safety.

Jewish Americans already spend more than a billion dollars each year for security to gather and pray safely.

And the extra funding for Nonprofit Security from President Biden's supplemental bill is running out.

I, and many other Members, have requested a significant increase in funding for Nonprofit Security to meet this moment, as well as report language detailing steps to streamline the application process across states.

<<TPS>>

Another issue I want to see addressed in the bill is Temporary Protected Status. Last year, I was grateful for the Chairman's partnership in including bipartisan language directing the Trump Administration to reconsider their decision to rip lawful status from TPS recipients.

TPS holders pass repeated criminal background checks, pay fees, earn work permits, and receive zero government welfare. It does nobody any good to take law-abiding people out of the workforce, especially for sectors where prices are way too high, like housing, groceries, childcare and elder care.

So, I've requested new language to expand on our bipartisan effort from last year.

It would direct the Secretary to review the termination of TPS for Venezuelans *and* Haitians, and require reporting on the potential economic and fiscal consequences of these decisions.

Haiti is in complete collapse. Gangs control 90% of the capital, millions are internally displaced, and a majority of the population is in emergency need of food and medicine.

The U.S. is actively supporting a UN-backed peacekeeping force in Haiti. It's hard to argue that Haiti is dangerous enough to send in a multinational fighting force, but safe enough to send back your dad's Haitian home care provider or your retail store's Haitian employees.

This is especially true for TPS holders, who are already vetted for any criminal history and earned work permits.

Many have U.S. citizen children, who would be separated from their parents, or else sent into a failed state where kidnappings for ransom are a primary source of gang revenue.

And all of this would harm our economy and national debt.

Between Venezuelans and Haitians, this would pull nearly one million people out of the workforce.

Florida's economy would shrink by nearly nine billion dollars, and payroll tax revenue for Social Security and Medicare would drop by seven billion per year.

This would have disastrous fiscal impacts, not to mention the enormous financial and moral cost of deporting all these people back to chaos.

<<ICE Detention Oversight>>

My final bipartisan priority is to protect our rights as Members of Congress to conduct oversight at immigrant detention facilities.

I proudly fought to get this provision enacted into law, because no matter who's in charge of the executive branch, we have a responsibility to uphold human rights and treat people in federal custody with dignity.

It's especially crucial now. The detained population has multiplied, yet more than seventy percent of those jailed have no criminal convictions, and more than 40 people have died in ICE custody over the last year.

Medical neglect and abuse are rampant, and people are regularly denied access to their lawyers or families.

Facilities like the Everglades detention center, clearly fail to meet basic humane standards and attempt to evade oversight by shifting the responsibility—and the cost—to Floridians.

I visited this internment facility and saw it firsthand. I hope the Chairman will conduct oversight there too, and I hope you will continue bipartisan support for Member access to detention sites.

I appreciate your consideration of these requests and I yield back.