

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO STRENGTHEN IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY, INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY, AND GOVERNMENT INNOVATION
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO STRENGTHEN IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY,
AND GOVERNMENT INNOVATION
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room 2128, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Nancy Mace [Chairwoman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Presents: Representatives Mace, Boebert, Burlison, Crane, McGuire, Brown, Khanna, Subramanyam, and Ansari.

Ms. MACE. Good morning. The Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation will now come to order, and welcome everyone who is here today.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I will now recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Good morning to everyone who is here today, to our witnesses, to our guests who are here as well, important conversation about leveraging technology to strengthen immigration enforcement. It was last year when I was in the Oversight Committee, and I exposed a sanctuary sheriff in the state of South Carolina, Charleston County, South Carolina. Her name was Kristin Graziano, and I learned that she was not working with ICE at the time, and she was letting illegal immigrants who were here in our country illegally—criminals because they break the law when they come into our country as soon as they cross that border illegally, it is a crime—but she was allowing rapists, pedophiles, molesters, murderers out onto the streets of South Carolina, in my district, in my state, doing harm to women and girls.

And so, having this conversation today is more important than ever because we have to stop this. And I will say this, that illegal border crossings are down significantly now that Donald Trump is President. I believe the last stat I read was that they were down 90 percent. But anyway, when I was exposing what my sanctuary sheriff was doing last year, my Lieutenant Governor, Pam Evette, stood silent. My Attorney General, Alan Wilson, stood silent. I was literally one of the only people in South Carolina willing to stick my neck out, put my career on the line, my reputation on the line, to make sure this kind of thing stopped.

And so, today we are going to have this hearing about using technology to minimize illegal immigration, to strengthen immigration enforcement. First of all, it is well documented the Biden Administration used technology to facilitate the invasion of our Nation by millions of illegal aliens, the CBP One app being just one example of this. Today's hearing will explore how technology can help strengthen the enforcement of our Nation's immigration laws. Cutting edge technology enhances immigration enforcement and reduces risks for immigration enforcement officials. From facial recognition software to data analytics powered by artificial intelligence to GPS monitoring, advanced technologies empower U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, to track, apprehend, and deport illegal aliens in our country.

And we know right now, under the leadership of Donald Trump and the leadership of Tom Homan, that we are trying to deport those who are here illegally as fast as we can. And I believe we do not have enough ICE agents right now to do that. We have got to make sure that ICE and Homeland Security have all the resources they need to do it as quickly as possible.

Tracking illegal aliens and identifying threats to the homeland allows ICE to more effectively enforce our Nation's immigration laws and remove those who are unlawfully present in the United States. Former President Biden and his Secretary of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas, willfully and intentionally unleashed an invasion—an invasion—of illegal aliens into the U.S. from around the world. We had more people crossing illegally into our country that were on the Terrorist Watch List than ever in the history of the United States over the last 4 years. Illegal aliens shepherded into the country by the Biden Administration include terrorists, murderers, rapists, pedophiles, cartel members, drug traffickers, sex traffickers, child traffickers, human traffickers, not exactly the kind of people you want roaming the streets of our communities.

By systematically dismantling President Trump's policies from his first Administration, the Biden Administration flung the border wide open for any and all who wished to enter here the U.S. illegally. This has led to the unlawful entry of over 10 million illegal aliens into the U.S., and nearly 2 million "known gotaways," who entered the country without once being apprehended. As of last July, there were over 646,000 illegal aliens with additional criminal histories running around free right here in the United States, and those are only criminal aliens that are known to ICE officials, so the actual number is actually statistically, probably significantly, much, much higher.

Why is this issue important? Why must we use all means at our disposal to identify, locate, and deport all illegal aliens in the U.S.? It is because the heinous nature of the crimes committed by those who enter the U.S. illegally and treat this Nation as their own playground to get rich by selling human beings and illegal drugs while victimizing women and children. The most dangerous criminals include cartel organizations that control the border, who force women into indentured servitude or sex slavery to pay for their entry into the U.S. They subject children to child pornography. If you speak to law enforcement at the border, you will hear about

rape trees, where the underwear of women and girls brutally raped on their journey to America are hung like trophies.

Ten years ago, I did not even know what fentanyl was, and now I personally know multiple people who have died of a fentanyl overdose. We have all heard stories also of law enforcement who are doing investigations, who were accidentally exposed to fentanyl, end up in the hospital very sick. They are lucky they have not died. The Biden Administration shoulders the blame for the record deaths of American citizens, the record number of illegal aliens, and the record profits for drug cartels due to fentanyl and human trafficking. And we are talking about numbers, about the amount of money that the cartels have made off of drug trafficking and human trafficking, tens of billions of dollars easily north of \$60 or \$70 billion. They are making money off the U.S. because we let them.

To protect American citizens, we must undo the horrors caused by the Biden Administration's immigration policies that rewarded criminal illegal aliens. A core component of this is the ability to track and monitor all illegal aliens in the country when detention is not feasible for some reason. When used as part of the Alternatives to Detention, or ATD program, modern technology can be used to monitor illegal aliens within the country and assist with proper enforcement of U.S. immigration laws. When detention is not possible, these modern technologies can enhance security by monitoring and tracking illegal aliens to ensure they can be removed once a final order of removal is in place. The Biden Administration, however, refused to use the ATD program as intended, frequently and prematurely removing illegal aliens from monitoring before a final order of removal was in, allowing them to scatter throughout the interior of our country and victimize American citizens.

For example, at the Biden Administration's direction, one of the illegal aliens who murdered Jocelyn Nungaray, a 12-year-old girl from Texas, who was raped and strangled to death.

[Photo]

Ms. MACE. This is Jocelyn Nungaray. I hope we never forget her name. We never forget her face. We never forget the horrors she endured. She was 12 years old. The illegal who raped and killed her had his GPS ankle monitor removed prior to committing these horrific crimes. Jocelyn Nungaray is the face of the horrors American women and girls are suffering at the hands of illegals that have been let in by the Joe Biden Administration. The Biden Administration allowed this to happen, all while unconscionably ignoring easy-to-use and available technologies that could have prevented the release of illegal aliens with criminal histories in the first place.

I look forward to the testimonies of our witnesses today, which include former ICE officials, to hear about their firsthand experience and suggestions on how we can leverage technology to strengthen immigration enforcement and facilitate the mass deportations Americans overwhelmingly support. I now yield to Ranking Member Brown for her opening statement.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today. Before I begin, I want to highlight that

Chair Mace and my Federal Contractor Cybersecurity Vulnerability Reduction Act, which would close a critical loophole in Federal Cybersecurity standards, passed the House yesterday. So, Chairwoman Mace, I am looking forward to continuing to work together on these—

Ms. MACE. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. BROWN. [continuing.] Important issues.

Ms. MACE. Thank you.

Ms. BROWN. Now moving to the topic of today's hearing. Immigration has remained a hot button issue across both Republican and Democratic administrations. Congress—I repeat Congress—has the authority, not the President, to enact a lasting solution. I take this responsibility seriously as well as our country's long history of accepting immigrants from all over the world, making us who we are today. But when I see the dangerous and cruel way that the current President treats and talks about immigrants, I know I am not dealing with a serious and solution-driven administration. We all want our cities to be safe. We all want to work with law enforcement and community members to prevent crime. No one wants dangerous criminals, terrorists, or illicit drugs coming in through our borders, but propagating lies and misplaced fear are not going to address the issue. In fact, it risks making the problem worse.

Real change starts with real solutions. Last year, the Senate crafted a comprehensive and bipartisan immigration reform, which presented a real opportunity to move the ball forward on this critical issue for the first time in a decade. In fact, the bill would have helped to address the fentanyl crisis by providing new scanning technologies at ports of entry and increasing staffing for customs agents. But what happened? Then Presidential candidate, Donald Trump, blew up the bill because he wanted to run on an anti-immigration rhetoric instead of fixing the problem.

Instead of seeking to score political points, we should work on a bipartisan basis to find real solutions to our broken immigration system. That means modernizing our border infrastructure, reforming the asylum process, and ensuring a fair and efficient way to resettle asylum seekers across the country. To prevent abuse of the asylum system, we must invest in programs that speed up processing times, properly fund immigration courts, and ensure fair adjudications. And let us be clear: creating a pathway to citizenship—Dreamers, PS holders, farmworkers, and so many others—is not just the right thing to do. It strengthens our economy and provides much-needed relief to communities that have earned it.

And yes, technology has a real role to play here, and Congress recognizes that. The 2024 spending bill signed into law by President Biden included a more than 20-percent increase in funding to purchase and deploy next-generation technology, like surveillance towers, tunnel detection technology, and mobile surveillance technology. This funding is already helping to strengthen border security, prevent the flow of fentanyl, and combat human trafficking.

During President Trump's first term, his Department of Homeland Security released a mobile application called CBP One that allowed immigrants to fill out much of the necessary paperwork before they reach the border. That seemed like a good idea, except the app frequently malfunctioned and often failed to recognize faces

with darker complexions. The Biden Administration ran with the idea and turned this broken app into a legitimate tool to provide a legal pathway for those escaping violence and persecution to come to America for a better life. That is leveraging technology to solve our border crisis. While the revamped CBP One app was not perfect, the app helped more than 1 million immigrants—more than 1 million immigrants—legally enter the United States to become productive and valued members of our communities.

And it deterred illegal border crossings, that is, until the Trump Administration abruptly shut it down last month as part of his day one, sign first, and ask later executive order rampage. So, what have we seen instead in the first 2 weeks of the Trump Administration? An attempt to terrorize immigrant families. On his first day in office, Trump signed an executive order authorizing Immigration and Customs Enforcement, also known as ICE, to raid schools, churches, and hospitals with little to no oversight or plan. The Trump Administration should instead be focusing on the responsible and humane use of technology to address border security when it makes sense. Any technology to address border security must be done with strong oversight and safeguards to protect privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. These concerns must always be at the forefront of any conversation on the use of technology, and especially artificial intelligence, across Federal Government.

So, I hope that we can have a productive conversation today about the opportunities that come from modern solutions and how we can implement those solutions while safeguarding against abuse.

Ms. MACE. Thank you so much. I am pleased to now introduce our witnesses for today's hearing. Our first witness is Mr. John Fabbriatore, former Senior Executive and Field Office Director for Enforcement Removal Operations at ICE. Our second witness is Dr. Doug Gilmer, retired Senior Law Enforcement Advisor and Special Agent in Charge for Homeland Security Investigations at ICE. Our third witness is Mr. Simon Hankinson, Senior Research Fellow for the Border Security and Immigration Center at the Heritage Foundation, and our fourth witness is Ms. Deborah Fleischaker, Principal Consultant at Blackbird Ventures, LLC. Welcome, everyone. We are pleased to have you this morning.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(g), the witnesses, if you will please stand and raise your right hands.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

[A chorus of ayes.]

Ms. MACE. Let the record show the witnesses all answered in the affirmative. Thank you. We appreciate all of you being here today and look forward to your testimony.

Let me remind the witnesses that we have read your written statements, and they will appear in full in the hearing record. Please limit your oral statements to 5 minutes. Now, as a reminder, please press the button on the microphone in front of you so that it is on and the Members up here can hear you. When you begin to speak, the light in front of you will turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow, and when the red light comes

on, your 5 minutes has expired, and I will ask you to conclude your remarks.

I will now recognize, Mr. Fabbriatore, to please begin your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN FABBRICATORE
FORMER SENIOR EXECUTIVE AND FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
ENFORCEMENT REMOVAL OPERATIONS
AND PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT
THE COMPLETE SOLUTION GROUP**

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Good morning, Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Brown, and distinguished Members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on the critical topic of leveraging technology to strengthen immigration enforcement. This issue is at the heart of national security, impacting us at every level from the border to interior enforcement. Border security and immigration enforcement are vital pillars of our Nation's safety and security, yet sanctuary states and cities often obstruct interior enforcement by cutting off ICE from essential data systems. This lack of cooperation, combined with outdated data infrastructure, leaves us vulnerable. We face mounting challenges, such as human trafficking, violent illegal alien gang activity, drug smuggling, and the influx of lethal substances like fentanyl. Tackling these issues demands innovation, strategic thinking, and integration of cutting-edge technology into our operations.

With over 30 years of Federal law enforcement experience, much of it spent on immigration enforcement, I am convinced that we will continue to face significant vulnerabilities without adopting advanced technological solutions and unconventional strategies. Technology must go beyond the borders, reaching interior enforcement by integrating advanced investigative tools into field operations. Streamlined data sharing across agencies, modernized communication systems, and increased funding for technology deployment are essential to improving efficiency, accuracy, and coordination.

In the last 4 years, sanctuary jurisdictions have further exacerbated these challenges by denying access to critical data sources, such as DMV records. These jurisdictions allow barely vetted individuals to obtain driver's licenses while blocking ICE agents from accessing this information. The inability to retrieve such records undermines our ability to protect the Nation effectively. Information sharing is not optional. It is fundamental to actionable intelligence, analytics, and a unified response to today's threats. For example, in the past, my team used tools like the Eagle Direct Identification Environment, or simply called EDDIE, a mobile system that links portable fingerprint readers to ICE data bases via smartphones. This tool allowed my team to identify heroin dealers in Denver who falsely claimed to be U.S. citizens but were, in fact, Honduran nationals. Quick access to data base information enabled us to remove these dangerous individuals from the community.

However, the effectiveness of the tool depends on the quality and integration of the data in our systems, a glaring issue that underscores the urgent need for modernization. The time to act is now.

We need a new data platform that are agile, robust, and equipped with advanced machine learning and cloud-native capabilities. These systems can reveal unseen relationships, identify patterns, and provide actionable insights, giving agents the tools for target and apprehend with precision. A significant focus must also be placed on integrating case management systems that track operations through the enforcement lifecycle. Officers should be spending their time on the streets safeguarding our communities, not stuck behind desks wrestling with disconnected, antiquated data bases.

I have seen the consequences of a fragmented approach. After 9/11, the whole-of-government strategy for information sharing proved successful. However, over time, we have regressed into siloed agencies that are hesitant to collaborate. This reluctance has led to serious national security gaps, evidenced by what occurred under the last administration: the rampant flow of illegal drugs, like heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl, across our borders and a persistent prevalence of human trafficking operations.

A unified response is nonnegotiable. ICE must have real-time data sharing capabilities with Federal and state agencies to increase efficiency and improve targeting. Emerging technologies from the private sector also hold enormous potential to revolutionize immigration enforcement. By leveraging automation software for high-volume targeting, building advanced analytics platforms, and integrating working leads management systems, we can maximize productivity and enable officers to focus on their primary mission: stopping national security threats, apprehending criminal aliens, and enforcing the immigration law.

The threats we face are not static. They are dynamic, interconnected, and constantly evolving. To address these multifaceted challenges, we must adopt proactive, technology-driven solutions. This is not simply an operational necessity. It is a moral imperative. If we are to enforce immigration law, eradicate fentanyl, disrupt human and sex trafficking operations, and ensure the safety of our Nation, Congress must prioritize investment in technology and expertise. By working together, we can create immigration enforcement framework that is responsive, efficient, and effective.

Thank you once again, and I look forward to your questions and working alongside you to safeguard the future of our Nation.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize Dr. Gilmer to please begin his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF DR. DOUG GILMER
RETIRED SENIOR LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISOR
AND ASSISTANT SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS
AND PRESIDENT AND CEO
RESOLVED STRATEGIES**

Mr. GILMER. Good morning, Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for this opportunity. I am Dr. Doug Gilmer. I am a 35-year veteran of law enforcement with the majority of that time spent with ICE HSI. My career has focused primarily on two areas: national security and

human trafficking. I have received a National Intelligence Award from the DNI for Intelligence Integration and also recently was presented the William Wilberforce Lifetime Achievement Award for my role in helping to counter human trafficking globally. I retired from HSI in August 2024 where, in my last role, I served at the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking.

There is an interconnectedness between illegal immigration, transnational and cross-border crime, drug and human smuggling, human trafficking, illicit finance, et cetera. Faced with an enormous problem today, and with the countless numbers of people who were allowed to enter the U.S. during the last Administration, many of whom saw the opportunity they were given as license to engage in criminal activity, law enforcement needs help to combat these public safety threats. If we first identify its intended outcomes, technology can aid in targeting threats, identifying trends, patterns, identifying victims, and analyzing vast amounts of data quickly, allowing for a faster, more efficient law enforcement response while also protecting personally identifying information. Technology can improve productivity, mitigate risks, improve morale, and reduce fatigue.

The government is often hampered by its ability to effectively integrate the latest technology, and, at times, has ineffectively used technology in ways that impeded investigative efforts. When the previous Administration took office, a moratorium on immigration arrests was almost immediately put in place. While this dramatically impacted ICE ERO in doing their job, it also impacted HSI. The answer was to create a computer application by which ICE personnel had to seek permission to make an arrest. The online form was then routed through the chain of command to executive leadership for adjudication based on established protocols. This is an example of an inefficient use of technology to solve a problem that did not need solving.

There have been technology successes, however. The DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking recently completed a technology upgrade to assist in the issuance of Continued Presence, an immigration benefit provided to foreign nationals in the U.S. believed to be victims of human trafficking. Once, this was a process that could take well over a year to adjudicate. Today, the CCHT has been able to digitize that process and reduce processing times down to as little as 3 weeks while adding additional anti-fraud measures.

Standing in the way of onboarding third-party applications, however, are the current acquisition requirements and the inability to onboard safe and secure technology quickly impacting public safety. The time it takes to acquire technology and integrate it means that by the time it is onboarded, we have missed opportunity, and the solution can be outdated. Often when a technology is acquired, it is siloed in a particular agency, component, or division rather than scaled to provide solutions for the general workforce.

Sometimes the issue is a matter of acquisition priority. For instance, in my last field assignment, we only had about five EDDIE machines for HSI personnel statewide. As John described the EDDIE machine, this tool not only helps in enforcing immigration law, but it saves time. It aids in enforcement prioritization, reduces the chance of error, and also helps law enforcement rapidly identify

suspects and mitigate threats to safety. In the absence of our own technology to solve crimes, we have often had to rely on NGOs and state and local law enforcement agencies who routinely have better technology. Not only is this time consuming, but the ability to do so relies solely on personal relationships, and it places an additional burden on those groups to assist.

In some cases, technology and processes are already in place but are not scaled to meet contemporary requirements. In some cases, we own the technology but are not allowed to use it out of privacy concern. Facial and pattern recognition technology is one such tool with tremendous potential for solving crimes and recovering victims of exploitative crime. However, the restrictions placed on its use are so tightly controlled, it is only used in a small percentage of cases. Recurrent vetting and targeting are other examples of underutilized technology. The best technology, however, is useless if the technology itself and or the evidence or data it produces remains in silos. That remains one of the biggest detriments to law enforcement: the lack of a collaborative data-sharing environment. When technology and data are siloed, are not easily retrieved or accessible, we lose critical time and miss information relevant to an investigation.

In conclusion, I am proud of my service with ICE, HSI, and of my colleagues there today. I believe ICE, though under resourced for its vast mission, could be the greatest value proposition in Federal law enforcement, and if properly resourced, could do far more good. There is not a more nimble and responsive Federal law enforcement agency in the Federal Government, none that work harder to pursue criminals and criminal organizations and are more committed to advocating for and serving the victims of the crimes they investigate. Thank you.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize Mr. Hankinson for opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF MR. SIMON HANKINSON
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW
BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION CENTER
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

Mr. HANKINSON. Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Brown, Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me today. I am a fellow at the Heritage Foundation, but the views I express today are my own.

DHS is required by law to detain all aliens arriving illegally in the U.S. throughout their entire immigration proceedings. Nonetheless, over the past 4 years, the Biden Administration released and paroled millions of them and let them go wherever they wanted, with no easy way for ICE to find them. Mass release of unknown aliens is a national security and community safety risk. There is no real vetting of aliens released or paroled. Unless a foreign national has a record with U.S. agencies, DHS is flying blind. And even if U.S. agents request information on an alien, many countries will not or cannot give it, so DHS has likely released thousands of aliens with criminal records in their home countries, and if we let them go with a promise to show up in court in future, it does stand to reason that we should know where they are.

Most released and paroled aliens are economic migrants who will not qualify for asylum, but only a small percentage of aliens ordered deported are ever actually removed. Alternatives to Detention, or ATD, was started in 2004 to increase compliance with court attendance and removal. ICE contracts to track aliens using facial recognition, voice ID, or GPS monitors, but to work, ATD has to be used widely and wisely. There are around 7.5 million aliens on ICE's non-detained docket, of whom, only about 184,000 are tracked using ATD, and ICE releases the majority of aliens from ATD long before their cases are over. A study in 2020 showed that 79 percent of ATD participants were unenrolled before their cases were over, and worse, for those that did stay in the program for their entire case lifetime, 85 percent absconded from ATD.

ICE says, "ATD enables aliens to remain in their communities, contributing to their families and community organizations. That is a benefit to aliens, but what about the risk to Americans?" From 2004 to 2020, there were 21,000 criminal charges or convictions recorded among the aliens in the ATD program, and in the Biden years, here are just a few aliens who were on GPS monitoring, which is the best level of ATD, yet victimized American citizens or legal immigrants.

We have already discussed the sad case of Jocelyn Nungaray, but in January 2025, Jefferson Ubilla-Delgado was arrested in Chicago for the murder of George Levin. He had entered the U.S. illegally, was released with a notice to appear and a GPS ankle monitor. In September 2024, Estefania Primera, also known as La Barbie, was arrested in El Paso, Texas. She was a member of the Tren de Aragua gang and accused of operating a massive sex trafficking ring. She was also released at the border with a GPS ankle monitor, but she took it off. And in February 2024, Diego Ibarra, the brother of Laken Riley's murderer, Jose Ibarra, was released with a GPS ankle monitor, but he cut it off and moved from Colorado to Georgia and lived there without molestation.

ICE ERO, Enforcement and Removal Operations, has limited staff, and many local law enforcement agencies refuse to cooperate with their detainers. They do not routinely pursue absconders and track down for arrest the highest-risk cases. There are roughly 430,000 aliens on the non-detained docket who have been convicted of crimes, but ICE's target in 2024 to remove them was only 29,389. And to make it worse, under the Biden Administration, ICE resources were diverted from the mission, which is enforcement, to providing social services. So, detaining every alien who crosses into the U.S. illegally is the ideal situation, but if we cannot do that, let us at least try to keep track of them.

With emerging facial recognition, artificial intelligence, and other technology, keeping track of aliens is getting easier and cheaper. ICE should aim to have 100 percent of non-detained aliens doing frequent check-ins. Congress should impose clear penalties for failure to check in with ICE. For example, it should be a felony for an alien to remove their GPS monitor. ICE should turn on GPS tracking through the SmartLINK application. They could use automated case analysis to assess the risks for ATD. We know from European data that rates of criminal activity differ enormously based on national origin and other factors, and ICE could collect that in-

formation, along with criminal records from aliens for all Federal, state, and local arrests. It is unacceptable to have millions of foreign nationals in the midst of deportation proceedings and not know where they are.

Thank you for inviting me to testify, and I welcome your questions.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I now recognize Ms. Fleischaker for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF MS. DEBORAH FLEISCHAKER (MINORITY
WITNESS)
PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT
BLACKBIRD VENTURES LLC**

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Brown, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. My name is Deborah Fleischaker, and I am currently the Principal Consultant at Blackbird Ventures. Previously, however, I spent almost 14 years at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, including over 10 years as a career civil servant. Over 2 of my years at DHS were spent at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, first as the Assistant Director in charge of Regulatory Affairs and Policy, and then a year as the Acting Chief of Staff of the Agency. Following my time at ICE, I moved back to DHS and finished my government career as the Department's Executive Secretary and Acting Chief Privacy Officer.

I want to start my testimony by clearly stating the operational challenges in increasing immigration enforcement, including where technology can help ameliorate those challenges and where it does not play a role. First, immigration enforcement, including deporting people ordered removed from this country, is hard. There is a tendency to talk about immigration enforcement as a matter of will, and this obfuscates the real material limiting factors on increasing immigration enforcement.

For example, Axios reported yesterday that removals and arrests during the Trump Administration are lower than the daily averages in Fiscal Year 2024. This happened despite high-profile immigration enforcement actions by the new Administration, including the use of Federal law enforcement and defense personnel, assets, and money. The only operational statistic that has increased during the first part of the Trump Administration has been the total detained population, the increase of which is driven by the increased detention rates of people with no criminal record. I do not think anyone here would argue that the Trump Administration has less of a will to enforce immigration law, yet the operational outputs are declining because of the material limits to immigration enforcement.

Second, technology cannot address all the limiting factors to increasing removals. The immigration lifecycle is long and complicated. The ultimate consequence in that lifecycle—removal—requires the cooperation of other countries. ICE cannot remove a person unless they have a place to remove them, travel documents, and a seat on an airplane or a bus. Technology can make some of

this process more efficient, but it does not impact the willingness of other countries to accept removals.

Third, I would like to talk about some of the success that ICE has had using technology to increase immigration enforcement. These initiatives are instructive in how ICE can use technology to better effect its mission. First, the ICE check-in app. In late 2024, ICE deployed a check-in app that allows certain people on its non-detained docket to perform their mandatory check-ins with an ICE officer using their phones. The check-in app should allow ICE to better manage its non-detained docket, relieve impacts on the limited physical space at ICE field offices and allow ICE officers more time to focus on noncitizens who are true public safety threats. ICE is still evaluating the effectiveness of the check-in app, but these are the types of efficiencies that can free up ICE officers from largely administrative tasks.

Next one is Family Expedited Removal Management, or FERM. Before September 2021, ICE used family residential centers to detain family units. These FRCs were expensive and resulted in relatively few removals. ICE began using ATD technology, including geolocation on heads of households, to move family units through the immigration enforcement lifecycle. This new processing pathway increased removals of family units in 2024 at a fraction of the cost of the former FRCs.

ICE already has access to vast amounts of data, but the officers need help turning it into prioritized, actionable leads. ICE has full access to information about noncitizens booked into prisons and jails throughout the country through routine data sharing. This access is called interoperability, formerly Secure Communities, and has been in place without interruption since 2017. ICE also has access to information-sharing data bases, including state DMV data bases, U.S. National Crime Information Center, and a variety of gang data bases. Access to additional data is not the limiting factor in ICE's immigration enforcement mission. All of its access already provides vast troves of information. ICE does not need additional data to do its job, but it does need help analyzing, sorting, and prioritizing the data to which it already has access.

Technology can and should help ICE focus on public safety and national security threats instead of people who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. This sort of technology assistance would support the ICE workforce, achieve greater efficiency, enhance compliance, and reduce costs by providing enhanced case oversight, intelligent decision support, and streamlined check-ins and reporting for the non-detained population.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important topic. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize myself for 5 minutes of questions.

A couple of weeks ago, I went on my first ICE raid, and I got to see ICE and Homeland Security and other agencies and agents come together, different field offices come together, to find this guy who a week prior had, like, a brick of fentanyl, or a portion of a brick, enough to kill a thousand people. It was a lot, but one of the things that I learned there was that in the Biden Administration, those agencies were not actually able to work together. They were

not allowed to do that, work together to deport those who are here illegally, and I learned a lot during that.

But, Dr. Gilmer, I want to ask you my first question. Something struck me in your testimony this morning. You are talking about restrictions on data. Can you talk a little bit more about that, some examples? Like, I guess it was maybe biometric data, there were restrictions on data you can utilize or—

Mr. GILMER. Yes. So, we have advanced technologies, facial recognition technology, pattern-matching technology that could be used to solve a vast array of crime and can be used to identify victims of crime, especially minor victims of child sexual abuse material, human trafficking victims, that type of thing, who often live in the shadows, right? But that technology is so tightly controlled out of fear of privacy, that it is only used in a very small percentage of cases. There has been a lot of fear that has been allowed to grow around that technology, I think, often by people who do not really understand the technology and do not understand the fact that we can utilize that technology, while also putting in proper safeguards to protect, you know, privacy, ethics, and civil rights.

Ms. MACE. And some examples of silos that you mentioned.

Mr. GILMER. Again, a lot of that technology is siloed into different components or divisions. It is not rolled out through an enterprise solution to the Agency, different components within DHS. Our systems do not talk to each other. I mean, we have a hard enough time talking between HSI and ERO, between our systems, much less bringing in CBP, TSA, Border Patrol, and when that data is siloed within those particular components, it is very easy to miss things because you cannot access the data and operationalize that data.

Ms. MACE. And then my next question is really for everyone. Can you speak to how the Biden Administration used technology to facilitate the invasion of illegal aliens into the country?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes, ma'am. For one, CBP One app, I believe, was definitely misused by the Biden Administration to allow people to come in, and that was one technology that was developed out of something that it should not have been used for. I think it was a go-around around Congress to allow people to enter the United States. And we have seen a lot of those cases that have entered on the CBP One app show up as criminal aliens, you know, in the arrests that we have made.

Ms. MACE. How is the app used?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. How is it used?

Ms. MACE. Yes, how is it used to do that?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Well, what we have seen, especially the fraud from that, is that the cartels were actually using it down in Mexico and having people sign up through them to then get on the CBP One app and get around, you know, being able to go through. So, the cartels were actually making money off of the CBP One app.

Ms. MACE. That is insane. Dr. Gilmer.

Mr. GILMER. Yes, I echo everything that that my counterpart just said. I do not have as much experience with the CBP One app particularly because my focus was with HSI and primarily on criminal investigations, but even within HSI, we saw the misuse of the CBP

One app by those subjects that we did encounter, oftentimes subjects of criminal investigations.

Ms. MACE. The cartels—

Mr. GILMER. The cartels.

Ms. MACE. [continuing.] Using CB One app to get people into this country illegally, and we know this. We know this, and we allowed it to happen. Mr. Hankinson.

Mr. HANKINSON. Yes. In terms of numbers, nothing is more extreme than CBP One. There were also the programs for specific countries, which obviously had to use technology to enroll people in the first place. There was some diversion of ICE money to programs like the Case Management Pilot Program and the Young Adult Case Management Program, I think it was, that were essentially providing social services instead of enforcement operations. And I am sure that had to be facilitated by the use of the technology that they had.

Ms. MACE. I am certain that they did. Thank you. I will now yield 5 minutes to Representative Brown.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Madam Chair. When strong privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protections are in place, technology can be a critical tool in immigration enforcement. For example, the Biden Administration installed new technology at select locations along the Southern border that quickly screens commercial cargo coming into the United States for illegal contraband. These non-intrusive inspection capabilities keep commerce flowing into the United States while successfully reducing drug and human trafficking. Ms. Fleischaker, in your experience, what role does technology play in keeping our border secure, and what do you see are some areas of opportunity?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I think you just pointed out one area where technology has helped keep our borders secure. I think that we should be using technology to make the process work as efficiently and effectively as we can. I think there are a lot of examples that I was a part of where technology was used to improve the process. I gave a couple during my testimony, including the ICE check-in app to help the non-detained population, and FERM, which really increased the number of family removals without the cost and burden of family detention.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. And so much of the immigration conversation is focused on immigrants coming to the United States the right way, but it is not easy for people to enter through a legal pathway because our immigration system has not kept up with the demands of the modern world. This is why the Biden Administration used the CBP One mobile application to make border crossings more efficient and provide guidance to individuals seeking asylum, people crossing the Southwest border illegally to request asylum. Once it went into effect, it was the only way for people to get an appointment to request asylum. So, Ms. Fleischaker, how can technology like CBP One make legal immigration pathways more accessible?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I am not going to argue that we cannot improve the technologies that we use. I think that that should be a constant and ongoing effort. I have no argument that we should be continuing to improve CBP One. I will say, though, that I tend to

support programs and policies that makes the workforce's job easier. CBP One is one of those programs that allowed Border Patrol agents to plan for and make efficient the process of bringing people through the border when they were seeking asylum. It allowed us to organize ourselves, and it allowed us to plan for and appropriately staff the Border Patrol offices because we knew who was going to be coming on any given day. That is the kind of thing that I think is a net positive, even when things can continue to be improved.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. So, maybe you can tell me, before CBP One, what difficulties did asylum seekers face when they arrived at legal ports of entry, and how can we expand the ways that CBP One app improved the process for people arriving at the border seeking asylum?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Previously, people would queue and wait, maybe, you know, for days or weeks, depending on the busyness of a particular border patrol station. The CBP One app helped bring some order to that process, which was, in my mind, a net improvement. I think that we should be using technologies like that to help improve the process writ large. I think that technologies that help us sort of sift through data, process people more quickly, improve outcomes are worth it. I will say, from the ICE perspective, you know, Congress appropriates the funds. Data modernization funds at ICE are often cannibalized because for the more pressing needs such as detention or ATD, right? So, we need those funds, ICE needs those funds, but often those funds do not get used for the appropriated purpose because there is more pressing, immediate needs.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. And one of the first things that President Trump did upon taking office was discontinue the use of CBP One and cancel all existing appointments, so can you tell us what are some of the immediate effects that this will have on the country's immigration challenges?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. So, I want to be careful. I am no longer with the Department, so I did not get to witness exactly what happened when the CBP One appointments were canceled, but as people will come to the border, they will no longer have appointments. They will no longer be prescreened and vetted, and it, I believe, should increase confusion, time in processing, and potential lines to get in.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. My time has expired.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize Representative Boebert for 5 minutes.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you so much to our witnesses here who came to testify on border policies and technologies.

I was excited to see President Trump put out a post, a truth, on Truth Social, that said, "The month of February, my first full month in office, had the lowest number of illegal immigrants trying to enter our country in history by far. There were only 8,326 apprehensions of illegals by Border Patrol at the U.S. Mexico border, all of whom were quickly ejected from our Nation or, when necessary, prosecuted for crimes against the United States of America. This means that very few people came. The invasion of our country is over. In comparison, under Joe Biden, there were 300,000 illegals

crossing in 1 month, and virtually all of them were released into our country. Thanks to the Trump Administration policies, the border is closed to all illegal aliens.” “Immigrants” is what he what he put. “Anyone who tries to illegally enter the U.S.A. will face significant criminal penalties and immediate deportation.” I think the President Trump and his team, Secretary Noem and border czar, Tom Homan, have done a fantastic job of turning chaos at our southern border into control.

Mr. Fabbriatore, welcome from the great state of Colorado. I wanted to ask you some questions about Colorado’s sanctuary policies that prevent ICE from coordinating with local law enforcement agents and maybe how that had an impact on the Tren de Aragua presence that we saw in Aurora.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Thank you, ma’am. So, yes, the sanctuary policies in the state of Colorado, as you know, there have been many that have been passed since 2013 that limit cooperation with Immigration Customs Enforcement, and that even limits the amount of data that ICE is allowed to get. This includes DMV records, the state Department of Labor, so this keeps ICE from being able to identify criminal illegal aliens easily and go out on the street and arrest them. When you have those limitations, that is when you are going to see an increase in crime like we saw with Tren de Aragua over the last couple of months because ICE just simply is not getting the data that is necessary to be able to target these criminal illegal aliens and remove them from the streets quickly.

Ms. BOEBERT. Yes, and do you believe that using modern tracking technology would have helped secure our border and even our cities in the state of Colorado?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. It definitely would have helped. It is something that the ERO officers need in order to be able to facilitate making arrests quickly, which is what we want to do. We do not want to give illegal criminal aliens an opportunity to commit more crimes in the U.S. We want to arrest them as quickly as we can.

Ms. BOEBERT. Yes. And so, with this CBP One app and discussing improvements to the app, do you think that there is a possibility for self-deportation, some sort of incentive to self-deport using the app, and arrive at a location to get a one-way ticket home?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. If we can use the app to enter, we can use that app to exit. So, absolutely, we can develop that technology to allow people to self-deport, and that way, families do not have to be separated.

Ms. BOEBERT. Right.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. They can go right through the CBP One app, they can get on the app, they can do an exit. We can have that information readily available, and they can self-deport.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you. And, Mr. Fabbriatore, under the failed Biden regime, how many criminal illegal aliens were able to evade ICE apprehensions because you were all restricted from using the right tools and technologies and authorities?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. So, thousands, I mean, millions even. I mean, we have 1.4 million on the non-detained docket of final orders right now, which, you know, they went and saw an immigration judge.

Immigration judge said you must leave, and they even defied an immigration judge's order, so these cases are stacking up. It is something that needs to be taken care of, and under this Administration, it will be.

Ms. BOEBERT. And, Mr. Fabbriatore, the Biden Administration focused on reducing detention rates rather than increasing surveillance. Hundreds of heinous acts were committed by violent criminal aliens. Do you think that reducing detention rates, rather than increasing surveillance, makes our borders more or less secure?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. No. We need an increased detention rate, absolutely. I think we are at 41,000 beds right now. I know President Trump would like to double, if not even have more, up to 100,000 beds. This is what we need. In order to have the deportation process be successful, we need those beds in place.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, and I am certainly proud of the initiative that President Trump has put forward and, like I said, border czar, Tom Homan. And I know that you have worked with him in the past, and I hope to see you alongside him in the future as well, and we have Secretary Noem doing a great job. And Mr. Fabbriatore, if you got 5 seconds that you want to say something, it is yours.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Thank you, yes. We need this technology. ERO needs this technology. They need the money, and they need the beds.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Mr. Fabbriatore. I yield.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. Representative Ansari, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you, Madam Chair. I am proud to represent Arizona's 3rd Congressional District, an incredibly diverse community where more than 64 languages are spoken, and like many in my district, I am the daughter of immigrants who came to the United States for a better life. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration continues to target families in my district and across the country with inhumane immigration policies, including mass deportations that are already negatively impacting our economy with extreme backlash from economists, as well as the business community in Arizona.

Right now, hundreds of migrants are being held in Panama and Guantanamo Bay under brutal conditions, many of whom are fleeing persecution and could face deadly consequences if deported to their home countries. This includes Artemis, an Iranian woman who converted to Christianity and would be punished by death if she went back to Iran. I guess Christian values get thrown out the window when it comes to asylum seekers. These policies are unacceptable and fundamentally un-American. We can have secure borders and also have an immigration system based on humanity. These policies do none of that.

Now the Trump Administration wants to expand surveillance technology to infringe on the civil liberties of immigrants and all of us in an effort to ramp up the horrific mass deportation efforts. Let us be clear. This will not stop with immigrants. If they can do this to immigrants and asylum seekers, there is nothing stopping them from doing it to American citizens as well. As we know, Elon Musk and DOGE are illegally accessing Americans' private data

and hacking into sensitive technology systems like Social Security and taxpayer data, which poses a grave national security threat.

With that, I would like to turn to my questions for Ms. Fleischhacker. In your opinion, does ICE have the capacity to conduct mass arrests and deportations and ramp up its use of technology without relying on outside contractors?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I think ICE has a huge reliance on outside contractors. It has the capability of developing much of this technology itself, but it needs the funding and time to do that. I think that there is a very clear pipeline between ERO and the private prison industry, that, I do not think ultimately serves immigration enforcement, ICE or the country.

Ms. ANSARI. Speaking of the pipeline between the work and the private prison industry, there has been some talk about the need to ramp up from the 41,000 beds. Can you talk a little bit more about what the numbers could look like and what the profits or, you know, benefits could be to the private prison industry if this Administration is able to fulfill all that it wants to do when it comes to mass deportations?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Again, I am not part of the Administration, so I cannot speak to exactly what their plans are. Detention is very expensive. It is the largest expense in the ERO budget, and detention beds cost a lot of money. Congress appropriates that money. ERO has been above the congressionally appropriated number for years, so it really is not a matter of ERO not doing what it is being asked to do. It has done it. ERO ICE does not have those beds. It will need to purchase, rent, lease them mainly from private prison companies. That is going to be an enormous funding source for them.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you. Ms. Fleischaker, would it be dangerous, in your view, to allow unaccountable private security contractors to run immigration enforcement?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Of course, accountability and oversight is absolutely necessary to any contract that we would sign. As you stated very eloquently, immigration enforcement, privacy, civil rights, civil liberties do not need to be in opposition to one another. They can work in concert, and it is very important that we have the appropriate mechanisms to do that.

Ms. ANSARI. And finally, are you concerned that a rapid scaleup of detention facilities could mean that DHS cuts corners, fails to impose appropriate guardrails, such as vetting contractors, protecting human rights, and ensuring fair and competitive bidding processes?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Absolutely. Detention is very complicated. The people in detention need to be provided appropriate levels of care. When you ramp up too quickly, you end up using facilities that do not have the staffing levels to provide that care, do not have the capabilities of providing that care, and people get hurt or die.

Ms. ANSARI. Thank you so much. I yield back.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I now recognize Representative Burlison for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURLISON. Thank you, Chairwoman Mace, for having this important hearing. You know, it is really good to see that the disaster that was Alejandro Mayorkas is gone. He is a disgrace. I am

glad he was impeached, and he will forever have a stain on the history of the United States and the scourge that he allowed to ensue. But he lied to us multiple times. He stood before Members of Congress and he said the border is secure. Well, I ask you, Mr. Fabbriatore, Dr. Gilmer, was that true?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. It was absolutely not true. The border was not secure.

Mr. GILMER. It was not secure, and it was made less secure.

Mr. BURLISON. OK. Then he went on to NPR, OK, and he had an interview just this year in which he said that, you know, the border is now more secure under the end of the Biden Administration than it was in 2019. Is that true?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. No, it is not true. The border is more secure with this Administration that is in place.

Mr. GILMER. I echo my colleague.

Mr. BURLISON. OK. Then my other question is that he also said that to truly secure the border, that really that they were doing the most that they possibly could do as an executive branch, that Congress had to act, and we have heard that again and again, but the data and the facts dispute otherwise, right? So, is Congress the only one that can make a difference, or can the President actually make a difference?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. The President can absolutely make a difference. It is about attitude and effort. This President, President Trump, is putting in the attitude that is needed to say the border should be secure and he is putting in the effort. It is something that the last Administration did not do. They did not have that attitude. They wanted people to come in, and they did not put any effort.

Mr. GILMER. Again, I echo my colleague. We have laws on the books. We have Title 8, which is our immigration law. It is the huge volume that my colleague and I had to virtually memorize early in our careers. While maybe it has not kept up with the current state of time—

Mr. BURLISON. It is still pretty clear.

Mr. GILMER. It is still pretty clear, and—

Mr. BURLISON. And it is still illegal.

Mr. GILMER. Yes, and it is actually not a bad piece of legislation. It just has not kept up with the times, and if we were allowed to enforce those laws in the manner and spirit in which those laws were written, we would be much more effective.

Mr. BURLISON. Let me ask this. Was the CBP One app effective, or was it a disaster?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. It was a disaster in the way that they used it. The CBP One app was not meant to be used for what it was used for under the Biden Administration. It was supposed to be used for bringing in goods and traffic, and other things. The way that they used it, I believe, was an end-run around Congress.

Mr. BURLISON. OK. Is there any technology that you would advocate for that would help, you know, ICE do its job?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. There is a lot of technology that is out there, and I think it is important that we bring this technology forward, and we allow ICE agents to actually use some of it to see what is the best that we would need. When we are looking at the CBP One

app and how it was used, there may be technology within that that we could have used. It is just how the application was actually used and what it was used for.

Mr. BURLISON. I know that with the advent of AI, it may open up some opportunities to dig deeper into people's backgrounds and their histories.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. AI is going to definitely be groundbreaking for us, but we are always going to need that human element because getting human intelligence out of someone else right now is not easily done just with AI. You still need that case agent to be able to look in the eyes of the person that is sitting in front of them to develop that human intel.

Mr. GILMER. I agree. Technology is never going to fully replace humans, but there is technology out there today that we need to learn to use better. As a matter of coincidence, right now in Washington, DC, about five blocks from here, there are probably about 150 of the most tech savvy, innovative tech providers, solution providers, developers that are meeting privately to address these very issues that we are talking about right now. And that is where a lot of these solutions are going to come from: the minds of private industry who can help guide the Federal Government in a safe, secure use of technology.

Mr. BURLISON. Well, thank you, and thank you for your service to our country. I am sorry that your Administration let you down and let other ICE agents down, and with that, I yield.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize Congressman Subramanyam for 5 minutes.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you. I wanted to go back to a couple of things people have said. One was that we do not have enough ICE agents, and, generally, you know, there is a people problem here as well. And I would love to know, Ms. Fleischacker, you know, recently we saw that about 400 people were fired at DHS, and some of them were from the DHS Science and Technology Directorate. How do you think these firings are going to impact, you know, being able to use science and technology for border security?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I think letting civil servants who are doing a good job go damages morale and will decrease the effectiveness of the Agency.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. And could you tell us much about what the Science and Technology Directorate does, or did you have any experience with them?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I did not work directly with the Science and Technology Directorate. I would be happy to get back to you.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Sure. No problem.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. And there was also a Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency within. Did you work with them at all?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I worked with them a little bit. They do a lot of election security work.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. OK. And you know, I think, right now, there is an effort to fire all, I guess, probationary workers as well at DHS. Long term, if we are losing people at DHS, how is that going to impact, you know, the morale, the ability to address border security generally?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I think it is incredibly damaging. I think that we need to be approaching efficiency with a scalpel, not a sledgehammer. And simply getting rid of probationary employees, who may be excellent and may have actually been government employees for a very long time, is not the appropriate way of doing that.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. And I want to go back to the CBP One app. Which Administration launched the CBP One app?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I actually do not know where it was originally developed. I know that under the Biden Administration, they reworked it and launched it in the form that people are discussing today.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. OK. And you mentioned the ICE check-in app, and do the people who created that app, are they still employed at DHS? Do you know?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Many of them are, yes.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Many of them, but not all of them?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I—

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Yes.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. You know, it is a broad team that develops these things, so I do not know to a person, but I know that many, many of the leaders still are there.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. And you were the Chief Privacy Officer at—

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I was the Acting Chief Privacy Officer at the end of my—

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. There has been this discussion about data privacy and civil liberties related to some of these technologies, how would you characterize—what are your thoughts on that conversation?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. There are laws, regulations, and policies that are in place that make clear that privacy is important. There are processes that the Department follows to ensure that privacy is being protected when new programs or technologies are implemented. I think that that is an important part of oversight and care that we can take in making sure that the technologies and the programs that we deploy are used as we want them to be used, and there are not unintended consequences.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Thank you. I am going to yield my time to the Ranking Member.

Ms. BROWN. I yield back. Thank you.

Ms. MACE. OK. I will now yield 5 minutes to Representative Crane from Arizona.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you, Mr. Chairwoman, for holding this important hearing on cybersecurity, information technology, and government innovation.

President Trump has only been back in office for 43 days, and border encounters are down 66 percent compared with the beginning of 2024. In February, we saw 8,326 border encounters. That number reached 189,913 in February of last year under Biden. Last week, single-day border apprehensions hit a 15-year low. President Trump and our new leadership at the Homeland Security Department are equipping Border Patrol agents and law enforcement to do their jobs. We were told by so many people on the right and the left just last year that the solution to our border crisis was a bipar-

tisan border deal. Biden and border czar, Kamala Harris, blamed Congress for continued border failures. Meanwhile, President Trump restored order and security almost immediately.

I next want to take an opportunity to correct the record real quick. My colleague, Ms. Brown, said that she was talking about the cruel way that the President talks about immigrants. I am pretty sure, Ms. Chairwoman, that the President actually married an immigrant. I do not think he has a problem with immigrants at all. What I think he has a problem with is this last Administration that threw the border completely wide open, let in between 10 and 15 million illegals, and some of them unfortunately raped and murdered many Americans, and that is what he really has a problem with. He also has a problem with U.S. taxpayers having to foot the bill for all of it.

I recently spoke to a DA from Pinal County in my district, who told me his police officers still have very little information when they arrest illegal aliens on their status or backgrounds due to poor vetting and lack of biometrics. Mr. Gilmer, how would some of these technology tools we are not currently using enable Border Patrol officials to stop the flow of illegal aliens, while also assisting our law enforcement officers?

Mr. GILMER. I do not know that some of the technology, such as the EDDIE machine, is necessarily going to stop illegal crossings. If you have somebody determined enough to come across there, they are going to find a way to come across. But what that technology does, whether it is the EDDIE device, whether it is facial pattern matching technology, it helps us to rapidly identify individuals and identify where they might be on a threat matrix. Are they a known or suspected gang member? Are they on the terrorism watch list, for instance? Are they a person who is already potentially the subject of an investigation by HSI or another Federal law enforcement agency? Being able to rapidly identify, you know, that biometric information, which, you know, it is difficult to get biometrics to lie, a person can tell us a story, give us a wrong name, all day long, but I can tell you—

Mr. CRANE. Thank you.

Mr. GILMER. [continuing.] Putting an EDDIE in front of somebody gets them to identify very quickly.

Mr. CRANE. Great. Let us talk about some other technologies then. Not only did the Biden Administration stop building the wall, but is it not true that they also refused to put up key technology components like sensors, lighting that was already purchased on border wall system, Mr. Fabbricatore?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes, that is absolutely correct. I have been down to the border about 8 times since I retired in 2022. Got to speak to a lot of Border Patrol agents. Cameras are down on the border. The technology for sensors has not been improved, and I heard many complaints from Border Patrol agents.

Mr. CRANE. Is it true that the Biden Administration also banned the use of DNA testing so that agents could no longer know if children belonged to the adults they were with, or if they were being trafficked, Mr. Fabbricatore?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Unfortunately, that is very true. When the Biden Administration first came into office, they had stopped the

DNA testing that President Trump had put into play in his first term, which kept us from being able to verify whether children actually belong with the adults that they were traveling with.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you. Ms. Fleischaker, you focused a lot on the decrease in outputs under this Administration. You cited in your testimony that Axios reported yesterday the removals and arrests during the Trump administration are lower than the daily averages in averages in Fiscal Year 2024, and then you go on to give some statistics. But is it not true, ma'am, that you know, some of the data going down might have something to do with the fact that the flow of illegals trying to come into the country is down as well?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I am not in the Administration. I can only go by what is reported.

Mr. CRANE. But do you know that the flow is down because people now know that our border is secure?

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I mean—

Ms. MACE. Very quickly.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I would state that the flow has been decreasing for a number of months.

Mr. CRANE. Thank you. I yield back.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I will now recognize Representative McGuire for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Thank you, Chairwoman Mace, and thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

The American people have suffered from the Biden-Harris Administration's failure of keeping the American people safe at home and abroad, and especially at our Southern border. Because time is an issue, I want to go real fast with four "yes" or "no" questions. No. 1, if you cross our border illegally, are you a criminal?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes.

Mr. GILMER. Yes.

Mr. HANKINSON. Yes.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. It is usually considered—

Mr. MCGUIRE. That is a yes or no.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Yes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Thank you. No. 2, yes or no, criminals do not care about the law.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. They do not care.

Mr. GILMER. They do not care.

Mr. HANKINSON. No.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I do not think I can say "yes" or "no" to that. It depends on the person.

Mr. MCGUIRE. I see what we are working with. All right. No. 3, this statement, do you agree with it, yes or no, "Police are good, criminals are bad, and victims are important."

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes, absolutely.

Mr. GILMER. One hundred percent, yes.

Mr. HANKINSON. Yes.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. Again, people are complicated—

Mr. MCGUIRE. I see what we are dealing with.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. [continuing.] But generally, yes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. All right. No. 4. Last one. Trump is more effective at securing our Southern border than the Biden Administration. Yes or no.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes.

Mr. GILMER. Yes.

Mr. HANKINSON. Yes.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I do not have the information to answer that.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Interesting. The past 4 years with Biden, our border has been an open door, and the for the folks that support the Biden Administration, they say that illegals have come here for a better life, but they started off as a criminal, and they started off breaking our law. We talked about the 12-year-old Jocelyn earlier. We talk about Laken Riley. These illegal aliens have been robbing, raping, and killing the American people. And I heard one of the witnesses talk about, hey, the Trump policies could cause people to be hurt or die. What about the American people that have been robbed, raped, and killed? I do not see anyone on the other side talking about that. They tore down our border wall that was placed specifically by our Border Patrol, where it was the most dangerous to protect the American people, and under the Biden Administration, they removed that wall. And I have heard—this is a “yes” or “no,” I guess—I have heard that we had electronics on that wall, so it was not just a steel wall, and the Biden Administration refused to use those electronics, and they actually tore them down. Is this information true?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes.

Mr. GILMER. That is my understanding.

Mr. HANKINSON. I cannot specifically say the equipment was taken, but I was told that there were repairs that were not done and lights and sensors and other things were not turned on.

Ms. FLEISCHAKER. I did not work on the border wall. I do not know the answer.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Understood. So, we have the fentanyl overdose epidemic in our country. I call it Chinese chemical warfare. It is being produced in China, coming across the Southern border, and poisoning and killing more Americans each year than died in the Vietnam War. When you express your concern about people might get hurt or die, what about those hundred thousand-plus Americans that are killed every day? Thank God President Trump is back in the White House, and not to mention human trafficking and all the children that are gone missing that we all know about. Data shows that border encounters have decreased by 66 percent compared to January 2024. However, again, millions of illegal aliens who were released by the Biden Administration are still in our country.

Mr. Fabbricatore and Dr. Gilmer, as former ICE agents working during the Biden Administration, is it fair to say that this was the worst administration to work with regard to enforcing immigration law in the U.S.? Please answer “yes” or “no.”

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes, it was.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Could you provide more specific examples—

Mr. GILMER. Yes.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Excuse me. Can you provide more specific examples of policies that made your job more difficult under the Biden Administration?

Mr. FABBRICATORE. Yes, for sure. You know, I retired under the Biden Administration because of how horrible it was. I just could

not give the orders to the men and women that worked for me that I felt were counter to protecting the United States. One of those was just a system that they had set up where, as a supervisor, when agents would put information in the system, it was so tiered that we could not allow these agents out onto the street to actually make arrests. They were limiting the arrests that we were making.

Mr. MCGUIRE. Dr. Gilmer, running out of time.

Mr. GILMER. Yes. I echo my colleague. The moratorium that was initially placed on making arrests significantly impacted our ability. We had cases that we were attempting to assist our state and local partners with. In one particular case, we had a sex offender who shot his victim, and they were attempting to obtain warrants on the subject, but we thought that we could actually detain that person and get them off the street, but we were not allowed to.

Mr. MCGUIRE. These policies that we are talking about today with the Biden Administration, they are absolutely not serious about protecting our border or the American people at home and abroad, and thank God we have President Trump in the White House. I would ask both of you, Mr. Fabbriatore and Dr. Gilmer, what tools does Congress need to give ICE to achieve its mission?

Ms. MACE. Very quickly.

Mr. FABBRICATORE. No. 1, we need the money to be able to have more beds. We need detention space, and we need more ERO officers out on the street and this technology as well.

Mr. GILMER. I echo my colleague. We need the technology and the resources, but we need the personnel to use that technology and fulfill the mission and purpose.

Mr. MCGUIRE. I yield. Thank you.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. In closing, I want to thank our panelists once again for your testimony this morning. We appreciate everyone's perspectives, experiences, and expertise on this.

We can use technology to investigate those who are here illegally and get them back out of the country. This issue is really important. As I said earlier, I was recently on an ICE raid in my hometown of Goose Creek, South Carolina. Goose Creek, beautiful neighborhood, beautiful houses. We roll up in there at 6 a.m. because this 18-year-old kid who came here illegally had a brick of fentanyl on him a week before that would kill God knows how many people in this country, and he was affiliated allegedly with some particular gangs.

I did a ride along with the North Charleston Police Department in Charleston, South Carolina, a couple weeks ago as well. And I want to thank all of my local law enforcement officers, ICE agents, Homeland Security agents, all these people who are out there putting their lives on the line to protect us and deport those who are here illegally. But when I was on this ride along with local police, it was really cold that night. I learned that even late at night, 10 p.m., criminals do not come out when it is cold by the way. I got to go back when it is a little bit warmer. However, instead they drove me down certain streets, like Stall Road in North Charleston. That is where the Sinaloa Cartel hangs out. That is where gang members from MS-13 hang out. Tren de Aragua is in South Carolina. These cartel gang members, these people are everywhere. It is not just in big cities like New York. It is not just the Roosevelt

Hotel where we are housing many of these people. They are in Goose Creek, South Carolina. You all have never heard of Goose Creek. It is a small town. They are literally everywhere, and it is scary, and we have allowed this to go on.

We had Maddie Hines, just 2 years ago, this young 4-year-old girl from South Carolina who was hit by an illegal alien. That guy, that criminal, that murderer, was deported under Donald Trump and let back in under Joe Biden. Last year, the spring of last year, a 4-month-old infant killed by an illegal alien on the roads of Beaufort County, South Carolina, her life stolen. That baby was stolen from the parents of an American family who did not deserve it. No one deserves that. And we have seen—thank God for Donald Trump, I praise the Lord above every single day—illegal border crossings are down by over 90 percent now just because he is President and showing strength, showing leadership, putting people like Tom Homan as border czar to make sure this stuff does not go on anymore.

I am very passionate about women's issues, not just illegal immigration, but I had a bill that passed on the floor of the House a couple of weeks ago, the Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act. I am a rape survivor. I take it very seriously. If you are here illegally and you rape a woman, you molest a child, you murder one of us, you are gone. A hundred and forty-five Democrats voted against that bill. It is shameful, and we are going to work hard for the American people, for everyone across South Carolina.

I want to thank our witnesses for everyone for being here today. God bless you. Thank you for your service to our country and her citizens to keep us safe, exposing the truth, exposing the corruption, exposing what is going on here. It is disgusting. It is shameful. People ought to be not just fired. They need to be prosecuted, and they need to go to prison. It needs to happen immediately.

So, with that, and without objection, all Members will have 5 legislative days within which to submit materials and to submit additional written questions for the witnesses, which will then be forwarded to the witnesses for their response.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:24 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

