

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NEIL L. BRADLEY  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT &  
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July 14, 2020

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Lowey and Ranking Member Granger:

As the Committee prepares to mark up the Fiscal Year 2021 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urges you to consider the following recommendations, which would promote business and economic growth, improve security, and facilitate cross-border trade and travel.

The Chamber supports \$172 million for additional customs officers, agricultural specialists, and support personnel that will facilitate the movement of goods and people at the nation's ports of entry. CBP staffing needs are hampering its ability to keep pace with the long-term growth in trade and tourists at our ports of entry and this funding demonstrates the Committee's commitment to supporting cross border economic growth, consumer safety, and security.

Further, the Chamber continues to support funding CBP initiatives that will modernize security and trade processes, including programs like the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) and the International Trade Data System (ITDS) single window that will help decrease the transaction cost of trade, open trade to small- and medium-sized businesses, and improve targeting capabilities for government. We urge Congress to continue supporting CBP and to provide appropriate funding to strengthen these programs.

The Chamber also urges the Committee to continue monitoring the funding shortfall due to the drop-in fees collected at ports of entry. We are concerned that this funding shortfall will result in service disruptions at ports of entry, especially as we move into the fall and the holiday season. Ports of entry are critical conduits to trade and tourism and service disruptions at these ports will pose new and unwelcome challenges to a recovering economy, while also increasing security and consumer safety risks. It is very important that Congress act to ensure no service interruptions at our ports of entry.

Travel and tourism are critical to both business and U.S. economic growth. While COVID-19 continues to impact travel and tourism, the Chamber supports providing resources to

the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) —including additional staffing, overtime flexibility, technology, “PreCheck” marketing support, and canine teams—to appropriately secure and facilitate the legitimate movement of air travelers. It is abundantly clear that wait times at airports are dramatically impacting travel and tourism, and Congress should do all it can in working with the TSA to develop effective staffing models and adopt emerging technology for risk-based security strategies to minimize congestion. The Chamber supports \$7.6 billion in funding for TSA.

The Chamber supports the \$2.25 billion for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. CISA plays an increasingly critical role in facilitating the development of tools, resources, and best practices to improve the nation’s cybersecurity posture and it has provided critical leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic in helping identify critical workers. The Chamber also supports full funding for the following programs: the Automated Indicator Sharing capability, the Support Anti-terrorism by Fostering Effective Technologies Act of 2002 (SAFETY Act) program within the Science and Technology Directorate, and the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) program.

The Chamber commends the committee’s prior year commitment to begin recapitalization of the U.S. Coast Guard heavy polar icebreaking fleet. Accordingly, the Chamber fully endorses the FY21 budget request for \$555 million for acquisition of the second Polar Security Cutter (PSC). Overall, this new ship class will provide assured maritime presence at the highest and lowest latitudes in support of U.S. national and economic security.

The Chamber supports increased funding for the United States Secret Service and their Electronic Crimes Task Force (ECTF) to enhance their efforts to combat cybercrime, fraud, terrorism, and espionage.


The Chamber also supports full funding for intellectual property enforcement to CBP, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center). Economic analysis of resources invested in IPR enforcement has shown that every dollar spent on federal IPR enforcement efforts generates four dollars in increased tax revenues through increased jobs and economic growth. Counterfeits, and more recently, counterfeits traveling through low-value, small parcel shipments, also pose a health and safety risk. The work of ICE and CBP, individually and through coordination with other agencies engaged at the IPR Center, has been recognized and praised for its energy and effectiveness.

Lastly, small and seasonal businesses across America are concerned about their ability to meet their workforce needs as the economy recovers. The Chamber supports the inclusion of measures that will provide cap relief for the employers of H-2B nonimmigrants that will provide these businesses with the ability to meet their seasonal workforce needs during the economic recovery.

Meeting the challenges of securing our country’s borders from all types of threats and facilitating safe travel, tourism and trade with our neighbors are equally important to the

Chamber and its members. The Chamber appreciates your consideration of these recommendations as you mark up the Fiscal Year 2021 Homeland Security Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations