

**Reading Statement by Jayson P. Ahern**

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**U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

**Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation,  
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“Cross-Border Trucking with Mexico”**

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Madam Chairman Murray, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning with my colleagues from the Department of Transportation and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, to speak briefly on the role that U.S. Customs and Border Protection plays in protecting our nation, and on CBP's involvement with the Cross Border Trucking Demonstration Project. U.S. Customs and Border Protection operates at the nexus of national security and American economic security. CBP includes more than 43,000 employees to manage, control and protect the Nation's borders, at and between the official ports of entry.

In order to accomplish our mission of securing America's borders and facilitating trade, CBP has developed a layered enforcement strategy, part of CBP's philosophy of a smart and extended border security strategy designed to protect our country and the global supply chain. On the Southwest border, CBP utilizes in combination, Advance Cargo Information, Automated Targeting and Screening, Private and Public Partnerships and Cutting Edge Technology, as well as nearly 5,000 Officers in order to

gain operational control to provide the level of security needed to protect the Homeland. All the while, recognizing the need to balance our enforcement with the facilitation of legitimate travel and trade.

***Advance Electronic Cargo Information:*** As required by the Trade Act of 2002, advance cargo information must be provided through the CBP-approved automated data interchange. For truck cargo, the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) is the approved system and information must be provided 1 hour prior to the arrival of the truck at the border crossing for non-Free and Secure Trade (FAST) shipments or 30 minutes prior to arrival for FAST shipments. ACE has made electronic risk management far more effective by allowing full security screening by the Automated Commercial System (ACS) Selectivity module and the Automated Targeting System (ATS). Additionally, DOT is a full participating agency in the International Trade Data System (ITDS), which provides a single portal for the trade community to provide required data to all government agencies.

- ***Automated Targeting System:*** CBP uses ATS to identify cargo that may pose a threat. Using risk management techniques CBP evaluates people and goods to identify a suspicious individual or shipment before it can reach our borders. To broaden the scope of targeting, CBP works with other DHS components, the Intel community, law enforcement agencies and the private sector, to expand its knowledge to better accommodate the ever-increasing demands for tactical information to continue developing and refining more sophisticated targeting tools.

- ***Public and Private Partnerships:*** CBP has developed several partnerships with industry to enhance security and facilitate trade. Foremost among these are Free and Secure Trade (FAST) and the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). The FAST program, which is operational on both our northern and southern borders, establishes bilateral initiatives between the United States and NAFTA partners designed to ensure security as well as safety while enhancing the economic prosperity of partner countries. In developing this program, Mexico and the United States have agreed to coordinate to the maximum extent possible, their commercial processes for clearance of commercial shipments at the border. This promotes security and prosperity by using common risk-management principles, supply chain security, industry partnership, and advanced technology to improve the efficient screening and release of commercial traffic at our shared border. FAST is a harmonized clearance process for shipments of known compliant importers. Thus, any truck using FAST lane processing must be a Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) approved carrier, carrying qualifying goods from a C-TPAT approved manufacturer, for a C-TPAT approved importer, and the driver must possess a valid FAST-Commercial Driver Card. C-TPAT is a voluntary government-business initiative to build cooperative relationships that strengthen and improve overall international supply chain and U.S. border security. The C-TPAT program also has a strong enforcement side. CBP suspends and removes members from the program when security measures weaken and allow the supply chain to be breached.

- ***Use of Cutting-Edge Technology:*** Given the magnitude of CBP's responsibility the development and deployment of sophisticated detection technology is essential. Deployment of Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) technology continues to increase and is viewed as a "force multiplier" that enables CBP Officers to screen a larger portion of the commercial traffic. CBP is currently utilizing large-scale X-ray and gamma ray machines, along with radiation detection devices to screen cargo. As of March 2007, 183 large-scale NII systems have been deployed, 74 of which are on the Southern Border with Mexico. Last year, CBP examined, either through a physical inspection or by using NII equipment, over 26% of the cargo arriving from Mexico. Additionally, 963 Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs) have been deployed nationwide with the ultimate goal of scanning 100 percent of containerized cargo and conveyances for illicit materials. These RPMs permit CBP to scan for illicit nuclear or radiological materials for 96% of all truck cargo and 91% of all personally owned vehicles arriving from Mexico.

In summary, the layered enforcement strategy I just mentioned will continue to be employed under this demonstration project, and security at our borders will not be diminished whatsoever. CBP will continue to review advanced data submitted by each and every truck prior to arrival at the port. We will continue to make a risk assessment on every truck based on this data and upon our Officers's questioning of the driver. Each of these trucks will pass through a radiation portal monitor, and when any risk is present, we will use our full array of non-intrusive inspection equipment and K-9 assets to ensure that no illicit materials, contraband or illegal goods are being carried in the

conveyance. Security at the border will remain paramount during this project, and will not be diminished.

Madam Chairman Murray, Members of the Subcommittee, I have briefly addressed CBP's initiatives that help CBP protect America against terrorists and the instruments of terror, while at the same time enforcing the laws of the United States and fostering the Nation's economic security through lawful travel and trade. As the DOT and FMCSA move forward with implementing this demonstration project, CBP will be a strong partner and will ensure that the twin goals of security and trade facilitation continue to be balanced at our SWB ports of entry. CBP has been, and will continue to be, an active partner in the development of this project. Throughout its implementation, we will continue to align our programs even further and ensure that the collaboration continues as the project progresses forward.

In closing, with the continued support of the President, DHS, and the Congress, CBP will succeed in meeting the challenges posed by the ongoing terrorist threat and the need to facilitate ever-increasing numbers of legitimate travel and trade.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I will be happy to answer any of your questions.