



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

January 6, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The President continues to stress the need to pass legislation that will both reopen the Federal Government and address the security and humanitarian crisis at our Nation's Southwest border. The Administration has previously transmitted budget proposals that would support his ongoing commitment to dramatically reduce the entry of illegal immigrants, criminals, and drugs; keep out terrorists, public safety threats, and those otherwise inadmissible under U.S. law; and ensure that those who do enter without legal permission can be promptly and safely returned home.

Appropriations bills for fiscal year (FY) 2019 that have already been considered by the current and previous Congresses are inadequate to fully address these critical issues. Any agreement for the current year should satisfy the following priorities:

- *Border Wall, Customs and Border Protection (CBP)*: The President requests \$5.7 billion for construction of a steel barrier for the Southwest border. Central to any strategy to achieve operational control along the southern border is physical infrastructure to provide requisite impedance and denial. In short, a physical barrier—wall—creates an enduring capability that helps field personnel stop, slow down and/or contain illegal entries. In concert with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CBP has increased its capacity to execute these funds. The Administration's full request would fund construction of a total of approximately 234 miles of new physical barrier and fully fund the top 10 priorities in CBP's Border Security Improvement Plan. **This would require an increase of \$4.1 billion over the FY 2019 funding level in the Senate version of the bill.**
- *Immigration Judge Teams – Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)*: The President requests at least \$563 million for 75 additional Immigration Judges and support staff to reduce the backlog of pending immigration cases. The Administration appreciates that the Senate's FY 2019 bill provides this level of funding, and looks forward to working with the Congress on further increases in this area to facilitate an expansion of in-country processing of asylum claims.
- *Law Enforcement Personnel, Border Patrol Agent Hiring, CBP*: The President requests \$211 million to hire 750 additional Border Patrol Agents in support of his promise to keep our borders safe and secure. While the Senate's FY 2019 bill supports some Border Patrol Agent hiring, fulfilling this request **requires an increase of \$100 million over the FY 2019 funding level in the Senate version of the bill.**
- *Law Enforcement Personnel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)*: The President requests \$571 million for 2,000 additional law enforcement personnel, as well as support staff, who enforce our U.S. immigration laws and help address gang violence, smuggling and trafficking, and the spread of drugs in our communities. **This would require an increase of \$571 million over the FY 2019 funding level in the Senate version of the bill.**

- *Detention Beds, ICE:* The President requests \$4.2 billion to support 52,000 detention beds. Given that in recent months, the number of people attempting to cross the border illegally has risen to 2,000 per day, providing additional resources for detention and transportation is essential. **This would require an increase of \$798 million over the FY 2019 funding level in the Senate version of the bill.**
- *Humanitarian Needs:* **The President requests an additional \$800 million to address urgent humanitarian needs.** This includes additional funding for enhanced medical support, transportation, consumable supplies appropriate for the population, and additional temporary facilities for processing and short-term custody of this vulnerable population, which are necessary to ensure the well-being of those taken into custody.
- *Counter-narcotics/weapons Technology:* Beyond these specific budgetary requests, the Administration looks forward to working with Congress to provide resources in other areas to address the unprecedented challenges we face along the Southwest border. Specifically, \$675 million would provide Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) technology at inbound lanes at U.S. Southwest Border Land Ports of Entry (LPOE) would allow CBP to deter and detect more contraband, including narcotics, weapons, and other materials that pose nuclear and radiological threats. **This would require an increase of \$631 million over the FY 2019 funding level in the Senate version of the bill.**

In addition, to address the humanitarian crisis of unaccompanied alien children (UACs), Democrats have proposed in-country asylum processing for Central American Minors. This would require a statutory change, along with reallocation of State Department funds to establish in-country processing capacities at Northern Triangle consulates and embassies. Furthermore, for the new procedure to achieve the desired humanitarian result, a further corresponding statutory change would be required to ensure that those who circumvent the process and come to the United States without authorization can be promptly returned home. Without the latter change, in-country processing will not reduce the unauthorized flow or successfully mitigate the humanitarian crisis.”

These upfront investments in physical barriers and technology, as well as legislation to close loopholes in our immigration system, will reduce illegal immigration, the flow of illicit drugs entering our country and reduce the long term costs for border and immigration enforcement activities.

The Administration looks forward to advancing these critical priorities as part of legislation to reopen the Government.

Sincerely,

Russell T. Vought
Acting Director