

CBP expects these additional systems to increase NII scanning rates of commercial trucks to 72 percent and passenger vehicles to 40 percent by fiscal year 2024.

While this will undoubtedly improve security, it will also increase the risk that transnational criminal organizations will shift their smuggling efforts to smaller ports of entry that lack NII equipment, such as those in my district.

This is a concern that I raised with CBP and port officials during a field hearing I held with my colleague, Congressman CRENSHAW, in my district in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, last December.

My legislation aims to ensure that all land ports of entry are appropriately equipped to combat smuggling.

Specifically, H.R. 5273 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a plan to expeditiously scan 100 percent of vehicles with NII systems or other similar technology at each port of entry.

It will also require the Secretary to report annually on the Department's progress implementing the plan until 100 percent of commercial and passenger vehicles are scanned.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the bipartisan work that went into developing this legislation. Specifically, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. CRENSHAW, for his support on the bill.

H.R. 5273, if enacted, will help keep our communities more secure by ensuring that CBP has the tools in place to do a more effective job at interdicting dangerous narcotics and dangerous materials.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my House colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 5273, the Securing America's Ports Act. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation, and I thank my colleague from New Mexico for her work on this legislation.

Our ports of entry continue to be a preferred avenue for transnational criminal organizations and drug smugglers to transport narcotics and contraband into the United States.

In fact, U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized more than 455,000 pounds of narcotics at our ports in fiscal year 2019 alone.

The amount of fentanyl seized in 2019 was enough for more than 577 million lethal doses. That is more than the entire population of the United States.

H.R. 5273 forces the Department to act on securing the ports of entry by requiring the Secretary to develop a plan to scan all commercial and passenger vehicles entering the United States through land ports using non-intrusive inspection systems or similar systems within 180 days.

This bill encourages continued research and development, including con-

sideration of emerging technology, to meet the inspection system plan requirements.

H.R. 5273 also requires the Secretary to establish benchmarks to evaluate progress toward 100 percent scanning, estimated costs, anticipated impacts on commerce, and anticipated impacts on border security operations, including staffing considerations.

Last year, Congress made a significant investment in funding nonintrusive inspection equipment for implementation across the land borders over a 5-year period, and this bill would ensure an appropriate plan is in place so that rollout runs smoothly, and taxpayer dollars are well spent.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers and am prepared to close after the gentleman from Texas closes.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, again, it is vital that all vehicles entering the United States are scanned with NII systems or similar technology to combat the smuggling of drugs and other contraband into the country.

My legislation would help do just that by requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a plan to achieve 100 percent scanning rate of vehicles at each port of entry and reporting on progress annually until that goal is achieved.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on the Committee of Homeland Security for their unanimous support to favorably report my bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 5273, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. TORRES SMALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5273, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DHS FIELD ENGAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 504) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Department of Homeland Security to develop an engagement strategy with fusion centers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY WITH FUSION CENTERS.

Section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h) is amended by—

(1) redesignating subsections (j) and (k) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively; and

(2) inserting after subsection (i) the following:

"(j) FUSION CENTER INFORMATION SHARING STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act, and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall develop or update a strategy for Department engagement with fusion centers. Such strategy shall be developed and updated in consultation with the heads of intelligence components of the Department, the Chief Privacy Officer, the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, officials of fusion centers, officers designated as Homeland Security Advisors, and the heads of other relevant agencies, as appropriate. Such strategy shall include the following:

"(1) Specific goals and objectives for sharing information and engaging with fusion centers—

"(A) through the direct deployment of personnel from intelligence components of the Department;

"(B) through the use of Department unclassified and classified information sharing systems, including the Homeland Security Information Network and the Homeland Secure Data Network, or any successor systems; and

"(C) through any additional means.

"(2) The performance metrics to be used to measure success in achieving the goals and objectives referred to in paragraph (1).

"(3) A 5-year plan for continued engagement with fusion centers."

SEC. 3. OFFICE OF INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYSIS FIELD PERSONNEL SUPPORT TO FUSION CENTERS.

(a) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall—

(1) consider the effectiveness of existing processes to identify and prepare field personnel for deployment to support fusion centers and internal mechanisms to ensure oversight and accountability of such field personnel, including field personnel assigned to one center and field personnel assigned to multiple centers; and

(2) publish and disseminate performance metrics, taking into account, as appropriate, regional and threat diversity, for—

(A) field personnel from the Office of Intelligence and Analysis assigned to an individual fusion center;

(B) field personnel from the Office of Intelligence and Analysis assigned to multiple fusion centers; and

(C) Regional Directors of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis to ensure accountability for monitoring all field personnel under the supervision of such Regional Directors.

(b) TRAINING.—In consultation with the Chief Information Officer, the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall develop and implement a formalized training module for fusion center personnel regarding the classified Homeland Secure Data Network, or any successor system.

(c) FUSION CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term "fusion center" has the meaning given such term in section 210A(k) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as so redesignated by section 2.

SEC. 4. DHS COMPONENT USAGE OF THE HOMELAND SECURITY INFORMATION NETWORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the

Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, and in accordance with the functions and responsibilities assigned to the Under Secretary under title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121 et seq.), shall—

(1) develop policies and metrics to ensure effective use by components of the Department of the unclassified Homeland Security Information Network (referred to in this section as “HSIN”), or any successor system; and

(2) develop policies for posting unclassified products on HSIN, or any successor system.

(b) **TECHNICAL ENHANCEMENTS.**—The Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the Chief Intelligence Officer, shall assess and implement, as appropriate, technical enhancements to HSIN to improve usability, including search functionality, data analysis, and collaboration capabilities.

SEC. 5. REPORT.

Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives that describes the implementation of—

(1) the fusion center information sharing strategy required under section 210A(j) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by section 2, based on performance metrics developed pursuant to such strategy;

(2) the deployment of field personnel to fusion centers (as such term is defined in section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h)), in accordance with section 3, based on performance metrics developed pursuant to such section; and

(3) policies that seek to ensure the effective use of the Homeland Security Information Network, in accordance with section 4, based on the metrics developed pursuant to such section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. TORRES SMALL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CRENSHAW) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague on the other side of the aisle, Mr. BACON, for his leadership on the DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act.

This bill was passed by the House of Representatives last January on a voice vote. It was also passed unanimously by the Senate in July after technical edits to the bill text.

The bill returns to the House floor today for us to consider the bill, as amended by the Senate, and send it to the President.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, once again.

In the face of an evolving and increasingly complex threat landscape, it is critically important to ensure that there is collaboration and information sharing.

The Department of Homeland Security's 79 fusion centers, located across the country, help to connect the dots about possible terrorist plots, including domestic terrorist plots.

A 2016 review found that DHS does not have a strategic engagement plan for these 79 fusion centers.

H.R. 504 will help address this gap by requiring DHS to develop a Department-wide strategy for engaging with fusion centers. This includes the development of metrics that will help hold fusion center staff accountable for their performance.

This legislation also requires DHS to improve the classified and unclassified information-sharing systems that are used by fusion centers to ensure that information is shared properly and in accordance with Department standards.

In part, H.R. 504 would require that all information-sharing policies are developed and maintained by the Department's privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties officers.

Over the past year, as communities across the country suffered from acts of targeted violence and terrorism, we have been reminded of the importance of information sharing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 504, the DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act.

This legislation was introduced by my friend and colleague from Nebraska, Representative DON BACON. I applaud Congressman BACON's initiative in sponsoring H.R. 504, which requires the Department of Homeland Security to:

Develop an engagement strategy for the national network of fusion centers;

Performance metrics for DHS personnel deployed to support State and local fusion centers; and,

Training for fusion center personnel in the use of available DHS information-sharing systems.

Additionally, the bill ensures that DHS component agencies are sharing appropriate information, through secure channels, with fusion center personnel.

Representing a border State, I want to ensure that DHS agencies, including Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, have relevant criminal or terrorism information that is accessible to appropriate fusion center personnel. This will enhance coordination and situational awareness throughout the homeland.

This bill has already passed the House of Representatives and was passed in the Senate with minor amendments. Passage of the bill today

will send H.R. 504 to the President's desk.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to again support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and friends from New Mexico and Texas for their leadership today and guidance to the floor.

I rise in support of H.R. 504, the DHS Field Engagement Accountability Act, which will improve the management, integration, transparency, and overall mission performance of the 79 State and local fusion centers across our country.

Creating a robust and mature information-sharing relationship between the Department of Homeland Security and State and local law enforcement is vital for our Homeland Security.

Since the September 11, 2001, attacks, State and local fusion centers have become key stakeholders in the homeland security of our country, and it is an important mission. Yet, despite their importance, the Government Accountability Office has observed that a lack of standardization in manpower, data systems, and training has hurt their effectiveness.

H.R. 504 is focused on setting the conditions to better allow our fusion centers to accomplish the mission for which they were created and funded.

My home State fusion center, the Nebraska Information Analysis Center, or NIAC, is the information exchange gateway for State, local, and Federal authorities serving all of the 93 counties in Nebraska.

NIAC collects, analyzes, and shares information on crime and terrorism with Federal, State, local, and Tribal law enforcement organizations and with other public and private entities as appropriate.

Recently, the NIAC was called upon to collect and analyze reports of suspicious drone activity in western Nebraska, for example.

Our Nation's fusion centers have a rapidly expanding range of missions that protect our citizens, and the Department of Homeland Security has a legal obligation to coordinate with and assist these State and local centers. So my legislation requires DHS to develop an engagement strategy to coordinate information sharing, technology, and personnel resources with these fusion centers.

Additionally, this bill requires DHS to develop clear and robust performance metrics for Federal personnel assigned to these centers. This will help both the headquarters and fusion center directors improve the effectiveness, while ensuring oversight and accountability.

In addition to personnel, DHS also provides fusion centers with access to classified and sensitive information.

H.R. 504 calls for improvements in training and technology to support this vital information exchange, including the requirement that DHS share intelligence products with fusion centers when appropriate.

Over the years, Congress has seen a vast improvement in DHS's support for these key stakeholders, including the NIAC. These improvements are vital to DHS sharing timely and relevant information with relevant stakeholders on the front lines of a constantly evolving threat landscape.

This bill will help those on the front lines defend against those who threaten or attack our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman THOMPSON and Ranking Member ROGERS for bringing this bill to the floor. I also thank Chairman JOHNSON and Ranking Member PETERS in the Senate for moving this bill through the Senate.

This is a commonsense measure, and with another strong showing of bipartisan support from the House. I look forward to the bill quickly becoming law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 504.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers and am prepared to close after the gentleman from Texas closes.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I, again, want to thank Representative BACON for his work on this legislation, as well as Chairman THOMPSON, Ranking Member ROGERS, Senator JOHNSON, and Senator PETERS for moving this bill through the House and Senate committees.

The sharing of counterterrorism and other homeland security information with State and local officials is vital in our efforts to protect the homeland. I am proud that we are able to support further enhancing these efforts in a bipartisan manner today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 504 passed the House on voice vote last Friday and passed the Senate on voice vote in July after technical edits were incorporated into the text.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill again so that it can be sent to the White House for the President's signature.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. TORRES SMALL) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 504.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOMELAND SECURITY FOR CHILDREN ACT

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2932) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to ensure that the needs of children are considered in homeland security planning, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2932

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Homeland Security for Children Act".

SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR STRATEGY, POLICY, AND PLANS.

Paragraph (6) of section 709(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 349(c)) is amended by inserting ", including feedback from organizations representing the needs of children," after "stakeholder feedback".

SEC. 3. TECHNICAL EXPERT AUTHORIZED.

Paragraph (2) of section 503(b) of the Homeland Security Act (6 U.S.C. 313(b)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (G), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (H), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(I) identify and integrate the needs of children into activities to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against the risk of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other manmade disasters, including catastrophic incidents, including by appointing a technical expert, who may consult with relevant outside organizations and experts, as necessary, to coordinate such integration, as necessary."

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter for five years, the Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report describing the efforts the Department has undertaken to review and incorporate feedback from organizations representing the needs of children into Department policy in accordance with paragraph (6) of section 709(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as amended by section 2 of this Act), including information on the following:

(1) The designation of any individual responsible for carrying out such paragraph (6).

(2) Any review, formal or informal, of Department policies, programs, or activities to assess the suitability of such policies, programs, or activities for children and where feedback from organizations representing the needs of children should be reviewed and incorporated.

(3) Any review, change, modification, or promulgation of Department policies, programs, or activities to ensure that such policies, programs, or activities are appropriate for children.

(4) Coordination with organizations or experts outside the Department pursuant to such paragraph (6) conducted to inform any such review, change, modification, or promulgation of such policies, programs, or activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. TORRES SMALL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CRENSHAW) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 2932, the Homeland Security for Children Act.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the Department of Homeland Security's policies and programs, it is important the children, the most vulnerable among us, are taken into consideration.

H.R. 2932, introduced by my fellow Subcommittee Chairman DONALD PAYNE, would, for the first time, authorize the children's technical expert position within FEMA to ensure the needs of children are incorporated in all disaster-related activities.

Importantly, the bill recognizes that, when it comes to DHS, the impacts of policies and programs go well beyond disaster response and recovery. It recognizes that, from screening protocols at TSA checkpoints to short-term detention standards to active-shooter training, DHS policy must incorporate the needs of children.

To that end, H.R. 2932 would direct the Department of Homeland Security's Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans to incorporate the needs of children in all departmental policies, programs, and activities. A similar measure passed by voice vote in the full House passed last Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my House colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, January 7, 2020.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON, Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I write concerning H.R. 2932, the Homeland Security for Children Act. There are certain provisions in this legislation that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 2932, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure agrees to forgo action on the bill. However, this is conditional on our