

MARK FRIEL: Good morning everyone. Welcome to CBP's headquarters. Those of you in the room we're excited to have you here, and of course this is available also via Facebook Live and on DHS's Facebook page and on dhs.gov, and also on CBP's YouTube channel. My name is Mike Friel, I'm the Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Public Affairs at Customs and Border Protection. And today CBP Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Citizenship and Immigration Services are here to present enforcement and removal numbers, and border security efforts for FY 2017 and discuss the administration's immigration priorities. The principal officials who will present today are as follows ICE's Acting Director, Thomas Homan, CBP's Acting Deputy Commissioner, Ronald Vitello, and CIS's Director, Francis Cissna. In your press kits, what you have are the principal's biographies, so you can look at those for quotations. Also, ICE's FY 2017 Enforcement and Removal Operations Report. CBP's 2017 Border Security Report and DHS's press release. Today's press conferences on the record. Couple notes, Director Homan will begin with opening remarks, followed by Deputy Commissioner Vitello, followed by Director Cissna. Director Cissna will then turn it over to questions and answers. And so, he will ask for you to raise your hands. For the first questions, we ask that you state your name, your organization, and then direct your question to the principal that you have the question for. We ask that you ask one question at a time to give your colleagues an opportunity to ask their questions as well. Also, if we don't get to your question, know that we will be available, the press staff will be available after this to take your questions, and so you can refer to Jonathan Hoffman from DHS Public Affairs for DHS questions. Dan Hetlage with CBP Press Office, and Jonathan Withington from USCIS after the event. Also, we will be available this afternoon to go into a bit of a deeper dive on the data. There's a lot of data here. We understand that, and we want to make ourselves available to you. So, if you would like to attend that as well or send somebody to attend that from your organizations feel free to do that. CBP's a deeper dive is at 1:00 p.m. followed by ICE. ICE is after that and I think ICE is at 2:15. With that, I'll introduce you to Director Homan.

THOMAS HOMAN: Good morning. Thank you for joining us. I want to begin by thanking DHS Acting Secretary Elaine Duke for her support of ICE and the work we do. Even though she couldn't be with us today we appreciate her support. Also want to recognize CBP Deputy Commissioner Ron Vitello and USCIS Director Francis Cissna, who joining me here today. They're terrific partners and friends. And we are working closely together to advance our priorities that the Trump administration has set forth, to fully enforce our nation's immigration laws. As part of that effort, I'm pleased to share some highlights and important results the men and women of ICE achieved during fiscal year 2017. As directed by President Trump, our efforts are focused toward enforcing the law and securing our border. And while we have made good progress and achieved a great deal this year, we understand there is much to be done. Throughout the organization our deportation officers and special agents succeeded across a broad range of initiatives and operations, from disrupting, dismantling illegal drug trafficking networks, to arresting or removing aliens, including criminals, who were all too often released back into our communities. As most you know, our enforcement and investigative activities are handled by two distinct divisions within our agency. Enforcement Removal Operations, known as ERO, and Homeland Security Investigations known as HSI. I'll start with ERO. In ERO, the most significant gains are made in administrative arrests and interior removals. As stated in the President's executive orders on January 25th regarding interior enforcement, ICE will no longer

exempt any class removal alien from potential enforcement activity. In other words, the officers are empowered to do their sworn duty and enforce the law as it was written and enacted by Congress. Administrator arrests totaled more than 143,000. Of those, 110,568 occurred after January 20th which is a 42% increase over the same time period last year. I read a lot of stories and comments over the past several months falsely accusing ICE of conducting indiscriminate raids and sweeps arresting people at churches, arresting people at hospitals. I repeatedly said that it's false. We conduct targeted enforcement operations. Every person we arrest we know exactly who we're going to arrest and where we're going to arrest them, based on a lot of investigative intelligence data. Here the data supports exactly I just said. Ninety two percent of all aliens arrested by ICE this year had criminal convictions, were an immigration fugitive, or they were an illegal re-entry. That means they were formerly removed from the country and re-entered the country again illegally, which is a felony itself. This is also proof that ICE officers know how to prioritize without overly prescriptive mandates. We've got 20,000 employees that do their job very well and the numbers show they operated at perfection this year under the President's mandates. For those who say that ICE no longer prioritizes criminals, fact, we arrested more criminals this year than we did last year. These numbers speak for themselves. The men and women of ICE prioritized exactly as the mission dictated. The direction from the top may change, but the consistency and excellence of the results delivered by the deportation officers is steadfast. I couldn't be prouder of the men and women of ICE. Interior removals were also significantly higher in FY 17 than they were the year before. In FY 17, ICE removed more than 81,000 aliens from the interior of the country. Over 61,000 of those removals occurred after January 20th. That's an increase of 37% over last year. While the historic low and CBP's border apprehensions led to a slight decline in overall removals, ICE's strong interior enforcement efforts nearly made up all the difference. Overall removals are down because the border is under better control than it has been in 45 years. That's a good story. Finally, I'm happy to report that the number of countries who do not cooperate in return of their nationals has decreased. [INDISCERNIBLE 00:07:54] last year at 24, to 12, and now 9. Furthermore, the number of countries who are in danger of being labeled uncooperative has fallen from 47 to 36. We've also just issued visa sanctions to four additional countries in FY 17, which sends a clear message -- cooperate or face consequences. The results achieved by the special agents of Homeland Security Investigations are equally impressive. First our efforts to uphold public safety were strengthened by more than 4,800 criminal arrests made in national anti-gang operations. In addition, a renewed focus on identifying and dismantling the ultraviolent MS13 gang led to nearly 800 arrests in FY 17. That's an 83% increase over last year. ICE is also on the frontlines of the fight against illegal narcotics trafficking that is contributing to the country's deadly opioid epidemic. Our special agency seized approximately 7,000 pounds of heroin and more than 2,300 pounds of Fentanyl, a drug so deadly just a few grams will be lethal. As I've said these few statistics represent only a fraction of the success ICE's deportation officers and special agents achieved this year. A more detailed report of our results is available online and we'll also be holding a press call later to provide a more in-depth discussion of these numbers. At the conclusion of today's announcement, I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have. As I said this is this is positive progress, which the men and women of ICE have been able to achieve with existing resources. But like I also said, more needs to be done. We've maintained the dedication shown by personnel by matching it with more staffing resources as the president requested. We need to address misguided policies and loopholes that only serve as pull factors for more illegal

immigration. The administration taking into account the impact of immigration law enforcement officers has proposed several goals that seek to address these challenges.

[00:10:04]

And I stand ready to work alongside my partners here today to advance these priorities. We sent a list of priorities and policy changes and judicial challenges to the Hill a few weeks ago. And I read a lot of media that they were created by the White House. There's nothing further from the truth. The three men on this stage wrote the majority of those requests to the Hill. These requests based on a lot of years of experience on the frontline and what we need to be even more successful than we've been this year to close those loopholes. We must continue to target violent gangs like MS13, and prevent them from rebuilding what we've begun to dismantle. And we need to hold sanctuary jurisdictions accountable for putting innocent lives at risk by shielding criminal aliens from enforcement. These numbers are really impressive this year despite the sanctuary city move that requires more resources and more work to find these public safety threats that were released back in the community by jurisdictions that want to call themselves sanctuaries. I want to thank you for your time. I'd like to turn it over to Deputy Commissioner Rob Vitello of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Ron.

RONALD VITELLO: Good morning everyone. I'm honored to be here with my colleagues from ICE and USCIS. Thank you Director Homan and Director Cissna. Before I get to the report and our numbers, I want to recognize the hardworking men and women of CBP. Working on the front lines they do a lot to protect this great nation. They do an exceptional job and we're very proud of them. Turning to the report, today we are releasing the CBP Border Security Report for Fiscal Year 2017. I want to emphasize that this is truly a team effort. So, I want to thank the Department as well as our partners in ICE and CIS. The report summarizes CBP's Border Enforcement efforts which reflect our focus on counterterrorism, countering transnational organized crime, and protecting our southern northern and coastal borders. The report contains important data about enforcement, use of force, recruiting hiring and retention, and the border infrastructure and technology. For fiscal year 2017 CBP reported 310,531 apprehensions by the U.S. Border Patrol between our air, land, and sea ports of entry, and 216, 370 inadmissible cases by CBP officers at our ports of entry in 2017. That's a 23.7% decline over the previous year. Illegal immigration along the Southwest border in particular declined sharply from January 21st to April which was the lowest month of border enforcement activity on record. In May however we began seeing a month over month increase in apprehensions and inadmissible cases along the southwest border, notably from children, either as part of a family unit, or unaccompanied by their parent or legal guardian. We remain concerned about the steady increase in the flow of unaccompanied children and family units from Central America. This trend is enabled by legal and policy loopholes which are exploited by transnational criminal organizations engaged in human smuggling and trafficking. CBP seized nearly 97 million in unreported currency, more than 2,300 firearms, and more than 305,000 rounds of ammunition through our enforcement process. And CBP also played a critical counternarcotics role resulting in the seizure of more than 2.14 million pounds of narcotics and the disruption of more than 81,000 pounds of narcotics and 2017. We've also seen a significant increase in the seizure of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids over the past three years from roughly two pounds in fiscal year 2013 to nearly 1,500

pounds in fiscal year 2017, and mainly through the International Mail and Express consignment facilities. I also want to mention the contribution of our air and marine operations. In addition to flying support for nearly 12% of all Border Patrol apprehensions, in FY 17 Air and Marine personnel operating in the illicit drug transit zone in the Eastern Pacific and the Caribbean contributed to 155 seizure or disruptions and interdiction events, stopping over 209,390 pounds of cocaine. This effort is part of the Joint Interagency Task Force South, which coordinates long range aerial patrols and surveillance missions as part of Operation Martillo. Use of force -- the job of the men and the women who wear the uniform is dangerous. Despite the decline in apprehensions this year, assault on CBP agents and officers increased by 44.8% to 847 in 2017.

[00:15:00]

Meanwhile CBP law enforcement officers use of firearms declined to a record low of 17, a 69% drop from a high of 55 incidents in 2012. This trend follows a number of CBP initiatives recently undertaken. Creation of the use of force investigative teams, use of force review boards at both the national and local levels, enhanced scenario based training, improved reporting, and the creation of the law enforcement safety and compliance directorate. We've also been more transparent in our response to the use of force incidents, posting data on our website and releasing the results of the National Use of Force review board proceedings. Recruiting, hiring, and retention -- as many of you know, CBP has faced and continues to face challenges in hiring and retention. Nevertheless, CBP surpassed FY 16 hiring by 14%, adding 1,477 law enforcement officers, compared to 1,291 in 2016. The administration has instructed us to hire an additional 5,000 Border Patrol agents. This also means we will make collateral hires for mission support as well as to address backfill attrition and close staffing gaps across all three uniformed components. To meet the executive order hiring mandate, CBP is working to implement modifications to the administration of the polygraph exam, the entrance exam, and physical fitness testing. To be clear CBP is not lowering standards in order to meet this frontline personnel requirement. Our hiring process will continue so that only individuals with the highest integrity serve as agents and officers safeguarding the nation's border. In response to the President's executive order on border security and immigration enforcement improvements and subsequent guidance from the Department of Homeland Security, CBP selected six contractors to build eight wall prototypes on the border near San Diego. Construction began in September and was concluded in October, and we have begun testing and the evaluation phase. We know however that the wall is part of a larger enforcement security system, so we are committed to using new technologies to augment our resources and employ such sensors, lighting, radar, and mobile towers. In September the U.S. Border Patrol Tucson sector began evaluating small unmanned aircraft systems in the operational environment as part of a pilot program. The remotely piloted SUAS will enable Border Patrol agents in the field to provide reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, tracking, capabilities and difficult to access or otherwise high-risk areas. After measuring and both hot and cold weather capabilities CBP expects a final review, including decisions about future investment and program expansion in the late spring of 2018. I appreciate your attendance at today's conference. I am grateful for the participation of our law enforcement. I'll now introduce the Director of USCIS Francis Cissna.

FRANCIS CISSNA: Thank Ron and Tom for the invitation to appear with you today, and thank you also to the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security who worked so hard this year to secure our borders and safeguard our cities. President Trump has made it his administration's priority to ensure that our immigration laws and policies promote national security and public safety as well as protect the interests of American workers. USCIS carries out this mission by administering a lawful immigration system. We strive to safeguard the integrity of the system and to ensure that those who immigrate to the U.S. share our civic values and seek to make positive contributions to our nation. As you've heard today the men and women of DHS have been working hard to stop illegal immigration, secure our borders, and protect American jobs. USCIS is proud to partner through our fraud detection and national security directorate with federal law enforcement to provide critical information for immigration enforcement initiatives. Cited as an example the recent Operation Matador gang enforcement action that USCIS helped with. The President's priorities ensure that our immigration system aligns with the needs of our economy and protects against ever evolving national security threats. Among these priorities are ending extended family migration, ending asylum abuse, and shifting to a merit based immigration system. Extended family migration is a process by which extended family members, nieces, nephews, and others outside the immediate family unit are admitted to the United States through a family based chain. Preliminary data from fiscal year 2017 shows that two out of three of our 1 million plus immigrants were admitted in family based categories. Only 66,000 of that 1 million lawful permanent residents were admitted based on their skills or job offer.

[00:20:05]

We also need to ensure that undeserving individuals are not exploiting the asylum system to remain in the United States. This requires tightening our asylum standards and imposing penalties on individuals who commit asylum fraud. Thousands of frivolous or fraudulent asylum claimants are released into the country each year pending their court date often years in the future. We must take action to bring integrity back into the asylum process. We also need Congress to help us protect the American workforce by requiring you verify, and strengthening laws to stop employment discrimination against U.S. workers. Overall our immigration system works best when CBP, ICE, and USCIS come together to stem the tide of illegal immigration to our country, through strong border and interior enforcement, coupled with commonsense immigration policies that prioritize America's safety for workers and our overall economic success. These key priorities are the guideposts for ensuring the security of our nation and its citizens. Thank you. So, at this point we are happy to take questions from the press. Yes.

LAURA MECKLER: I'm Laura Meckler from the Wall Street Journal. I have a question and then a quick statistical query [INDISCERNIBLE 00:21:31] for you. My question is about given the historic drop in apprehensions at the border, why is it necessary to spend billions of dollars on a border wall at this point? And my question for Mr. Homan, maybe he'll get this later, can you provide a -- you talk about the percentage of the arrests that are criminals, of course, your definition of criminal is different than the definition used by the prior administration. Can you give us -- well, it is, because you have a broader definition of what qualifies as a criminal -- can you give a percentage based on their definition, so we can see some apples to apples?

FRANCIS CISSNA: So, on the question about --

THOMAS HOMAN: We can't hear you unless you get to the microphone.

FRANCIS CISSNA: So regarding your question on the wall we're not just asking for a barrier at the at the border. That's one of the tools in the toolkit. We're asking for increased situational awareness, we're asking for an enforcement zone at the immediate border. I've been in the Border Patrol for quite a while. I've been in situations where we failed to predict surges in illegal activity. It's good that the numbers are down, that the border's in more control than it's been in quite some time. But this is a time for us to accelerate those gains and having an enforcement zone and having the equipment for our agents to operate safely in will prevent future problems for us.

THOMAS HOMAN: If I answer your question about the percentage of criminals. First of all, the definition of criminals hasn't changed. Criminals still are those who have a criminal conviction. I think that's at 72% of those we arrested had a criminal conviction. The issue is under the last administration, they had to have a criminal conviction to even put a detainer on them, which means you could be arrested for a serious crime, be in a county jail, we weren't even allowed to put a detainer on them even though they're in the country illegally and were arrested for significant crime. That was bad. So, this administration is making sense of that. If you're in this country illegally and you enter this country illegally, which is a crime within itself, let's remember that, and yet you commit another crime against a citizen in this country, you're a priority for arrest. And there is no prerequisite that you commit yet another crime to enforce immigration law. You know the IRS enforces tax law, we enforce immigration law. That's our job. And what we're going to do. So, there's no prerequisite you have to commit another crime for us to pay attention to you. Now the numbers 92% are important, here is why. Because the vast majority are criminals. We arrested more criminals this year than last year, which kind of takes the wind out of the sails of people that say we don't prioritize criminals anymore. We absolutely do, and the numbers prove it. But the remainder of the numbers are fugitives. These are people at billions of dollars of taxpayers' money to patrol the border, have immigration court, detention, billions of dollars of taxpayer money to give these people due process. Once a federal judge issues a final order from the bench they need to mean something, or there's no integrity the entire system. So, people had their day in court and are fugitives because they refuse to honor a judge's order are being held accountable. If we keep sending that message you can have due process at great taxpayer expense, get a final order, but you know what, you're not a priority, you're never going fix the border.

LAURA MECKLER: Is that part of the 72%, people with --

[OVERLAY]

THOMAS HOMAN: No, that's in addition to the 72%. And the third piece of that bucket of 92% are those who re-entered the United States after being formerly deported, which is a felony. That's United States Code 1326. It's a felony on its face to re-enter this country after removal. So,

the numbers clearly show the men and women of ICE are executing perfectly on the executive orders.

[00:25:03]

They're doing a great job. Ma'am.

FEMALE 1: I'm just trying to follow up on Laura's question there. The argument that the President has made is that we need to have a border barrier, because people are pouring over the border, drugs are flying over the border. Your statistics show that there are fewer people coming over. So, can you just explain for the people who are listening, for the people who are watching, why we still need to have that physical barrier there?

RONALD VITELLO: In this society and all of our lives we use walls and fences to protect things. It shouldn't be any different on the border. Yeah, the traffic is down. That's a good thing. But we still need -- we are still challenge with access, we're still challenged with situational awareness, and we're still challenged with security on that border. And so, to take the 1,000 arrests a day to say that we're finished, it's not stating what the facts are. We're still arresting nearly 1,000 people a day coming across the border, most of that on the southwest border. So, we want to have more capability. We want more agents, we need more technology, and we want that barrier to have a safer and more secure environment.

THOMAS HOMAN: If I could add to that -- I've been asked that question a lot. I did start my career on the Border Patrol. Me and Ron pretty much started together a long, long time ago. Look, they built the border wall in San Diego, numbers went down tremendously. They built in El Paso they went down. They built in certain parts of Arizona it went down. Every place they built a wall barrier, it has decreased significantly the illegal crossings. Why would we not want to build a wall? What is the cost of national security and public safety? Why not make that investment? It's a wise investment. It's going to make this country safer. And this going drive the numbers even lower. I think it's a wise investment based on my 34 years' experience. Ma'am.

FEMALE 2: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:26:55]. My question is for you, Director Homan. ICE arrested [INDISCERNIBLE 00:27:02] spoke to the media and activists are saying about [INDISCERNIBLE 00:27:09] administration. Is that true? What do you have to say about that?

THOMAS HOMAN: I'm not surprised the activists make that claim. We get a lot of allegations every day. Absolutely. No there's no truth to the allegation. If the person was there illegally and he came to our attention we did our job. We did our sworn duty. We did the job that [INDISCERNIBLE 00:27:26] Congress enacted. Again, I want to make it clear that the President's made it clear in executive orders, there's no population off the table. If you're in this country illegally, we're looking for you and we're going to look to apprehend you. You will get your day in court. But after that day in court if the decision is you're going home. But as I said earlier in my presentation earlier, we get allegations every day against the fine men and women of ICE. And it's really sad, the vilification of these men and women. And men and women of the Border Patrol, these are people who chose the profession -- no one's getting rich in that job, but

they strap a gun to their hip every day to protect their communities, leave the safety and security of their homes and their families to defend this nation. The last thing they need is vilification from these activist groups and NGOs and the rest of them. These are 60,000 American patriots that chooses a profession to defend his country. I got nothing but great admiration for every one of them. Sir.

MALE 1: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:28:23] with U.S. [INDISCERNIBLE 00:28:25]. This question is for you [INDISCERNIBLE 00:28:27] Director. I understand that ICE -- that you were saying that ICE hasn't made -- it's not the case that criminals are not a priority for enforcement. But the 42% increase in people who have been apprehended for administrative violations, why has there been such a large increase for that particular group?

THOMAS HOMAN: Well, it's easy. When you go from 0 to 100, you're going to see an increase. Our last administration, unless you're a convicted criminal, you weren't a priority for us to go out and look for. This President, like him or love him, is doing the right thing. And people can argue all they want about priorities and the policies of this administration. What this president has done -- 45 year low on border crossing. That's not a coincidence that's based on this president and his belief in letting the men women of ICE and Border Patrol do their job. As far as a 42% increase in non-criminals, we've got to remember who they are now. These are these people who had their due process in the eyes of the law in front of a judge who got a final order. That needs to be executed. If we don't execute them, you're never going to fix the border. As long as people think they get by the fine men and women of Border Patrol, no one's looking for them, those days are over. We're looking for them and that's why when I testified three months ago, a lot people were attacked against -- that you need to look over your shoulder. It's not okay to violate the laws of this country. It's not okay. So, you should be concerned just like you and I would be concerned because speeding down a highway, we won't get a ticket. Or we lie on our taxes, we're going to get audited. If you choose to violate the laws of this country, you should be concerned that ICE is --

[00:30:02]

that's the way it's supposed to be. And the rest of that non-criminal, we're talking about people that re-entered the United States after being removed. That is a felony on its face. So, if you look at what our priorities were on the criminals, the re-entries and the fugitives, we set our priorities all along -- which people said we didn't prioritize. Ninety two percent is pretty much perfection in the execution. Now let's talk about what the other 8%, which is collateral arrest. Let me tell you what most of those collateral arrests come from. They come from so-called sanctuary cities. When you release a public safety threat to the public, that is just foolish. It is stupid. And they say they're protecting immigrant community by not working with us in the jails and on these criminal aliens. First of all, it's a public safety issue. It's an officer safety issue where the men and women of ICE can't go in the safety, security, and privacy of a county jail to take a public safety threat into custody. Now we're forced to go out into their neighborhoods on their turf, without access to who knows what weapons to make these arrests, making the job of my officers even more dangerous. So, we're going to arrest them either way, which means if I can't get them from the jail, now we've got to go find them at their homes or the place of business. Chances are

when we go to their homes or place of business, we're going to find other illegal aliens that weren't even on our radar to begin with. Now they're on the radar. So, there's this falsehood being pushed out there. Are sanctuary cities protecting immigrant communities? No, they put immigrant communities at risk of more arrests because they're forcing our hand to go into neighborhoods.

MALE 2: Sir, I just want to rephrase the border wall question for Mr. Vitello. So, my question is during the campaign there was talk about the sea to shining sea wall. We've moved on from and that you've requested 1.6 billion for targeted 74 miles. Given the drop in border traffic, do you anticipate that this will be sort of the final request for a border wall, or do you anticipate making another request in the next fiscal year, and the next budget cycle?

RONALD VITELLO: The walls we have now work. The walls that we're asking for are going to help us do better. But the plan is we've evaluated -- the folks on the Border Patrol have evaluated the entire border. And so, the 1.6 for the request for '18 is the first tranche. There's going to be additional requests that go beyond that as well.

MALE 2: And if the border traffic remains at current levels or even lower, you still think that there would be another request for more mileage of border wall?

RONALD VITELLO: It's not just wall, it's an enforcement zone. And we want that in all of the right places. The traffic patterns will shift, that's been part of our history in my career. So, we have to shore up where we need it the most now, which is the Rio Grande Valley, and some replacement wall in San Diego. Those are the two priorities for next year, and then the traffic will change, and we'll adjust our priorities for the further on. But we need to be ready for that next push so we're not just what we're going to do next year but we're going to do in the following years.

FEMALE 3: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:33:03]. Thank you for joining us. During the campaign the President pledged to his base particularly a massive deportation plan of all 11,000,000 undocumented immigrants here. So, based on your trends that your seeing both on the border and interior enforcement, are you on track to meeting that promise -- fulfilling the promise deporting 11,000,000 people. I think he said within the first year. I forgot the timeframe. But are you on track to meeting and fulfilling that promise?

THOMAS HOMAN: Look, [INDISCERNIBLE 00:33:39] I think ICE is -- we're hitting on all cylinders with our current resources. The President's asked for 10,000 more officers. We certainly need them. A large amount of those will be deportation officers, to look for the criminals on the street and to look for those who are fugitives. And there's going to be a tranche of those officers also are going to be special agents who will work worksite enforcement cases, immigration, alien smuggling, alien trafficking, and so forth. So, I think we're all cylinders. Now the numbers are very impressive considering this President's only been in power since January. A 400% increase in interior arrests is impressive. Nearly a 40% increase in interior removals, impressive. We're going to keep enforcing law. Now, we've asked for -- the President asked for 10,000 more officers. Last year I asked for 51,000 beds and we'll see where Congress comes out

with the present budget. We need more resources. And what's more important, we've made some great strides this year but all three of us have said, we need more to get this thing done. We've sent a list of policies up to the Hill asking for changes in certain policies and regulations, so we can enforce the law in a meaningful way across the board. So, I hope that answered your question. I mean as far as our resources are concerned, I think we're doing a lot.

MARK FRIEL: We have time for one more question.

[00:35:00]

MALE 3: Yes, I'd like to ask a question. There was a bakery up in Massachusetts where they recently -- your agencies forced them to let go of 800 illegal immigrants. The shocking thing is that wages for Americans went up. And I'm wondering if you're going to do any more of these inspections of workplaces to help Americans.

THOMAS HOMAN: Absolutely. We've got to get rid of the magnets. That is that's one of the reasons for illegal immigration. If they can get come here and get a job. It's illegal to hire somebody who's not authorized to work in this country, illegal aliens. So, did we force that bakery to release those people? Well, yeah, we're enforcing the law. They can't hire people that are not authorized to work. As I said a few months ago, I have asked HIS, Homeland Security Investigations, I want to see at least a 400% increase in worksite operations. I think it's me -- not just -- we're not just talking about arresting the aliens at these work sites and putting them in front of a judge and having their cases heard in court. We're talking about employers who knowingly hire these people who are not authorized to work. And we still prioritize and work those who engage in peonage, and you know work slavery, and those who are trafficking in people. We prioritize what we get. Again, we've only got so many resources; we've got prioritize everything we do. But worksite enforcement is a big part of that plan. That's why we need to support e-verify. That's one of the things we asked Congress to do. We need to have a legal workforce. Francis, can you add to that at all about what we're asking for as far as --

FRANCIS CISSNA: No, that's right. The case that you just deduced, that baker in Chicago was a perfect example of how worksite enforcement works. If you enforce the laws and prevent people from not who aren't supposed to be working from working, it's only for the good for the American worker. In that case, I think the articles that I saw about that indicated that wages went up. There was that Smithfield hog processing facility back in North Carolina about ten years ago, same story. So, worksite enforcement is good. My agency supports it wholeheartedly. It results in absolute protections for American workers.

MALE 3: And I know in that case, you went after the labor supplier, the companies are now liable. From what I understand if they hired a labor through a labor broker, [INDISCERNIBLE 00:37:18] legal. Is there any chance you're going to go after the executives of the companies which hired the labor brokers to protect them, legally?

THOMAS HOMAN: Look, it's a case by case basis. Every investigation is a little bit different.

Homeland Security Investigation will do a thorough investigation. We'll try to identify everybody that had violated the crime, hold everybody accountable that knowingly violated the law. That's the way it has to be. Every case can be different. Sometimes there's going to be executives that are indicted, sometimes there's not. It all depends on who knows -- who knowingly violated the law. But we're going to run every one of these investigations to the ground and hold people accountable for violating the laws of this country.

MARK FRIEL: Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our presentation today. Of course, if you have follow-ups, you can contact [PH 00:38:01] Rich Johnson with Immigration Customs Enforcement, Jonathan Hoffman with DHS, and Jonathan Withington with USCIS, who will be in a room. Again, we're going to have follow-up deeper dive conversations if you'd like to [INDISCERNIBLE 00:38:16] those points of contact.