



February 4, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST), a U.S. based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world, we are writing to urge for the following inclusions as you work to complete the final FY2022 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Bill.

We request \$9,203,000 from the ICE allocated funds for CBP to self-initiate investigations into the enforcement of section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930. Recent changes in law have made it easier to enforce this prohibition on the importation into the U.S. of goods made with forced labor. While we still believe our original request of \$20,000,000 is necessary, we support the House number of \$9,203,000 as these funds will further help CPB's efforts as they enforce section 307. That said, funds would be used to fulfill CBP's budget request for FY18 of 20 new auditors, to further enforce forced-labor restrictions in imports as was addressed in section 910 of the TFTEA of 2015. Increased and improved enforcement of the Act would allow CBP to stop goods made with forced labor from entering the U.S. markets and discourage foreign producers from using forced labor in their supply chains.

We have seen a small but steady uptick in enforcement actions over recent years. In FY 2018, there were two Withhold Release Orders (WRO) issued, including a notable one for all cotton from Turkmenistan, and in FY 2019, there were six WROs issued. In FY 2020, CBP more than doubled the previous amount by issuing thirteen WROs, resulting in the detention of more than 300 shipments containing nearly \$50 million of goods believed to be tainted by forced labor. However, this remains just a fraction of what is needed to ensure the law is adequately enforced.

Additionally, we request \$54,400,000 for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). HSI plays a critical role in combating severe forms of trafficking originating from foreign countries, including investigating violations of Section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930, and is, therefore, the first line of defense against key aspects of this crime. In FY17 HSI initiated 833 TIP investigations, down from 1,029 in FY16 and from 1,034 in FY15. We request funding from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement allocated funds for investigations, training, victim services, and victim witness coordinators within HSI to combat



severe forms of trafficking in persons as authorized by Sec. 113(i) of the TVPRA of 2013 and updated in the TVPRA of 2018.

Of these funds, \$15,770,000 should be for forced labor investigations under section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930, and \$9,203,000 should be designated specifically for Victim Witness Coordinators. Additional resources should be used to train field officers on identifying victims of human trafficking and distinguishing between trafficking and smuggling, expand trafficking investigations, and help reduce the incidents of trafficking and forced labor in the U.S. The Victim Witness Coordinator funding would allow HSI to hire 5 additional Victim Witness Coordinators specialized in human trafficking to support human trafficking victims interacting with law enforcement and ensure that the HSI response to this crime is victim-centered. The funds would also allow HSI to train all victim witness personnel on the provision of victim services and rights for this specialized victim population.

Homeland Security Investigations (HSI): Office of Victims Assistance: \$33,500,000 | We request this funding from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) allocated funds to the Secretary for the establishment of an Office of Victims Assistance within the HSI unit. ICE is often the first government entity to interact with trafficked migrants and should provide the first opportunity for these victims to access services in accordance with the TVPA of 2000.

As a champion for the victims of child labor, forced labor and sex trafficking, you understand the complexities of these issues and the resources needed to respond. We have carefully vetted our requests to focus on the most important and effective programs.

We thank you for your consideration of these requests and your continued leadership.

Sincerely,

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)

Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)

Free the Slaves

HEAL Trafficking

Human Trafficking Institute

Humanity United Action

McCain Institute for International Leadership

National Network for Youth (NN4Y)

Polaris

Safe Horizon

Solidarity Center

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

United Way Worldwide

Verité

Vital Voices Global Partnership



ATEST is a U.S.-based coalition that advocates for solutions to prevent and end all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery around the world.

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