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Readout of Secretary Napolitano's Remarks on Border Security and Facilitating Legal Travel and Trade

Release Date: April 1, 2011

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
Contact: 202-282-8010

WASHINGTON—Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano today delivered remarks highlighting the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) unprecedented efforts to strengthen security while facilitating legal travel and trade along the Southwest border.

"Security and economic prosperity represent two sides of the same coin," said Secretary Napolitano. "We are committed to further strengthening our border security efforts, which will reinforce and help expand legal trade and travel in the border region."

During her remarks, Secretary Napolitano underscored the Department's historic efforts to strengthen border security through the Southwest Border Initiative, launched in March 2009—which includes increasing the number of Border Patrol agents from approximately 10,000 in 2004 to more than 20,700 today; doubling the number of personnel assigned to Border Enforcement Security Task Forces; and deploying more than a quarter of all U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel to the Southwest border region—the most ever.

Secretary Napolitano also highlighted the unprecedented collaboration between the United States and Mexico to bolster cooperation on law enforcement, intelligence sharing and joint operations along the Southwest border. The Department has increased joint training programs with Mexican law enforcement agencies and, for the first time in history, Border Patrol agents are coordinating joint operations along the Southwest border with Mexican Federal Police to combat human trafficking and smuggling in both nations.

Last week, Secretary Napolitano [visited](#) El Paso, Texas, where she joined Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Francisco Sanchez, CBP Commissioner Alan Bersin and regional mayors to discuss ways to continue to facilitate commerce along the Southwest border and spread the message that the border region is open for business.

The Obama administration has made great strides in facilitating legal trade and travel across the border —working with local leaders to update infrastructure and reduce wait times at our Southwest border ports of entry while increasing security. More than 1,700 private-sector partners in Mexico are enrolled in the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) trusted-shipper program, and CBP is deploying 250 new officers to ports along the border as a result of the FY 2010 Border Security Supplemental. These investments have yielded concrete results, with imports crossing the Southwest border into the United States increasing 22 percent from fiscal year 2009 to fiscal year 2010.

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This page was last reviewed/modified on April 1, 2011.

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