

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Appropriations Committee
2006 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwomen DeLauro and Roybal-Allard and Ranking Members Granger and Fleischmann:

As Members of the Committee on Ways and Means, we write to ask for your support in funding the several accounts to combat imports to the United States being made with forced labor. As you continue your work for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, we specifically ask that you fund the Office of Trade (OT) at \$339,387,000—\$50 million above the FY 2021 enacted level of which we urge the Committee to direct U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to allocate \$25 million of that funding specifically for forced labor enforcement activities, including the Advanced Trade Analytics Platform (ATAP), the Workforce Staffing Model (WSM) program, and the Origin Tracing Isotope Ratio Capability and Technology program. Finally, we urge you to direct the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to appropriate sufficient funding to its Forced Labor Program under Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) because it is responsible for investigating criminal violations related to the importation of such goods.

U.S. enforcement efforts regarding forced labor require more resources. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) over 20 million individuals are trapped in forced labor and child labor. We are concerned about the use of forced labor and child labor across the world to produce many of the products imported into the United States. CBP's Forced Labor Division has been drastically underfunded to meet our forced labor enforcement needs despite continued and growing evidence of the use of forced labor and child labor in the supply chains of products imported into the United States from around the world.

Of the additional funds provided to OT in FY 2022, we request that the Forced Labor Division receive at least \$25 million to enforce and remediate issues related to imports made wholly or in part by forced labor. This funding would support at least 75 FTEs, including training costs, to work on forced labor and would support improvements to technology, such as the ATAP and WSM program to position CBP at the cutting edge of new product tracing techniques and data to improve enforcement.

Accordingly, we ask the following language request to be included in the committee report that accompanies the FY 2022 Homeland Security appropriations bill:

Of the \$339,387,000 appropriated to the Office of Trade in U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Secretary is directed to allocate not less than \$25 million in funding to support the enforcement of the prohibition of imports made with forced labor, which shall include funding for increased staffing, training, and technology.

In addition to the important work CBP conducts, ICE is responsible for investigating in the U.S. and abroad criminal violations related to the importation of goods made with forced labor. ICE’s Forced Labor Program is organized under HSI, which is responsible for cross-border criminal enforcement. Personnel in ICE’s Domestic Operations and International Operations divisions in field offices across the United States and internationally are responsible for these criminal investigations into allegations of forced labor. However, a recent GAO report noted that the Forced Labor Program consists of only “one full-time staff member who works exclusively on forced labor issues at HSI headquarters.”¹ To address this deficiently, we urge the Committee to direct ICE to appropriate sufficient funds to its Forced Labor Program under HSI.

We consider these funding levels necessary to strengthen enforcement efforts around forced labor and other key trade issues such as antidumping and countervailing duty collections, penalties, and suspension and debarment to ensure that the United States holds our trading partners accountable.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Members of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Members of Congress

/S/ _____
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

/S/ _____
John B. Larson
Member of Congress

/S/ _____
Ron Kind
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/720/710460.pdf>

/S/
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

/S/
Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress

/S/
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

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Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

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Suzan K. DelBene
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Judy Chu
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Tom Suozzi
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Jimmy Panetta
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Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress