

DHS Announces \$12.14 Billion for Border Security & Immigration Enforcement Efforts

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Michael Chertoff previewed today a 19 percent increase over Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 in funding for border security and immigration enforcement efforts in FY 2009. This represents a more than 150 percent increase since President Bush has been in office, enabling the department to fulfill its border infrastructure, fencing and personnel goals by the end of 2008.

“In his State of the Union address, President Bush said that we must secure the border, police the interior, and find a way to deal with the issue of illegal immigration in a way that is humane and sensible,” said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. “The President's budget request builds on our accomplishments and substantially reinforces our commitment to provide more boots on the ground, strengthen interior enforcement, and add new technology and fencing at the border. This administration has made substantial investments in border security and interior enforcement, and this budget reinforces that commitment.”

Securing our Borders

There has been remarkable progress at our borders over the past year. DHS has continued the practice of “catch and return” at the border, surpassed its fencing goals, and seen record enforcement numbers against illegal immigration and narcotics smuggling activities.

- **\$2 Billion for the Secure Border Initiative (SBI)** – DHS has completed more than 280 miles of pedestrian and vehicular fencing to date and expects to have about 670 miles of total fencing in place by the end of this year. The President is requesting \$775 million for secure border fencing, infrastructure and technology under SBI in FY 2009, which together with 2008 funding provides \$2 billion for SBI.
- **\$442.4 Million for Additional Border Patrol Agents** – The FY 2009 budget requests an additional \$442.4 million to hire, train and equip 2,200 new Border Patrol agents, which will achieve our goal of 20,000 agents by the end of September 2009. This will more than double the size of the Border Patrol under President Bush’s leadership.

More Interior Enforcement

The department's interior enforcement strategy complements its border security efforts. The FY 2009 budget will expand those efforts to target employers of illegal aliens and immigration violators, as well as dangerous criminal networks. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) worksite enforcement cases are at an all-time high: roughly 700 percent higher than Immigration and Naturalization Service's worksite cases in its final year of operation in fiscal year 2002. The FY 2009 budget provides for even greater enforcement activities along with advances in verification tools available to employers.

- **\$3 Billion for Enforcement Activities** – ICE has removed roughly 240,000 illegal aliens, made 850 criminal arrests, and fined or seized more than \$30 million following worksite investigations to date.
 - **\$1.8 Billion for ICE Custody Operations** – This will expand ICE's capacity by an additional 1,000 new detention beds to further support the practice of "catch and return" at the border. Since FY 2005, ICE has increased the amount of detention beds by 78 percent.
- **\$100 Million for E-Verify** – \$100 million will support expanded usage of E-Verify, an automated system used to confirm the employment eligibility of both citizen and non-citizen new hires. We anticipate E-Verify participation to increase from about 50,000 now to more than 100,000 employers this year, and 300,000 in FY 2009.