Ports of Entry—a major source of economic activity—are badly in need of improvements

$4 billion
Deficit for needed improvements to Ports of Entry, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan

- Update screening and scanning technology
- Expand physical processing capacity
- Hire more inspectors

4,000
Number of customs inspectors and other Port of Entry personnel short of what CBP’s own workforce analysis suggests it requires

$2 billion
Economic activity through the U.S.-Mexico border Ports of Entry every day

18%
Percentage of vehicles coming into the U.S. that CBP is able to inspect

Illicit drugs come almost entirely through Ports of Entry and the mail

100 out of 1.3 million
Number of items inspected by CBP out of the total number of inbound international packages the U.S. Postal Service handles every day

“The most common method... involves transporting illicit drugs through U.S. ports of entry (POEs) in passenger vehicles with concealed compartments or commingled with legitimate goods on tractor trailers.”
—U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration 2017 National Drug Threat Assessment

“Adequately staffing our ports of entry with law enforcement personnel professionally trained to interdict illegal drug shipments is the fastest way to stem the deadly opioid tide into our communities.”
—Tony Reardon, president of the National Treasury Employees Union, which represents 25,000 CBP officers

“The big issue right now with drugs coming into the United States is the ports of entry.”
—Former Department of Homeland Security Secretary John F. Kelly

“As a lifelong border resident, I speak with constituents, landowners, and law enforcement professionals regularly, and they agree that a massively expensive barrier is nothing more than a 14th Century solution to a 21st Century challenge.”
—Rep. Henry Cuellar, Texas
Fences = walls

“Calling a 30-foot-tall concrete and steel monstrosity a fence does not change its nature.”
—Scott Nicol, resident of McAllen, Texas, and co-author of the report Death, Damage, and Failure: Past, Present and Future Impacts of Walls on the U.S.-Mexico Border

Fences/walls built with FY2018 funds will cut through:
• Public lands (National Butterfly Center, Bentsen State Park and World Birding Center, Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge)
• Historic La Lomita chapel
• Farmers’ riverfront land (some held in their families since 1700s)
• Rio Grande floodplain, increasing risks of flooding and damage

Address the root causes of migration

“If you want to stop illegal immigration, stop U.S. demand for drugs, and expand economic opportunity [in Central America]”
—Former White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly

“The U.S. has turned away from addressing the complex causes of immigration and smuggling, and a careful consideration of the most effective ways to respond to these issues, and instead has focused myopically on enforcement and militarizing our borders”
—Death, Damage, And Failure: Past, Present, and Future Impacts of Walls on the U.S.-Mexico Border, ACLU

“When we work together with well-targeted programs and really targeting them at areas that … we’re seeing migration, like the Western Highlands of Guatemala where there’s a real poverty and hunger crisis — it’s one of the most food-insecure regions in the hemisphere, huge rates of malnutrition.”
—Kevin McAlleenan, CBP Commissioner

“You show me a 50-foot wall, and I’ll show you a 51-foot ladder.”
—Former Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano

Public opposition to border walls

QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY POLL
Dec. 18, 2018
Oppose building walls: 54-43%
Democrats: 90-8
Women: 57-40
Republicans: 14-86
Men: 51-47
Independents: 51-45
White voters: 50-49
Black voters: 78-16
Hispanic voters: 68-27

Oppose shutdown: 62-34%
because of funding for the wall

REUTERS/IPSOS POLL
Dec. 27, 2018
35 % support border wall funding in Fiscal Year 2019 spending bills
25% support shutdown over border wall funding

SURVEY OF U.S. BORDER RESIDENTS
(UNIVISION, DALLAS NEWS AND CRONKITE NEWS, JULY 2016)
Oppose wall: 72%
Depend on neighbors in Mexico for economic survival: 79%
View people on other side of the border as criminals: 1%

3 Senate Judiciary Committee, Dec. 11, 2018, archive.org/details/CSPAN_20181211_155000_Customs_Border_Protection_Commissioner_Testifies_Before_Senate_Judiciary
4 Sandhills Express, Dec. 30, 2018, bit.ly/2GS5FXC
6 Ibid.
9 Government Executive
10 Republican Policy Committee
11 Cato Institute
13 “There’s No Real Difference Between Border Walls and Border Fences,” aclu.org/blog/immigrants-rights/theres-no-real-difference-between-border-walls-and-border-fences
14 Ibid.
16 Death, Damage, And Failure: Past, Present, and Future Impacts of Walls on the U.S.-Mexico Border, ACLU, aclu.org/report/death-damage-and-failure
17 Sandhills Express
18 From a 2007 address to the National Press Club, grist.org/article/napolitano-knows/
19 Quinnipiac University, Dec. 18, 2018, poll.qu.edu/national/release-detail?ReleaseID=2590
20 Reuters/Ipsos poll, Dec. 27, 2018, reuters.com/article/us-ua-shutdown-poll/more-americans-blame-trump-for-government-shutdown-reuters-ipsos-poll-idUSKCN1Q01FA