

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Chris Murphy
Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Katie Britt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murphy and Ranking Member Britt:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2025 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, we write to request substantial funding for the acquisition and implementation of Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) systems. The technology and equipment supported through this program are force multipliers that enable U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to detect illicit substances and prevent their movement across our borders, and for that reason, this funding is critical to finding and seizing fentanyl crossing the southern U.S. border

NII systems are used by CBP Officers and Border Patrol Agents to examine cargo and conveyances for contraband, weapons, and substances in as few as eight minutes, versus the 120 minutes typically required for a physical exam. This new technology allows CBP to examine large volumes of traffic quickly and effectively at U.S. ports of entry, border crossings, and checkpoints. The technologies currently employed include large-scale X-ray and Gamma-ray imaging systems, Radiation Portal Monitors, Personal Radiation Detectors, Radiation Isotope Identification Devices, as well as portable and handheld technologies.

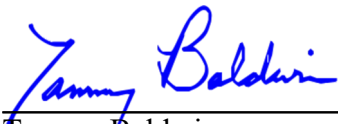
We appreciate your diligent work to negotiate the bipartisan border security deal that would have provided \$3.88 billion to enhance security at our nation's borders, including \$424.5 million to combat the entry of fentanyl and other illicit narcotics from entering the U.S. through the acquisition of innovative non-intrusive inspection equipment. However, when this legislation was held up by partisan politics, CBP reported that scanners were sitting in warehouses unused because of a lack of funds to install them.

While Congress has made ongoing efforts to fund these systems, ongoing operations and maintenance costs must be met on a consistent basis to avoid any idling of border security assets. A delay in delivering screening capabilities to our borders could leave the country vulnerable to malign actors. The US Customs and Border Protection must be given the appropriate resources to detect and disrupt the evolving tactics utilized by Transnational Criminal Organizations to smuggle narcotics, including fentanyl, across U.S. borders. The NII program is a critical part of CBP's layered enforcement strategy to screen for illicit goods.

The security of our borders cannot be held up due to partisan disputes. We urge you to include sufficient funding for this program to ensure the professionals who secure our borders are equipped with the technology necessary to keep Americans safe.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your work on behalf of the men and women of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and on behalf of American families.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Laphonza Butler
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



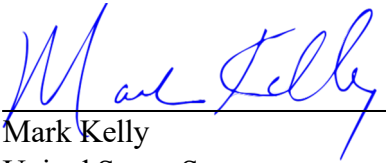
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



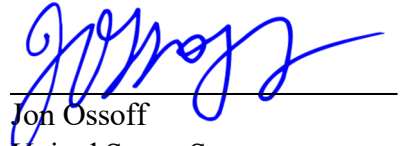
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

Homeland Security Group Letter Table
HLS_Baldwin_Group_240515-011800[LetterID 19114]

ID	Sub	Request Agency or Account	Request Project Name	Request (\$000)
167337	HLS Group	[Title II]/[U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)]/[Operations and Support (O&S)]/[Border Security Operations]/[U.S. Border Patrol]/[Assets and Support] [Member Staff] - Lucy Perkins lucy_perkins@baldwin.senate.gov 202-224-9246	Assets and Support [Member's Request (text)] - Robust funding	\$0