



TESTIMONY OF

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For a Hearing

BEFORE THE

United States Senate  
Committee on the Judiciary

ON

“Abducted Abroad: Exploring the Plight of International  
Parental Child Abduction and its effect on American Families”

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## **Introduction**

Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Feinstein, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss the role of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in preventing the abduction of children from the United States.

As America's unified border security agency, CBP plays an important role in the nation's efforts to prevent children from being abducted and taken abroad. CBP works in close coordination with the Department of State (DOS) to leverage CBP targeting capabilities as part of our multi-layered, risk-based approach to enhance the security of our borders and America's children.

## **Preventing Departure in International Child Abduction Cases**

As the nation's largest law enforcement agency, CBP remains committed to preventing the illegal abduction of children across our Nation's borders. CBP works every day to act on information received from our partners across law enforcement, including information warning of potential perpetrators of child abductions.

The *Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act* (ICAPRA) was signed into law on August 8, 2014. CBP's early commitment to close coordination with DOS resulted in the development and implementation of an early warning mechanism in which notification of travel is made to requesting agencies for minors considered at risk of international parental child abduction (IPCA).

## **Information Sharing and Operational Coordination**

Substantive and timely information sharing is critical to preventing the abduction of children. CBP contributes to the whole-of-government effort by sharing critical information on individuals with law enforcement partner agencies at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels.

These efforts yield results. From FY 2014 to the present,<sup>1</sup> CBP has received 609 requests from DOS to prevent the departure of minor children at risk for IPCA. The program has yielded 10 criminal arrests related to IPCA, and 24 international departures of minor children at risk for parental abduction have been prevented. These results were only possible thanks to the close collaboration between CBP, DOS, and our law enforcement partners in the U.S. and around the world.

## **Conclusion**

Tackling this threat involves a united, comprehensive strategy and an aggressive approach by multiple entities across all levels of government. With continued support from Congress, CBP, in coordination with our partners, will continue to contribute to the safety and security of America's children.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective 04/04/2018