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| Question#: | 1 |
| Topic: | TCO Activities |
| Hearing: | Narcos: Transnational Cartels and Border Security |
| Primary: | The Honorable Dianne Feinstein |
| Committee: | JUDICIARY (SENATE) |

Question: In your prepared statement you suggested that many transnational criminal organizations and cartels are poly-crime organizations. That is, they participate in whatever activity will result in a profit - whether it is the trafficking of drugs, humans, or other contraband. You further noted that transnational criminal organizations and cartels often share the same routes.

What percentage of TCOs, and which specific organizations, are involved solely in drug trafficking, versus some combination of drug trafficking, human trafficking, or the trafficking of other contraband?

Response: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations cannot provide a definitive percentage of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) solely trafficking drugs into the United States. TCOs are highly complex organizations that commit a number of crimes, including movement of illegal narcotics and other contrabands—including involvement in human smuggling and trafficking activities—across international borders through historic narcotics trafficking routes. As noted in the Presidential Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking (EO issued on February 9, 2017), TCOs are known to engage in a wide variety of illegal conduct, due to the profitability. Intelligence tells us the primary cartels involved in drug trafficking are the Sinaloa Cartel, Cartel De Jalisco Nueva, Gulf Cartel, Cartel Del Noreste, and the Juarez Cartel. In many cases, these TCOs will charge other organizations for the use of their established smuggling networks and territories regardless of the type of contraband. An example of these types of relationships, based on investigative evidence and collected intelligence, includes human smuggling enterprises and Mexican cartels maintaining a symbiotic relationship where most human smugglers are required to pay taxes and fees to cartels for access to smuggling routes through specific geographic areas. Human smuggling enterprises are subject to physical violence and/or death if proper coordination and compensation are not rendered.

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| Question#: | 2 |
| Topic: | Operation CITADEL |
| Hearing: | Narcos: Transnational Cartels and Border Security |
| Primary: | The Honorable Dianne Feinstein |
| Committee: | JUDICIARY (SENATE) |

Question: In your prepared statement, you indicated that in Fiscal Year 2018, Operation CITADEL delivered capacity building training to partner nations including Colombia, Panama, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, the Bahamas and Dominican Republic. You further noted that this training "strengthened foreign nations' law enforcement capabilities while helping to initiate and advance collaborative, transnational investigations."

How is Operation CITADEL evaluated for success?

What direct impact has Operation CITADEL had on the enforcement, interdiction, and intelligence sharing efforts in each of the countries in which it operates, and how has this impacted drug trafficking in the United States?

Response: Operation CITADEL is evaluated through the feedback provided by partner nations and other participating law enforcement agencies, as well as its ability to enhance foreign partners' investigative capabilities leading to the increase in criminal investigations by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and partner nations resulting in additional arrests, seizures, and intelligence collection and dissemination.

Operation CITADEL provides resources to enhance foreign partners' investigative, intelligence, and information-sharing capabilities to counter transnational threats and organized crime. This provides ICE HSI with the ability to expand domestic and international investigations well beyond U.S. borders and to more effectively target the illicit pathways exploited by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). During Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, Operation CITADEL enforcement efforts resulted in the initiation of 74 criminal investigations; 520 criminal arrests; the rescue of 7 unaccompanied minors; the seizure of 82 firearms, 28,847 pounds of cocaine, \$1,094,787 from illicit currency movements; and 9,606 biometric enrollments. Additionally, 1,282 foreign officers were provided classroom and real-world situational training in multiple areas of law enforcement.

Operation CITADEL builds the capacities and capabilities of ICE HSI's international partners' law enforcement, customs, and immigration enforcement systems/agencies. Operation CITADEL targets the mechanisms used to move humans, illicit funds, and contraband throughout the Western and Eastern Hemispheres. Operation CITADEL also supports the Secretary of Homeland Security's Southern Border and Approaches

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Campaign Plan through focused support to domestic and international investigations, Extraterritorial Criminal Travel Targets, and other priority investigations.

Collaboration among Department of Homeland Security Components, Department of State, Department of Justice (DOJ), and Department of Defense, as well as other foreign partners, has been essential to Operation CITADEL's efforts to build capacity and address identified threats. During FY 2018, ICE, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and DOJ's United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida deployed agents, attorneys, analysts, and officers to Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, the Bahamas, and the Dominican Republic. An Assistant United States Attorney worked with attorneys and Special Agents from El Salvador to establish an MS-13 and gang working group to build awareness and exchange information. To help build upon law enforcement knowledge of TCOs and to identify new networks, new illicit pathways and vulnerabilities, agents and analysts were deployed to Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Greece, Jordan, Austria, Barbados, Senegal, the Dominican Republic, and EUROPOL in the Netherlands.

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| Question#: | 3 |
| Topic: | Fentanyl Trafficking |
| Hearing: | Narcos: Transnational Cartels and Border Security |
| Primary: | The Honorable Cory A. Booker |
| Committee: | JUDICIARY (SENATE) |

Question: In 2017, America suffered more drug overdose deaths than in any year in our history. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's estimates, more than 70,000 Americans died from drug overdoses last year. Almost 200 people a day died from drug overdoses across the country. In my home state of New Jersey, approximately eight people are dying from drug overdoses every day.

As many of the panelists at the December 12 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing recognized, a major driver of the rise in drug overdose deaths in recent years has been fentanyl. Fentanyl-related overdose deaths climbed from around 3,000 in 2013 to 28,466 in 2017, and overdose deaths involving fentanyl and similar drugs rose by more than 45 percent just last year. The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment likewise observed, "Illicit fentanyl and other synthetic opioids-primarily sourced from China and Mexico-are now the most lethal category of opioids used in the United States." Heroin-related deaths have been increasing year after year as well. As the DEA report noted, "Mexican [Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs)] continue to dominate the heroin market in the United States by controlling the supply, trafficking, and wholesale distribution of heroin."

What specific actions has your office undertaken to specifically address the trafficking of fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances by Mexican TCOs? Please describe, for example, any working groups and, as available, the key goals or outcomes of any such efforts.

A significant amount of fentanyl now reportedly comes into the United States through mail and courier services, but in such small quantities that detection is very difficult. Has your office participated in interagency efforts to improve the federal government's detection capabilities for fentanyl (and other opioids) sent through mail and courier services? Please describe, for example, any working groups and, as available, the key goals or outcomes of any such efforts.

Response: Border Enforcement Security Teams (BESTs) are U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations' (HSI) primary platforms to investigate opioid smuggling. Through BESTs, ICE HSI uses the agency's unique customs and immigration authorities, and leverages critical partnerships with state, local, tribal, and foreign partners to maximize its impact on the operation of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) within our communities.

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ICE HSI operates BESTs in 65 locations throughout the United States—an increase of 55 percent from Fiscal Year (FY) 2016—in response to the President’s Executive Order 13773, *Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Prevent International Trafficking*. BESTs leverage the participation of more than 1,000 federal, state, local, tribal, and foreign law enforcement agents and officers representing more than 150 law enforcement agencies to target opioid smuggling.

To combat opioid trafficking, ICE HSI increased its presence at international mail facilities in such locations as Los Angeles and San Francisco, California; Chicago, Illinois; and Memphis, Tennessee; as well as Northern Kentucky, Louisville, and New York. ICE continues to target supply chain networks and coordinates with international and domestic partners to provide field training, highlight ongoing trends, and provide best practices for officer safety. In support of the detection and analysis effort, ICE HSI is fully engaged with the Drug Enforcement Administration’s Special Operations Division, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s National Targeting Center, and the Department of Justice’s Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces’ Fusion Center to identify shipment routes, fully exploit financial and investigative analyses, and target parcels that may contain heroin, illicit fentanyl, fentanyl-related substances, and manufacturing materials.

In FY 2018, ICE HSI made more than 722 fentanyl-related arrests from 429 cases initiated. In addition, during this same period, ICE HSI seized 2,737 pounds of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues.

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| Question#: | 4 |
| Topic: | Migration Reasons |
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| Primary: | The Honorable Cory A. Booker |
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Question: Migration Policy Institute President Andrew Selee, who testified on the second panel at the December 12 hearing, stated: "While there is no single study that has successfully explored the mix of reasons that Central Americans leave their homes to embark on a dangerous journey north, available evidence suggests that the rise in the number of Central American asylum-seekers is tied both to violence and impunity, in other words, the need to seek protection and the inability to obtain it within their own countries." Do you agree with that conclusion? Please explain the sources that have informed your response.

Response: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agrees that a mix of factors is responsible for an increase in migration from the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. As noted during the hearing, these factors include gang violence and poverty in the region. Further, as demonstrated in the University of Southern California Center for Risk and Economic Analysis of Terrorism Events study, increased economic opportunity and reunification with families who have successfully settled in the United States also play a key role in the decision to migrate (such migrants experience an average earnings increase of 16 times what is possible in the Northern Triangle).

Additionally, ICE's experience as a law enforcement agency strongly suggests that migration is affected by the perception of whether or not U.S. immigration laws are being enforced. In interviews with Department of Homeland Security officials, many aliens cite a belief that they will receive "permisos," or permission to stay in the country once they arrive, a belief that is often encouraged by alien smuggling organizations that profit from such attempts. Perceived or real "loopholes" in the U.S. immigration system that lead potential migrants to think they will be allowed to remain in the United States also provide incentives for the dangerous journey north, and enrich the criminal groups who facilitate it. To this end, it is worth noting that few aliens seeking protection in the United States are actually granted asylum under current U.S. law. Specifically, in Fiscal Year 2018, of the cases of aliens from Northern Triangle countries adjudicated by immigration judges after the alien was found to have a credible fear by an Asylum Officer, only 9 percent were actually granted asylum by an immigration judge.