



Homeland Security

November 2, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: All DHS Employees
FROM: Michael Chertoff
SUBJECT: Secure Border Initiative

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Chertoff", written over the printed name in the memorandum header.

I announced today an ambitious effort to address a serious threat to our nation's security—the continual influx of illegal migrants across our borders. This effort is known as the Secure Border Initiative (SBI) and is built on a foundation of border security, interior enforcement, and a temporary worker program.

The SBI provides a comprehensive view of immigration that aims for nothing less than to gain full control of our borders. To this end, we will hire almost 2,500 new CBP and ICE employees. We will completely eliminate the “catch and release” style of border enforcement by re-engineering our detention and removal process. By increasing detention space and minimizing the time that aliens spend in our custody, we will transform border enforcement into a “catch and remove” program.

We will expand our border infrastructure and enhance our enforcement technology. We will increase physical layers of security, build access roads to enable the Border Patrol to speed response efforts, construct stadium style lighting to deter border crossers, and install surveillance cameras to monitor incursion along targeted areas of the border. We will improve security in the areas between ports of entry by expanding, integrating, and coordinating the use of technology and communications including Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), aerial assets, camera systems, and sensors.

However, enhancing the security of our borders is only the first step. SBI will also focus on interior enforcement. We will strengthen our efforts to combat document fraud and monitor the worksite to ensure that employers who violate the law are punished. But this second pillar will go beyond the workplace. We will expand our fugitive operations program, and we will develop a robust criminal alien program that will target and remove foreign-born illegal migrants incarcerated in federal and state jails.

We will work to broker agreements with other foreign governments. We will urge them to remove the backlog of their nationals in our detention facilities and to maintain a productive dialogue with us in order to safely and quickly repatriate migrants back to their nations at the same rate at which they are arriving.

The Temporary Worker Program, proposed by President Bush last year, will help us strengthen interior enforcement. The Temporary Worker Program will enable migrants to work in regulated, legal channels and will increase our security by giving us a better idea of who is entering our country and for what purpose.

SBI is a team effort that will require the collective energy of the entire Department. Congress already has provided us with the resources in our FY 2006 appropriations to start moving forward with this important priority. For more specific details on the SBI, please refer to our Fact Sheet, which is posted on DHS Online at:
<https://dhsonline.dhs.gov>

Your continued dedication and support of the SBI will result in a safer and more secure America.