

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5132

To bolster Department of Homeland Security efforts to combat cross-border threats posed by transnational criminal organizations, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2023

Mr. THANEDAR (for himself, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. CORREA, Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California, Mr. MAGAZINER, and Ms. TOKUDA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To bolster Department of Homeland Security efforts to combat cross-border threats posed by transnational criminal organizations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “United Against
5 Transnational Criminal Organizations Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. BOLSTERING DHS EFFORTS TO COMBAT CROSS-**
2 **BORDER THREATS POSED BY**
3 **TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS.**

4 (a) DHS JOINT TASK FORCE.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection
6 (b)(11) of section 708 of the Homeland Security Act
7 of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 348), not later than 180 days
8 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
9 retary of Homeland Security shall, pursuant to such
10 section, establish a Department of Homeland Secu-
11 rity Joint Task Force to conduct operations using
12 personnel and capabilities of the Department to
13 combat cross-border threats posed by transnational
14 criminal organizations operating along the land bor-
15 ders of the United States for the purpose specified
16 in clause (i) of subsection (b)(2)(A) of such section.
17 Such task force shall—

18 (A) pay particular attention to
19 transnational criminal organizations that target
20 foreign nationals, particularly children and fam-
21 ilies, for smuggling or trafficking across the
22 land border of the United States; and

23 (B) when appropriate, refer to the Attor-
24 ney General for prosecution border-related
25 criminal activity.

1 (2) PRIORITIES.—The task force established in
2 accordance with paragraph (1) may, when appro-
3 priate, refer to the Attorney General for prosecution
4 border-related criminal activity, and shall pay par-
5 ticular attention to transnational criminal organiza-
6 tions that—

7 (A) target people, particularly children and
8 families, for smuggling or trafficking across the
9 land borders of the United States; or

10 (B) are engaged in the smuggling or traf-
11 ficking of fentanyl, fentanyl chemical precur-
12 sors, or related equipment and material across
13 the land borders of the United States.

14 (3) PERFORMANCE METRICS.—Consistent with
15 subsection (b)(9) of section 708 of the Homeland
16 Security Act of 2002, the Secretary of Homeland
17 Security shall establish and submit to the appro-
18 priate congressional committees performance metrics
19 to evaluate the effectiveness of the Joint Task Force
20 established pursuant to paragraph (1). Such per-
21 formance metrics shall include outcome-based
22 metrics associated with efforts to achieve the prior-
23 ities described in paragraph (2), including informa-
24 tion on effectiveness at identifying transnational
25 criminal organizations engaged in such activity, the

1 sharing of information regarding such organizations,
2 efforts to dismantle or disrupt such activity by such
3 organizations, and investigative contributions to the
4 prosecution of such organizations.

5 (4) QUARTERLY REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not
6 later than four months after the establishment of
7 the Joint Task Force pursuant to paragraph (1) and
8 every four months thereafter until such Joint Task
9 Force is disbanded by the Secretary in accordance
10 with paragraph (4), the Director of such Joint Task
11 Force shall report to the appropriate congressional
12 committees on the activities of such Joint Task
13 Force during the preceding four-month period.

14 (5) DISBANDING OF JOINT TASK FORCE.—The
15 Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

16 (A) upon establishment of the Joint Task
17 Force pursuant to paragraph (1), report to the
18 appropriate congressional committees the cri-
19 teria to be applied by the Secretary before mak-
20 ing a determination to disband such Joint Task
21 Force; and

22 (B) not later than 15 days prior to dis-
23 banding such Joint Task Force, submit to such
24 committees a justification relating thereto.

1 (6) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
2 TEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “ap-
3 propriate congressional committees” means the com-
4 mittees specified in subparagraph (F) of section
5 708(b)(6) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

6 (b) TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION BOR-
7 DER SCREENING STRATEGY.—Not later than one year
8 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
9 of Homeland Security shall issue a strategy to improve
10 the effectiveness of the screening of vehicles, persons, and
11 cargo at land ports of entry that may be at higher risk
12 of being related to transnational criminal organization ac-
13 tivity. Upon issuance of such strategy, the Secretary shall
14 brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House
15 of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Secu-
16 rity and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding
17 such strategy.

18 (c) INTEGRATED BORDER INTELLIGENCE ANALYT-
19 ICAL CELL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall
20 establish within the National Targeting Center of U.S.
21 Customs and Border Protection an integrated border in-
22 telligence analytical cell focused on sharing information re-
23 garding potential concentrated surges of migrants arriving
24 at the land borders of the United States, and smuggling
25 or trafficking that may pose a border security, homeland

1 security, or other threat to the land borders of the United
2 States. Such cell shall integrate intelligence capabilities
3 from across the Department of Homeland Security to
4 carry out the following:

5 (1) Develop intelligence products to improve the
6 Department's ability to track, prepare for, and man-
7 age in a humane and effective manner concentrated
8 surges of migrants arriving along the land border of
9 the United States.

10 (2) Report on transnational criminal organiza-
11 tions exploiting migrating populations and migration
12 routes to smuggle or traffic fentanyl or other illicit
13 goods across the land border of the United States.

14 (3) Support Federal efforts to dismantle or dis-
15 rupt smuggling and trafficking routes along the land
16 border of the United States.

17 (4) Report on information circulated by
18 transnational criminal organizations and other mali-
19 cious actors to encourage illicit migrant travel to the
20 United States.

21 (5) Develop other related intelligence products
22 that support the Department's border security oper-
23 ations.

24 (d) STRENGTHENING CROSS-BORDER PARTNER-
25 SHIPS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordi-

1 nation with the Secretary of State, shall expand partner-
2 ship efforts with law enforcement entities in Canada, Mex-
3 ico, countries in Central America and South America, and
4 other appropriate countries to combat smuggling and traf-
5 ficking of people, fentanyl, fentanyl chemical precursors,
6 or related equipment and material within such countries,
7 including through the following:

8 (1) Expansion of transnational criminal inves-
9 tigative units to identify, disrupt, dismantle, and
10 prosecute transnational criminal organization activ-
11 ity.

12 (2) Participation in the Bilateral Human Traf-
13 ficking Enforcement Initiative by U.S. Immigration
14 and Customs Enforcement and the Department of
15 Justice with their Mexican law enforcement counter-
16 parts.

17 (3) Expansion of advanced training programs
18 for investigators and prosecutors from Canada, Mex-
19 ico, countries in Central America and South Amer-
20 ica, and other appropriate countries.

21 (4) Increase of capacity-building efforts to sup-
22 port international partners in improving the ability
23 of such partners to detect and interdict fentanyl,
24 fentanyl chemical precursors, and related equipment

1 and material originating from or transiting through
2 their territories.

3 (e) FENTANYL INTERDICTION AND SUPPLY CHAIN
4 DISRUPTION.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall
5 seek to strengthen intelligence sharing operations with
6 Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial agencies in-
7 volved in prevention, detection, and interdiction of
8 fentanyl, fentanyl chemical precursors, and other related
9 equipment and material to enhance efforts to disrupt and
10 dismantle supply chains for such illicit drugs and equip-
11 ment and material.

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