

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Rodney S. Scott
Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Secretary Noem and Commissioner Scott:

We write to express our grave concern about reports and new data suggesting that U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) enforcement of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) has dropped drastically in recent months despite no evidence that shipments of goods prohibited by the law have slowed.

As you know, the UFLPA blocks imports from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Since 2017, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has detained up to two million Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in a network of hundreds of state-run internment camps.¹ Detained individuals are also forced to work in factories in the XUAR and elsewhere across the PRC producing goods that are shipped around the world, including to the United States.

Forced labor is a central tactic used by the CCP in its repression campaign against the Uyghurs. Under the guise of vocational training or poverty alleviation, authorities in Xinjiang have forced tens of thousands of adults and children to work against their will and under threat of punishment to produce goods and raw materials that are woven into international supply chains and shipped into our homes. Government authorities employ "threats of physical violence, forcible drug intake, physical and sexual abuse, and torture"² to press detainees into work at these factories and worksites where they produce clothing, pharmaceuticals, consumer electronics, and other everyday goods. Following years of advocacy by brave survivors, eyewitnesses, and international organizations, Congress passed the UFLPA in 2021 with overwhelming bipartisan support, sending a strong signal that the United States stands united in our commitment to root out the evil of forced labor in the production of goods.

CBP has been tasked with enforcing the UFLPA since 2022, and the results show a clear impact. Since 2022, CBP had inspected more than 17,000 shipments, denying entry for over 10,000 under UFLPA authorities. Over the first three years of the law's enforcement, the interagency Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force (FLETF) added 144 entities to the UFLPA "Entity List," which identifies companies and other entities the U.S. government has verified to engage in

¹ <https://selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/adrian-zenz-testimony.pdf>

² <https://www.state.gov/forced-labor-in-chinas-xinjiang-region>

UFLPA-prohibited practices. Robust enforcement of the UFLPA, including through sanctions imposed on entities pursuant to the law, has sent a clear signal to the private sector and to the CCP that the United States will no longer tolerate the importation of goods produced with forced labor. Moreover, as governments around the world have banded together in opposition to the CCP's human rights atrocities and enacted their own forced labor import bans, the UFLPA has served as both a model for prohibiting the import of forced labor-derived products globally and as an example of principled trade policy.

However, in recent months, CBP data shows that your agencies' enforcement of the UFLPA has decreased significantly. In 2023 and 2024, CBP stopped on average 334 and 383, respectively, shipments per month under suspicion of violating the UFLPA. But in April and May 2025—when President Trump announced his “Liberation Day” tariff overhaul—stopped shipments for UFLPA enforcement dropped significantly to just over 100 each month. Between April and August of this fiscal year, stopped shipments have averaged 224 per month. That is down from the prior five-month (November through March of FY25) average of 1,062 per month.³ This represents more than a fourfold reduction in CBP stopped shipments. This reduction in stopped shipments appears to conflict with the Department of Homeland Security's stated goals contained in the August 2025 report to Congress where the Department reaffirmed its commitment to enforcing UFLPA and even commits to expanding enforcement of the law.⁴ Very concerningly, the FLETF has added zero new entities to the UFLPA Entity List since January 15, 2025.

These and other data suggest that combatting forced labor is not a priority for this Administration. In July, a combination of staff and funding cuts decimated the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Secretary Rubio also cut roughly 80 percent of staff from the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL). Both of these agencies dedicate foreign assistance funding to combat forced labor around the world, with TIP serving as one of the State Department's representatives on the FLETF.⁵ The Trump Administration has eviscerated the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) at the Department of Labor, which plays an essential role on the FLETF, while cutting grants to civil society organizations that combat forced labor on the ground. The demise of USAID reduced resources for critical research and advocacy funding that enabled UFLPA implementation and enforcement. The Administration's anemic UFLPA enforcement has reportedly already prompted changes in corporate compliance and risk management: “Companies know that enforcement is down,” so are “deprioritizing eliminating forced labor from their supply chains.”⁶

UFLPA enforcement is about more than the moral imperative to fight forced labor. The PRC government has a documented history of using lax environmental laws and forced labor as effective subsidies for their manufacturers. This creates an uneven playing field upon which companies that adhere to the international rules-based order are at a disadvantage. The UFLPA is

³ <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/trade/uyghur-forced-labor-prevention-act-statistics>

⁴ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2025-08/25_0819_plec_uflpa-strategy-2025-update-508.pdf

⁵ <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-to-monitor-and-combat-trafficking-in-persons;>
<https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/U.S.%20Government%20Trade%20Strategy%20to%20Combat%20Forced%20Labor.pdf>

⁶ <https://thecapitolforum.com/trumps-u-s-customs-border-patrol-reduced-policing-forced-labor-violations-focuses-on-tariffs/>

also about leveling the playing field for U.S. manufacturers. Relaxing enforcement of the law poses a direct risk to U.S. industry and workers competing in the global economy.

We are extremely concerned by reports that CBP’s precipitous drop in UFLPA enforcement may be a result of CBP diverting resources to implement President Trump’s dramatic changes to trade and tariff policy. The on-and-off nature of the tariffs has created an extremely unpredictable business environment, creating instability for businesses trying to plan for the future and “reducing investment and productivity ... reduc[ing] the productive capacity of the economy and slow[ing] the growth of potential output.” Unsurprisingly, President Trump’s promise that his trade policies would revitalize American manufacturing and bring down the trade deficit has also not come true as he has piled onto his chaotic tariff announcements by gutting historic investments in U.S. manufacturing and clean energy production. Census Bureau data on manufacturing investment also shows a decline this year, with capital goods orders in the first half of 2025 down \$203 million from the same period last year and construction spending in manufacturing down more than \$70 billion for the same period. Additionally, the goods and services trade deficit in the first five months of 2025 was 47 percent higher than during the same period in 2024 (30 percent for manufactured goods), driven largely by a spike in imports in the early months as firms presumably frontloaded imports in anticipation of the President’s misguided tariff policies.

This Administration seems to have decided to decimate its own ability to combat forced labor in our supply chains in favor of compounding the cost-of-living crisis facing the working and middle class and vulnerable families. As one expert noted, “For an administration that claims to be making decisions for and on behalf of American workers, enforcement of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act should be a top priority.”⁷ Given the importance of continued, robust UFLPA enforcement to U.S. economic security and to the United States’ ongoing commitment to combat forced labor, we request a response to the following questions by no later than December 20, 2025:

1. What factors does DHS assess have led to the precipitous decline in UFLPA enforcement since March 2025? Are lower enforcement numbers associated with any reduction or reorganization of staff (whether temporary or permanent)?
2. According to one report, “[a]s of September 5, the CBP website showed that the agency had stopped only 14 shipments in July 2025. Following a request for comment ... the website was revised to show that 184 shipments had been stopped in July.”⁸ Please provide an explanation of how UFLPA enforcement statistics are normally reported and why CBP changed the July 2025 statistics following the request for comment.
3. How does CBP plan to continue working with other FLETF members to identify and stop shipments that potentially violate the UFLPA following drastic cuts to forced labor programming and research funding at expert agencies, such as TIP, DRL, and ILAB?

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

4. Why have no new entities been added to the UFLPA Entity List since January 15, 2025, and what is CBP's plan for working with other FLETF member agencies to add new entities to the list moving forward? Are all FLETF member agencies continuing to contribute to the FLETF processes for adding new entities?
5. Please provide a detailed breakdown of CBP's spending on UFLPA and Section 307 forced labor enforcement during the two fiscal years from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2025. Additionally, please provide detailed information about changes to the number of personnel dedicated to combatting forced labor at CBP during that time, including how many, if any, personnel were shifted to other duties after January 20, 2025, and when those changes occurred.
6. Please provide current and historical statistics on the number of third-party petitions alleging forced labor for a particular company or sector and the time required to process and issue an initial determination. Please provide current and historical statistics regarding the number of Findings and Withhold Release Orders by CBP that are initiated by a third-party petition or that are self-initiated by CBP.
7. What has CBP's strategy been since January 20, 2025 for enforcing UFLPA in high priority sectors? What has CBP done to identify whether and how products in these sectors are entering the United States?

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



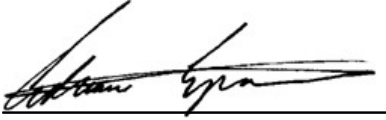
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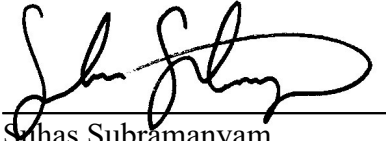
Jerrold Nadler
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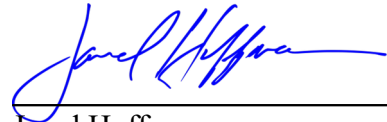
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