STATEMENT OF

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CHAIRMAN WU, RANKING MEMBER GINGREY, AND DISTINGUISHED SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS, it is my honor to appear before you today to discuss the Office of Border Patrol's use of technology in securing the border. My name is Jeff Self, and I am the Division Chief over Southwest Border for Customs and Border Protection's Office of Border Patrol. The United States Border Patrol is a component of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). I would like to begin by giving you a brief overview of our agency and mission. As the guardian of the Nation's borders, CBP safeguards the homeland—foremost, by protecting the American public against terrorists and the instruments of terror, while at the same time enforcing the laws of the United States and fostering the Nation's economic security through lawful travel and trade. Since 1924, the Border Patrol has grown from a handful of mounted agents patrolling desolate areas along U.S. borders to today's highly-trained, dynamic work force of almost 15,000 men and women supported by sophisticated technology, vehicles, aircraft, and other equipment. Contributing to all this is the Border Patrol's time-honored duty of interdicting illegal aliens and narcotics and those who attempt to smuggle them across our borders. We cannot protect against the entry of terrorists and the instruments of terror without also reducing the clutter that is caused by illegal migration across our borders. For example, today we have to account for all who enter or attempt to enter the United Stets illegally. Last year we arrested over 870, 000 people who entered the United States illegally. Of those, we had over 18,000 major crime hits through biometric technology. These crime hits canvassed a litany of crimes to include murder, rape, sexual assaults, and kidnapping. It is imperative that we reduce the number of persons or clutter attempting to illegally enter the United States so that we can concentrate on terrorist or weapons of terror from entering the United States.

The Border Patrol's national strategy is an "all threats" strategy with anti-terrorism as our main priority. This strategy has made the centralized chain of command a priority and has increased the effectiveness of our agents by using a risk-management approach to deploy our resources. The strategy recognizes that border awareness and cooperation with our law enforcement partners are critical. Partnerships with the Department of the Interior; Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Drug Enforcement Administration; Federal Bureau of Investigation; State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies; and State Homeland Security offices plays a vital role in sharing and disseminating information and tactical intelligence that assists our ability to rapidly respond to an identified threat or intrusion, which is essential to mission success.

Recognizing that we cannot control our borders by merely enforcing the law at the "line," our strategy incorporates a "defense in depth" component, to include transportation checks away from the physical border. Traffic checkpoints are critical to our enforcement efforts because they deny major routes of egress from the borders to smugglers who are intent on delivering people, drugs, and other contraband into the interior of the United States. Permanent traffic checkpoints allow the Border Patrol to establish an important second layer of defense and help deter illegal entries through comprehensive enforcement. Border Patrol Agents often encounter fraudulent documents while conducting transportation check duties. Agents receive training at the Border Patrol Academy that enables the agent to identify key features and characteristics of valid immigration documents. This training, coupled with on the job training, allows agents to identify common tactics used by the criminal element in creating fraudulent documents. Our most valuable asset at the checkpoint in examining the validity of any document (birth certificate, driver's licenses, and immigration documents) is the agent's experience.

To carry out its mission, the Border Patrol has a clear strategic goal: Establish and maintain effective control of the border of the United States. Effective control is defined in the Border Patrol's strategy as the ability to detect, respond, and interdict border penetrations in areas deemed a high priority for threat potential or other national security objectives. In order to establish effective control in a given geographical area, we must be able to consistently:

- Detect an illegal entry;
- Identify/Classify the entry and determine the level of threat involved;
- Respond to the entry; and
- Bring the event to a satisfactory law enforcement resolution.

Gaining, maintaining, and expanding a strong enforcement posture with sufficient flexibility to address potential exigent enforcement challenges is critical in bringing effective control to the borders. Guidance at the national level for planning and implementation ensures resources are initially targeted to gain and maintain effective control in the most vulnerable, highest-risk border areas, and then to expand this level of border control to all Border Patrol Sectors.

While the key to mission success is the right combination of personnel, infrastructure, and technology, it must be coupled with improved rapid response capability and organizational mobility. Each of these components is inter-dependent and critical to the success of the Border Patrol's strategy. We are fully engaged with the DHS Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate in our efforts to identify, develop, and acquire technology to help us gain enhanced awareness and control of our borders. Our participation in S&T's Integrated Process Team on Border Security, for example, will help us use S&T resources to develop technology that will better secure our borders. Systems with the technological ability to predict, detect, and identify

illegal entries and other criminal activity, but lacking the capacity for a rapid response or reaction, cannot complete the enforcement mission. Conversely, enforcement personnel with inadequate intelligence or poor technological support to provide situational awareness, access, and adequate transportation or equipment necessary to conduct enforcement activity are much less likely to be effective in today's dynamic border environment.

There is no stretch of border in the United States that can be considered completely inaccessible or lacking in the potential to provide an entry point for a terrorist or terrorist weapon. Therefore, securing every mile of diverse terrain is an important and complex task that cannot be resolved by a single solution, such as installing fence. Securing each unique mile of the border requires a balance of technology, infrastructure, and personnel that maximizes the government's return on investment and is tailored to each specific environment. Some of the components utilized in evaluating tactical infrastructure needs are border access (the existence of all-weather roads), border barriers (vehicle and pedestrian), and the lack of non-intrusive inspections equipment at checkpoint facilities.

The proper mix of personnel, technology, and infrastructure will vary with differing border environments and enforcement challenges. The Border Patrol operates in three basic geographical environments: urban, rural, and remote. Each of these environments requires a different mix of resources. In an urban environment, enforcement personnel generally have only minutes, or sometimes seconds, to identify an illegal entry and bring the situation to resolution. This dynamic is a result of the fact that significant infrastructure exists to facilitate an illegal entrant's approach to the border and entry and to permit the violator to escape within moments of effecting the entry by blending in with the legitimate traffic in the community. New tactics are constantly developed by those attempting to avoid detection in such situations in order

to combat increased border security. One of those new methods that we have seen is the discovery of tunnels. There have been over 70 tunnels detected on the border. These tunnels were detected by various methods including sinking vehicles, collapsing roads, and by agents in the performance of their duties.

On the Northern border, the vastness and remoteness of the area and the unique socio-economic ties between the U.S. and Canada are significant factors in implementing the Border Patrol's national strategy. Severe weather conditions on the Northern border during winter intensify the need to expand "force-multiplying" technology to meet our enforcement needs. The number of actual illegal border penetrations along the U.S.-Canada border is small in comparison to the daily arrests along the U.S.-Mexico border. The threat along the Northern border results from the fact that over ninety percent of Canada's population of 30 million lives within one hundred miles of the U.S.-Canada border. It is most likely that potential threats to U.S. security posed by individuals or organizations present in Canada would also be located near the border. While manpower on the U.S.-Canada border has significantly increased since 9/11, the Border Patrol's ability to detect, respond to, and interdict illegal cross-border penetrations there remains limited. Continued testing, acquisition, and deployment of sensing and monitoring platforms will be crucial in addressing the Northern border threat situation.

One tool that CBP uses to assist with border security is the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). The UAS provides CBP with a remotely piloted asset that allows for persistent, broad area surveillance. UAS operations are proactive responses to un-cued, cued, and intelligence based missions. The UAS Program focuses its capabilities on the CBP priority mission and enhances surveillance and reconnaissance requirements along the border. The UAS has the flexibility and endurance to fly long leg surveillance missions while conducting both scheduled

and unscheduled searches. As a law enforcement force multiplier for CBP, the UAS allows CBP Air and Marine (A&M) to support other DHS entities, including the United States Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Since 2004, CBP UASs have flown more than 2,000 hours, directly contributing to more than 4,000 arrests and the seizure of thousands of pounds of marijuana. In July 2007, CBP A&M added another UAS to the southwest border for a total of two. In FY2008, one UAS will migrate to the northern border to support expanded northern border operations. Once additional personnel are trained to support UAS operations in the southwest, CBP A&M will be available to provide surveillance at the southwest border 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Nationally, the Border Patrol is tasked with a very complex, sensitive, and difficult job, which historically has presented immense challenges. We face those challenges every day with vigilance, dedication to service, and integrity as we work to strengthen national security and protect America and its citizens. I would like to thank both Chairman Wu, and the Subcommittee, for the opportunity to present this testimony today and for your support of CBP and DHS.