

Press Office

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DHS STREAMLINES REMOVAL PROCESS ALONG ENTIRE U.S. BORDER

Under Secure Border Initiative, Expedited Removal to be

Implemented Along Northern Border and Coastlines

WASHINGTON, DC – Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Michael Chertoff announced today the implementation of Expedited Removal (ER) along the entire U.S.-Canadian border and all U.S. coastal areas, as part of the Secure Border Initiative. Today’s announcement reflects the further implementation of ER that was initially implemented along the Southwest border and will now be implemented along all of the United States’ border areas. ER is an effective border management process that swiftly returns illegal aliens to their countries of origin while maintaining protections for those who fear persecution.

“With the Secure Border Initiative, we made a commitment to implement new tactics throughout the U.S. in order to gain control of our borders,” said Secretary Chertoff. “We have seen success in deterring illegal border crossers since Expedited Removal was implemented throughout the Southwest. Implementing this process along all borders will

provide DHS agents and officers with an additional tool to protect our nation's boundaries and quickly remove those who entered our country illegally.”

Expedited Removal authority was established by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 and applied initially at our nation's ports-of-entry. Since last September, DHS has successfully implemented ER between the ports-of-entry at all nine U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol Sectors on the Southwest border. CBP Border Patrol agents have been trained and are now ready to implement ER in all Border Patrol Sectors. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Detention and Removal officers have devoted significant detention space to ER and have removed more than 4,750 aliens under the program since September.

ER provides DHS the authority to expeditiously return applicable illegal aliens to their country of origin as soon as circumstances will allow. DHS will be applying ER to aliens who have spent 14 days or less in the United States, and are either apprehended within 100 miles of the border with Mexico or Canada or arrive by sea and are apprehended within 100 miles of a coastal border area.

Individuals in ER proceedings are generally not released into the United States. ER disrupts the various human smuggling cycles that occur along the border by substantially reducing the time from arrest to ultimate removal from the United States and foreclosing opportunities for these illegal aliens to reconnect with their smugglers and guides.

Under the Secure Border Initiative, the Expedited Removal process has proven to be a successful tool in rapidly returning illegal aliens to their country of origin, while providing those aliens who have a credible fear of persecution or torture the opportunity to present their case before an immigration judge. By implementing ER more widely, ICE and CBP personnel in all border sectors will be provided the mechanism to effectively deter future entries and accelerate removals.

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