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## A Bargain for a Better Border

*Posted by Commissioner Alan D. Bersin, U.S. Customs and Border Protection*

Earlier this week I had the pleasure of speaking to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's national security task force. Before I spoke, I listened with great interest to task force chairman and former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge emphasize that U.S. ports of entry must be where both security and prosperity thrive.

I could not agree more. In fact, from my view as commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, I see that our national security and economic security mission are more than complementary activities. Securing the nation's borders—land, air, and sea—while facilitating the flow of lawful people and goods entering the United States is vital to our homeland security, as well as our economic prosperity. And, over the past several years, we have deployed unprecedented levels of personnel, technology, and resources to enhancing both security and legal commerce at our nation's borders.

As the global security and economic pictures have evolved in the post-9/11 world, so has our approach to border security. This new border paradigm has helped CBP refine *our* way of doing business by adding more time and space to our inspection process, and allowing us to identify dangerous people and goods at the earliest point possible.

Of course, this new border paradigm will not be fully embraced overnight. While we have made significant progress in the private commercial sector, we need to do more to encourage businesses and individuals to join these efforts. This week, I asked the U.S. Chamber to work with us on expanding trusted traveler and shipper programs and with building better, smarter borders that continue to strengthen security and expedite legal commerce.

Here's the bargain: If you are a frequent [international traveler](#) or U.S. border crosser, or you are involved in [importation into the U.S.](#), we urge you to join one of our trusted traveler or shipper programs. The more goods and people we encounter who participate in these programs, the more resources we can dedicate to those we know far less about. Participate because you want a safer border, or participate because you want your border experience to be faster and easier. Either way, we all win.

Posted by Homeland Security Blog Team at 2:38 PM 

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Securing our borders should be our number one priority. Why have we waited so long to do so?

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