



**Homeland  
Security**

# Engagement Readout

## **The CIS Ombudsman’s Webinar Series: How the Department of Homeland Security is Combatting Human Trafficking and Forced Labor in Imported Goods**

On January 13, 2021, the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CIS Ombudsman) hosted a public webinar during National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month to discuss how DHS combats human trafficking and forced labor in imported goods. Subject matter experts from DHS headquarters and various components joined the engagement.

Kelly Hyland, Legal Counsel at the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT), explained how the CCHT supports federal criminal investigations, victim assistance efforts, intelligence analysis, and training activities related to human trafficking and forced labor. Brandi Bynum, Acting Program Manager for the DHS Blue Campaign, highlighted efforts to improve public awareness about human trafficking and how to respond to potential human trafficking situations. She also shared two new resources to inform businesses and law enforcement that may encounter trafficking victims (the [Human Trafficking Awareness Guide for Convenience Retail Employees](#) and the [Human Trafficking Response Guide for Campus Law Enforcement and Public Safety Officials](#)). Therese Randazzo, Director of the Forced Labor Division at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), shared that in fiscal year 2020, CBP detained more than 300 shipments in the United States containing goods made by forced labor worth more than \$50 million. Kelly Hyland, from the CCHT, and Nidhi Kaura, Policy Analyst at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), provided an overview of Continued Presence, T nonimmigrant visas, and other options available to trafficking victims in the United States to potentially obtain and maintain lawful status.

A total of 321 stakeholders joined this webinar (attorneys/legal representatives – 29%, employers – 5%, government workers – 36%, advocacy groups – 5%, petitioners/applicants – 2%, and others – 23%). Participants submitted 50 written questions and the speakers answered as many as they could during the engagement. Question topics included DHS support for victims of human trafficking, resources available for law enforcement and the general public, and how to report suspected human trafficking.

Below is a sample of the questions received:

- How does DHS interact with the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement Anti-Trafficking in Persons Programs?
- What is the ultimate fate of goods made with child/forced labor that CBP seizes?
- How would a victim request Continued Presence?

- What is the best way to contact USCIS regarding a T nonimmigrant visa application that is outside of normal processing times?
- Are there volunteer or task force opportunities available for the public to support the Blue Campaign?

**Speakers**

- Michael Dougherty, Former CIS Ombudsman
- Bertha Anderson, Chief of Public Engagement at the CIS Ombudsman
- Carrie Anderson, Senior Advisor at the CIS Ombudsman
- Kelly Hyland, Legal Counsel at the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking
- Brandi Bynum, Acting Program Manager for the DHS Blue Campaign
- Therese Randazzo, Director of the Forced Labor Division at CBP
- Nidhi Kaura, Policy Analyst at USCIS