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U.S. Department of Homeland Security sent this bulletin at 01/02/2020 02:06 PM EST

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Homeland Security will begin processing migrants for return to Mexico under the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) at the Nogales Port of Entry south of Tucson, Arizona. This brings the total number of ports of entry where MPP returns will be made to seven. Any migrants making illegal or inadmissible entry at the Southwest Border, regardless of location of entry, may be returned to Mexico through one of these locations to await their immigration court proceedings. Previously, migrants apprehended in the Tucson Sector were returned to Mexico through El Paso for processing under MPP. The expansion to the Nogales Port of Entry reflects the continued commitment by both the United States and Mexico to a program that has proven effective at reducing human smuggling across the Southwest Border.

First implemented in January 2019, pursuant to a law passed by Congress in 1996 on a bipartisan basis, the program allows certain aliens to remain in Mexico while awaiting court proceedings in the United States. MPP has been a crucial element of DHS's success in addressing the ongoing crisis, securing the border, and ending catch and release. So far, more than 56,000 migrants have been returned to Mexico to await their immigration hearings.

“MPP has been an extremely effective tool as the United States, under the leadership of President Trump, continues to address the ongoing humanitarian and security crisis at the border,” said Acting Secretary Chad Wolf. “The Department is fully committed to the program and will continually work with the Government of Mexico to expand and strengthen it. I am confident in the program’s continued success in adjudicating meritorious cases quickly and preventing fraudulent claims.”

MPP has been implemented and expanded in close cooperation with the Government of Mexico in and around San Diego, Calexico, El Paso, Laredo, Brownsville, and Eagle Pass.

MPP remains a cornerstone of DHS’s efforts to restore integrity to the U.S. immigration system and relieve the crushing backlog of pending asylum cases. Our nation is more secure because of the program, and migrants with meritorious asylum claims can receive protection in months, rather than waiting in limbo for years.

DHS continues to invest in this critical program despite the potential of adverse court

action. Disruption of MPP would negatively impact U.S. foreign relations, risk sparking a renewed humanitarian and security crisis at the border, and most benefit those who seek to profit from human misery.

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