

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2021

Acting Commissioner Troy Miller
U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
Department of Homeland Security
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Acting Commissioner Miller,

We write to obtain a resolution regarding the detention of Iranian Americans in secondary inspection upon entering the United States in Blaine, Washington on January 4-5, 2020. On January 5, 2020 more than 80 Americans of Iranian descent were held in secondary inspection at length and questioned at the Peace Arch Border Crossing – with nearly 300 individuals having been reportedly affected. Some individuals claimed to have been held in secondary inspection over 10 hours, and others reported they were turned away due to a lack of space. Those held in secondary inspection included U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and people of all ages including elderly people and children. Individuals had their passports confiscated, and they were questioned about their political views and allegiances without explanation.

We are deeply concerned about the experiences of those impacted last January. We are approaching the second anniversary of this unfortunate situation and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has yet to apologize for or fully respond to our questions about the events that took place.

Given these conditions, we request that the following actions be taken before the second anniversary of these events, which will be January 5, 2022.

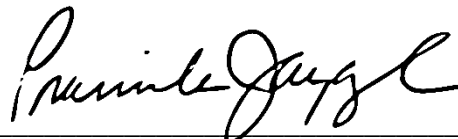
1. A formal apology from CBP regarding the tweet posted on January 5, 2020 which denied the Iranian-Americans were being subject to increased scrutiny at the Peace Arch Border Crossing in Blaine, WA.
2. The prompt publication of the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties' report describing what happened at the Peace Arch border crossing between January 4-5, 2020.
3. A press conference held for CBP to publicly renounce their actions, and commit to changes moving forward.

Men, women and children legally entering or returning to the United States at a designated port of entry should not be arbitrarily held and questioned solely based on their religion, ethnicity, or national origin. We look forward to prompt action by CBP to acknowledge and hold itself accountable for the grave impact of the actions taken at the Peace Arch Border Crossing between January 4-5, 2020. In conjunction with the Iranian community, we eagerly await the development and release of a corrective action plan to assure that these events do not recur.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your prompt response.



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress