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DHS wall construction update: 6 October 2020

BLUF: The Trump administration is building new wall and doing so faster than ever before. Currently wall construction continues at the southwest border (SWB) with the administration's goal of 450 new miles of wall system on track for the end of the calendar year.

Now construction is moving at an average rate of around 10 miles per week, setting the administration up to complete its year-end goal with time to spare.

As summed up below by Border Patrol Chief Rodney Scott, the current status of the wall system's construction is summed up as follows:

- 350 new miles completed
- 231 new miles under construction
- 157 new miles under the pre-construction process

Furthermore, as Acting Secretary Chad Wolf illustrated in his State of the Homeland Address last month, the timeline has been accelerating since construction began:

“In January, we reached 100 miles of new border wall system. In June, we achieved 200 miles. In August, we marked the 300th mile—and by the end of this calendar year we will reach over 450 miles of new border wall system.”

The wall's effectiveness:

Finally, as hundreds of new miles of border wall system have been constructed, they have pushed human smugglers to move their inhumane efforts to where DHS officers are the most-prepared to catch and stop them: America's points of entry.

With more wall going up, CBP has seen an increase in tractor trailer cases and apprehensions for FY20 along the border.

- The Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley (RGV) and Laredo (LRT) sectors in Texas have traditionally been the hot spot for tractor-trailers loaded with migrants.
- In fiscal year 2020 through August, these two sectors have seen more than 226 tractor-trailer cases, with 3,740 individuals discovered concealed in these dangerous and life threatening conditions.
- Just for LRT this represents a 37 percent increase from the same period in fiscal year 2019.
- These smugglers often pack their human cargo into dangerously hot, crowded trailers with no ventilation, no food or water, and typically no means of escape.
- Border Patrol agents often find human remains or encounter lost migrants who are ill, injured, and abandoned by smugglers backed by cartels and other criminal enterprises.

“Smugglers are unscrupulous criminals and will stop at nothing to enrich their pockets, even if it involves locking human beings in trailers intended for animals,” said Acting Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Mark A. Morgan last month. “They treat illegal aliens as a commodity, inhumanely holding them captive in overcrowded stash houses with limited access to food and water.”

Put simply, these hundreds of miles of new border wall system are key tool for law enforcement in the ongoing fight against the inhumane scourge of transnational human smuggling.