



Stop the Coup 2025

a public education and mobilization campaign

CHAPTER 5. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY **Author: Ken Cucinelli**, *former Acting Director of US Citizenship and Immigration Services under Trump; Acting Deputy Secretary for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS); with DHS experts.*

Cucinelli’s priority recommendation is to eliminate the Department of Homeland Security and all current members of the Homeland Security Advisory Committee. This is to address DHS’s failure to become a single “One DHS”; its various missions are disjointed vs. cohesive, Cucinelli states. Conservatives back transferring DHS missions to other agencies into one “stand-alone” agency – to become the third largest in government, in term of personnel. The priorities of homeland security should be refocused on law enforcement, they argue.

Conservatives seek to crack down on border control; halt the expansion of immigration and asylum programs; and arrest, temporarily detain, and expel large numbers of undocumented aliens and recent arrivals who have not secured citizenship.

Proposals:

- ✓ Create a stand-alone border and immigration agency at the Cabinet level – becoming the third largest federal department with over 100,000 employees -- by combining the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the Department of Justice (DOJ) Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), and the Office of Immigration Litigation (OIL)
- ✓ Move the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to the Department of Transportation
- ✓ Move the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to the Department of the Interior or, if combined with CISA, to the Department of Transportation
- ✓ Move the US Coast Guard (USCG) to the Department of Justice and -- in time of full-scale war -- to the Department of Defense (DOD). Alternatively, move the Coast Guard to DOD for all purposes
- ✓ Split the US Secret Service (USSS) in two: move the protective element to the Department of Justice and move financial enforcement to Treasury
- ✓ Privatize the Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
- ✓ Move the Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) to the DOD
- ✓ Move the Office of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction to the FBI
- ✓ Cut all remaining elements of DHS to save taxpayers’ money

The dismantling and redirection of Homeland Security mission would address what Cucinelli calls “its drift” under Biden to a “woke” Left. *The proposed DHS reshuffle would:*

- ✓ Prioritize border security and immigration enforcement, including detention and deportation



Stop the Coup 2025

a public education and mobilization campaign

- ✓ Repair the “historic damage done by the Biden Administration,” and establish a lawful, orderly immigration system that would protect the homeland from public safety threats

Novel “Day One” strategy: Cucinelli calls for empowering the Office of the Secretary to carry out the DHS agency reorganization, and proposes a novel “Day One” 2025 strategy to assure loyalists in key agency seats.

This calls for vetting of candidates by the Office of Presidential Personnel, “which is not reliant on detailees from other parts of the department, to help ensure the completion of the next President’s agenda.”

While acknowledging the constitutional requirement of Senate confirmation of nominees, Cucinelli suggests “a novel approach” to fast-track confirmations of nominees to avoid Senate delay that involves placing conservative nominees into “acting” or interim positions while they await Senate approval. This step would “guarantee implementation of the Day One agenda and equip the department for potential emergency situations while still honoring the confirmation requirement,” writes Cucinelli.

Proposals:

- ✓ New legislation “to establish a more durable but politically oriented line of succession for agency decision-making purposes”
 - in cases where career officers are in a position, hold that seat for a loyalist
 - redistribute DHS employees, and transfer all law enforcement capacity in office billets to field positions “to maximize law enforcement capacity”
- ✓ Give explicit decision-making powers to individuals wielding “acting” Secretary authority to finalize agency actions, including regulations, to ensure fulfillment of department’s homeland security mission

Customs and Border Patrol (CBP):

- ✓ Expand CBP arrest and detention capacities
- ✓ Bring back horseback-mounted Border Patrol, and “clear the records and personnel files of those who were falsely accused by Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas of whipping migrants and issue a formal apology on behalf of DHS and CBP”
- ✓ Fund and expand border wall and Port of Entry sites

Detention:

- ✓ Put into law a single nationwide detention standard to overcome having to adhere to varying state standards and oversight; this would “allow the flexibility to use large numbers of temporary facilities such as tents”
- ✓ Congress should mandate and fund more tents and beds for 100,000 illegal aliens
- ✓ Congress should fund 20,000 Expedited Removal Officers (ERO) and 5,000 attorneys at the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA)

ICE:



Stop the Coup 2025

a public education and mobilization campaign

- ✓ Direct ICE to take custody of all aliens with records for felonies, crimes of violence, DUIs, previous removals, and any other crime considered a national security or public safety threat under current laws
- ✓ Eliminate T and U visas
- ✓ Cap H-2B (seasonal non-agricultural) visas and avoid issuing any regulations that would favor certain foreign nationals seeking an H-2 guest worker visa
- ✓ Take executive action to eliminate visas for foreign students “from enemy nations”
- ✓ Give ICE authority to arrest, detain, and remove “immigration violators” anywhere; eliminate “sensitive zones” where ICE now can’t operate
- ✓ Next administration should challenge current ICE limits of “expedited removal” of “eligible aliens” to within 100 miles of the US border. “This is not a statutory requirement,” states Cucinelli
- ✓ Expand the use of workplace search warrants (Blackies Warrants) to allow ICE to question or apprehend workers ICE suspects of being undocumented immigrants

USCIS:

- ✓ Limit USCIS to a screening and vetting agency, not to speed up immigration, but crack down
- ✓ Move away from expanded-access and temporary patrol programs “that are contrary to Congressional intent”
- ✓ Crack down on prosecution of possible citizenship fraud cases and create a criminal investigation team to investigate possible immigration benefits fraud of Title 8 cases
- ✓ Refocus USCIS on law enforcement and eliminate transfer of USCIS officers to work with “DACA, mass parole for Afghans, Ukrainians, Venezuelans, etc.”

Additional proposals:

- ✓ End chain migration while focusing “on the nuclear family”
- ✓ End the current employment visa program to reward only “best and brightest.” Transform the current H1-B visa program into an elite program
- ✓ Require all visa applicants rejected for any benefit or status adjudication to immediately leave the US
- ✓ Remove “credible fear” and fear of gang violence as grounds for asylum
- ✓ Repeal immigration benefits for unaccompanied children
- ✓ Remove alien children from HHS jurisdiction
- ✓ Amend Section 235 of the Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (TVPRA) to more easily return unaccompanied children to home countries
- ✓ Set new national standards for large-scale temporary tents to house undocumented families
- ✓ End funds to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to process and transport illegal aliens into and throughout the United States
- ✓ Set stricter limits of employment for legal immigrants and non-immigrants



Stop the Coup 2025

a public education and mobilization campaign

- ✓ Restart the Remain in Mexico Protocol, working to keep asylum seekers and other immigrants from entering the US
- ✓ With presidential approval, refuse to allow mass migration of groups of aliens

FEMA

- ✓ Transfer control of FEMA grants to states
- ✓ Privatize and/or end the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
- ✓ Cut needed FEMA Senate-confirmed positions to one – the Administrator
- ✓ Eliminate FEMA’s “springing Cabinet position” to support coordinated agency responses

CISA

- ✓ Realign CISA with the government’s priorities
- ✓ End current “censorship of misinformation and disinformation” that began after alleged Russian misinformation in the 2016 election. (“That turned out to be a Clinton campaign ‘dirty trick,’” says Cucinelli)
- ✓ Fire CISA Cybersecurity Advisory Committee on Day One (Jan. 20, 2025)
- ✓ Move CISA’s emergency communications and Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) roles to FEMA
- ✓ Move CISA’s school security functions to state homeland security offices
 - CISA should not duplicate cybersecurity functions done elsewhere (DOD, FBI, NSA, USSS)
- ✓ For election security/preparation, CISA should help states and localities assess if they have “good cyber hygiene” in their hardware and software -- but nothing more
 - CISA should *not* be significantly involved closer to an election, nor participate in messaging or propaganda

Coast Guard:

- ✓ USCG’s budget should reflect mission activities
- ✓ Counter China’s influence and encroachment in the Pacific region (a conservative priority)
- ✓ Fund Pacific wartime drills
- ✓ As with DOD, re-onboard USCG personnel dismissed from service for refusing to take the COVID-19 “vaccine,” with time in service credited to them

Monitoring Speech: Cucinelli focuses special attention on the role of the Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans (PLCY), calling for “a complete inventory, analysis, and reevaluation of the department’s domestic terrorism lines of effort to ensure that they are consistent with the President’s priorities, Congressional authorization, and Americans’ constitutional rights.”

Steps:



Stop the Coup 2025

a public education and mobilization campaign

- ✓ Evaluate, with the help of social media outlets, any efforts “to censor or otherwise change or affect Americans’ speech” and to “comprehensively report on and publish this history in full so that the American people can know the facts”
 - The PLCY should fire all personnel who participated in such activity

Intelligence and Analysis:

- ✓ Eliminate The Office of Intelligence and Analysis, “because it has not added value and because it has been weaponized for domestic political purposes”

Other Proposals:

- ✓ Execute the major reorganization of homeland security structure and chain of command, by calling on the Office of General Counsel to “advise principals as to how DHS can execute its missions within the law instead of advising principals as to why they cannot execute regulations, policies, and programs”
 - This step calls for hiring significantly more Schedule C/political appointees to supervise career staff and manage their output
- ✓ Among radical steps, reduce the scope and function of the Office of Civil Rights (CRCL) and the Privacy Office (PRIV) to a single officer, with a narrow task of reviewing alleged abuses to civil rights
 - Put CRCL and PRIV employees under the control of an OPC Deputy General Counsel -- a political appointee

STC 2025 Commentary: Cucinelli lays out a militarized homeland security plan with a focus on reducing immigration and expelling large numbers of undocumented immigrants with pending applications, and using “irregular warfare” to increase militarization of surveillance of domestic groups viewed as not aligned with the president’s actions, policies, or larger conservative agenda. This, coupled with steps to reduce the Office of Civil Rights, are in line with Project 2025’s embrace of authoritarian rule under a president with expanded powers, backed by a corps of activist lawyers.

The proposed Day One “novel approach” of immediately placing unvetted conservative loyalists into “acting” or temporary high-level seats of Homeland Security offices on Day One reveals Project 2025’s creative attempt to gain conservative control of decision-making and sidestep Senate oversight. Whether it is legal is secondary to this untested strategy. While Cucinelli does not specify if such temporary “acting” appointees would also have “final authority” to make decisions while waiting for Senate hearings and approval, that appears to be his intention.

Here, Project 2025 makes clear its brazen attempt to override the existing Congressional oversight mechanisms to seat loyalists in critical Homeland Security positions and authorize them – however temporarily – to act with unfettered authority. This is how they plan to “dismantle the Administrative State” and rewrite the rules of governance and department policy – from Day One to Day 180 – or the day a Congressional hearing stops them.



Stop the Coup 2025
a public education and mobilization campaign

Chapter 5 - Key Points

- ✓ Eliminate the Department of Homeland Security and create a super agency with 100,000-strong work force focused on law enforcement domestically, while limiting Office of Civil Rights role
- ✓ Drastically expand ICE's mandate to arrest, detain, and expel undocumented immigrants
- ✓ Direct the Office of General Counsel to help make reforms legal or defend challenges to reforms
- ✓ Apply "irregular warfare" to create a militarized domestic surveillance corps against individuals or groups at odds with presidential / Project 2025 conservative agenda
- ✓ Use a novel approach to immediately place loyalists in temporary "acting" positions with unquestioned authority to decide policy -- while sidestepping Congressional oversight