

Congressman Henry Cuellar

Dedication of the Machinery Center of Excellence and Expertise at TAMIU

Friday, April 20, 2018

1:30 p.m. CT

Front foyer, Western Hemispheric Trade Center,

Texas A&M International University, 5201 University Blvd. Laredo, Texas 78045

Acknowledgment

Dr. Pablo Arenaz President - Texas A&M
International University

David Higginson Director, Field Operations U.S.
Customs and Border Protection, Laredo

Armando Taboada, Machinery Center Director

Juan J. Porras, Assistant Center Director

- Today, we formally dedicated the new permanent office for the Machinery Center of Excellence and Expertise (CEE) at Texas A&M International University's (TAMIU) Center for Western Hemispheric Trade.
- The Machinery Center originally opened on April 15, 2013 was previously housed at the Shiloh Tower office building. Laredo was chosen as the site for the Machinery CEE because it is the largest inland port in the U.S., processing

\$121.6 billion in imports, \$234 million in duties collected in FY 2017.

- The Machinery Center provides one-stop processing to reduce trade's cost of business, increase consistency and predictability, and enhance CBP enforcement efforts.
- The Center:
 - Ensures uniformity of practices across ports of entry
 - Facilitates the timely resolution of trade compliance issues nationwide
 - and strengthens the agency's knowledge on key industry practices.
- The Center helps CBP align with modern business practices, focusing on industry needs and tailor support to unique trading environments.

Benefits

This new collaborative effort will be mutually beneficial for TAMIU and U.S. Customs and Border Protection

TAMIU will receive

- Joint research opportunities for professors and graduate students
- Provide undergraduate students first hand industry experience by opening internship opportunities
- Access to U.S. Customs and Border Protection's nine other Centers of Excellence and Expertise
- Joint outreach events with trade industry and stakeholders

- The new collaboration gives CBP a research branch, with access to talented TAMIU professors and students and the resources of Texas A&M International University and the A&M System

- The research collaborations will enhance CBP enforcement efforts, help optimize trade, bring more revenue to Laredo.

The types of joint research project can include:

- Monitor and Studying the effects of trade facilitation through statistical analysis.
- Identifying trends in trade
- Provide insight for promoting sub-industries within Texas that directly affect the U.S. economy.

- Adding efficiencies for our Machinery Center stakeholders by studying innovative ways to expedite trade flows while ensuring compliance with federal trade and intellectual and property rights laws.

- These research collaborations will open the door for additional funding for TAMIU allowing them to leverages federal, state and local resources

Conclusion

- The Machinery Center of Excellence's new home here at TAMIU and this partnership with CBP will provide opportunities and benefits for TAMIU, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and our community.

About the Center

- The Machinery Center transformed the approach to trade processing by moving from transactional processing (entry by entry) to management by account.
- The Machinery Center works virtually with ports of entry across the nation, and in FY 2017 processed machinery imports exceeding \$224.6 billion in import value, ranking fifth among the

10 Centers nationwide, and the amount of duties collected on those imports is approximately \$2.07 billion. The amount of entry summaries processed by the Machinery Center in FY 2017 exceeds 4.2 million.

- The top five commodity categories processed by the Machinery Center include the following:
 1. Printing machinery
 2. Taps, cocks and valves
 3. Smart phones
 4. Pumps, compressors and fans
 5. Refrigerators, freezers and refrigeration equipment.

- There are currently more than 88,000 importers of machinery. In addition, Texas is the second-largest state for the number of machinery importers.