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## **Ahead of Committee Vote, Wyden Urges Colleagues to Reject Rodney Scott Nomination for Customs and Border Protection**

### **As Prepared for Delivery**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is responsible for all of the goods and people flowing across our borders. It's no exaggeration to say the person in charge of this vast agency is tasked with protecting our country and our economy.

That's a tall order. And unfortunately, after careful review of his background and qualifications, I can firmly say that the evidence shows Mr. Scott falls short. He is unfit and unqualified to be CBP commissioner.

Mr. Scott has no experience with customs facilitation or enforcement. Donald Trump is creating the biggest disruptions to the U.S. customs system that I've ever seen – and is prepared to leave it in the hands of someone who has no experience with customs.

The head of CBP will also be in charge of limiting the impact of Trump's disastrous tariffs on supply chains and workers. If goods crossing the border get backed up or delayed, that can make or break small businesses in my home state that rely on those goods.

Nothing I've seen in Mr. Scott's background shows me he is prepared to meet those challenges.

Mr. Scott also has a long history of problematic leadership and judgement. Perhaps the most egregious example is his involvement in the cover up of a homicide of a migrant detained while Mr. Scott was leading the Border Patrol office in San Diego.

In 2010, a migrant by the name of Anastasio Hernandez-Rojas was detained after crossing the border. He was then beaten by CBP agents and eventually died as a direct result of his injuries.

As the guy in charge, what did Mr. Scott do? He did not follow his own agency's policies. He did not immediately refer the incident to outside investigators.

Instead, the office he led started its own investigation into Hernandez-Rojas's death. A former CBP internal affairs official told me that the investigation was quote "not an investigation, it was a cover-up – one Mr. Scott supervised."

An independent Human Rights Commission ruled just a few weeks ago that the U.S. government violated human rights principles in the cover up of Hernandez Rojas's death in CBP custody.

Fast forward to the summer of 2020, when the Trump administration deployed a staggering number of federal law enforcement officers to my hometown of Portland, Oregon to suppress peaceful protests.

Mr. Scott was serving as Chief of Border Patrol at the time. And provided vast support for the deployment of federal law enforcement officers that whisked peaceful protestors away in unmarked vehicles, shot protestors in the head, and unleashed chemical weapons and contaminants.

Now in his second term, Donald Trump seems eager to use every tool at his disposal to weaponize the federal government against groups and individuals that disagree with him or attempt to push back on his agenda.

The person in charge of our borders must be someone that is able – and willing – to push back on Trump's worst impulses and directives. We don't need to question what Mr. Scott would do if given a questionable order from Donald Trump, because we already know.

Mr. Scott has a history for covering up the truth when it benefits him, and a willingness to enable Trump's worst impulses to target American citizens exercising their constitutional rights. I think everyone in this room can agree CBP needs someone at the helm that will prioritize protecting American families and facilitating trade that benefits American businesses, and a commissioner that will crack down on fentanyl smuggling and human trafficking. Not one pre-occupied with doing the political bidding of the president.

For all of these reasons, I cannot support Mr. Scott's nomination, and strongly urge my colleagues to vote no.