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CBP issues withhold release orders

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued two withhold release orders in May, one against a seafood vessel^[1] and another involving hair products imported from China.^[2] The actions show that CBP is actively enforcing the forced labor provision within the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015.^[3]

The orders were issued due to suspicions of forced labor within the supply chain, as well as within the seafood industry.

CBP issued a withhold release order last October, targeting goods sold to Costco Wholesale Corporation and Ansell, both with supply chains in Asia allegedly tainted by forced labor.^[4] The agency revoked the withhold release order covering rubber gloves^[5] previously sold to Ansell, likely in response to the need for medical supplies during the pandemic. CBP has the power to seize goods imported into the United States if there is a suspicion those goods have any connection to forced labor in the supply chain.

¹ U.S. Customs and Boarder Protection, “CBP Issues Detention Order on Seafood Harvested with Forced Labor,” news release, May 11, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3cV4q5B>.

² U.S. Customs and Boarder Protection, “CBP Issues Detention Order on Hair Products Manufactured with Forced Labor in China,” news release, May 1, 2020, <https://bit.ly/36kteS7>.

³ Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-125, H.R. 644, 114th Cong. (2016).

⁴ Sascha Matuszak, Enforcement of modern slavery regulations reaches critical mass, *Report on Supply Chain Compliance* 2, no. 20 (October 24, 2019), <https://bit.ly/2XkbemP>.

⁵ U.S. Customs and Boarder Protection, “CBP Revokes Withhold Release Order on Disposable Rubber Gloves,” news release, March 24, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2Xo1K9Q>.

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