

Protect Nonprofit Organizations from Terrorist Attacks

Sending Office: Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Sent By: Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov

****Programmatic Request****

Dear Colleague:

We urge you to join us in ensuring that nonprofit organizations across this country can make needed investments to secure themselves against terrorist attacks by signing the below letter requesting the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2021 fund the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) at \$240 million and \$120 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) NSGP. Together, these parallel programs provide critical security resources to at-risk faith-based and community institutions located in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Extremism comes in many forms and extremist violence –whether inspired by ISIS, Al Qaeda, Iran and its proxy Hizballah, or from domestic violent extremists, such as white supremacy– remains a serious threat to communities across our nation, especially faith- and community-based organizations. This serious threat led FBI Director Chris Wray to elevate the FBI's assessment of the threat posed by racially motivated violent extremists in the U.S. to a “national threat priority” last year.

With the growing number of hate groups and the rise in anti-Semitic incidents, it is critical the NSGP receives robust funding to ensure physical security enhancements are made to nonprofit organizations at high risk of a terrorist attack or from violent homegrown extremism. The program has improved efforts to keep nonprofit organizations safe by promoting physical security enhancements, emergency preparedness planning, training and exercises, and enhanced engagement and collaboration between public and private community representatives and their state and local homeland security and emergency management agencies. Since today's threat environment continues to evolve quickly, the NSGP is a critical program to help nonprofits prevent, protect, mitigate, respond and recover from terrorist or violent homegrown extremist attack.

The deadline for signing on is COB March 13. If you have any questions or would like to sign the letter, please fill out the [form](#) here or contact Dylan Sodaro in Rep. Pascrell's office at Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov or Ryan Woodward in Rep. King's office at Ryan.Woodward@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Peter King

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Letter Text

March XX, 2020

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Appropriations Committee

2006 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwomen Roybal-Allard and Ranking Member Fleischmann:

Thank you for your continued support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). As you know, the NSGP provides needed funding to nonprofit organizations at high risk of a terrorist attack. As you draft the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask you to fund the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) at \$240 million and \$120 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) NSGP.

The NSGP supports critical security investments, such as physical security enhancements, emergency preparedness planning, training and exercises, and enhanced engagement and collaboration between public and private community representatives as well as their state and local homeland security and emergency management government agencies. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has recommended these types of investments to secure these targets within the faith-and community-based sector because DHS recognizes their vulnerability to attack is elevated and nonprofit institutions often lack the needed resources to invest in protective measures.^[1] In today's quickly evolving threat environment, these investments are needed more than ever.

In February, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Chris Wray testified before the House Judiciary Committee that the FBI has elevated its assessment of the threat posed by racially motivated violent extremists in the U.S. to a "national threat priority" this fiscal year.^[2] In January, the FBI, DHS and National Counterterrorism Center issued two Joint Intelligence Bulletins outlining the escalating threats against faith-based and nonprofit communal

organizations. In one, they assessed that Domestic Violent Extremists and Racially/Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists would continue to pose a lethal threat to faith-based communities, particularly the Jewish community.^[3] In the second, they assessed that if Iran were to perceive actions of the U.S. as acts of war or existential threats to the Iranian regime, Iran or its proxies, such as Hizballah, could commit attacks in retribution against U.S.-based Jewish individuals and interests.^[4] Both assessments warned that these threats would be difficult to detect in advance.

These assessments were based on multiple lethal incidents, violent attacks, and disrupted plots, including the mass casualty attacks against Jewish institutions in Pittsburgh (October 2018), Poway (April 2019), Jersey City (December 2019), and Monsey (December 2019). Over the course of the program, fewer than 33 percent of applications have been awarded. Between 2005 and 2019 FEMA received nearly 11,500 applications seeking approximately \$900 million in investments, but only 3,800 awards were made, funding just over \$300 million in investments.^[5] More than 7,500 applications seeking \$600 million in security enhancements were not funded. In today's threat environment, demand for NSGP resources is expected to grow substantially more, further widening the needs gap.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to strengthen funding for the NSGP by funding the UASI NSGP at \$240 million and \$120 million for the SHSGP NSGP. These funds are critical to preventing direct threats to communities and help protect at-risk nonprofit institutions from grave threats.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

^[1] US Department of Homeland Security, Infrastructure Protection Report: Religious Facilities (May 2006, updated August 2011)

^[2] Statement Before the House Judiciary Committee, Hearing on Oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, February 5, 2020

^[3] JIB: Continued Interest in Targeting Jewish Communities in the Homeland by Domestic Violent Extremists, 3 January 2020 (IA-41058-20)

^[4] JIB: Escalating Tensions Between the United States and Iran Pose Potential Threats to the Homeland, 8 January 2020 (IA-41117-20)

^[5] FEMA Webinar, "Protecting Your Organization: The Nonprofit Security Grant Program" (January 22, 2020, slide 19); Link: [https://cache.webcasts.com/content/cent001/1280897/content/3e8a9c1565dc1b28121b7bf8694f0e558c67f0d4/pdf/secured/Nonprofit_Security_Grant_Program_\(NSGP\)_Webinar_for_Nonprofit_Partners.pdf](https://cache.webcasts.com/content/cent001/1280897/content/3e8a9c1565dc1b28121b7bf8694f0e558c67f0d4/pdf/secured/Nonprofit_Security_Grant_Program_(NSGP)_Webinar_for_Nonprofit_Partners.pdf)

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