

October 17, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We deeply appreciate your and the entire Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to the safety and security of the Jewish people.

As the unprovoked war against Israel escalates, our organizations join together to urge you to specifically request that Congress include a special allocation for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) in the forthcoming emergency supplemental funding package to provide much-needed protection of Jewish communal institutions across the nation. We request this be in the amount of \$500 million.

We have seen time and time again that tensions in the Middle East lead to an increase in antisemitic incidents targeting Jewish institutions and Jewish individuals. For example, in May of 2021, during a two-week period of military conflict between Israel and Hamas, the number of antisemitic incidents in the U.S. reported to ADL increased by 75% compared to the two weeks before the fighting began. Many of these incidents appear to have been perpetrated by individuals scapegoating American Jews for the actions of the Israeli government.

As you know, the NSGP provides faith-based communities with the resources to harden their spaces against rising physical and cyber threats and allows vulnerable populations to be better prepared for emergencies. The NSGP saves lives and prevents tragedies. Unfortunately, a review of past requests found that less than half of funding applications are accepted and funded. In FY'23, while there was \$305 million available, more than \$600 million in applications were submitted. Now is the time to ensure the Jewish community – and all American faith communities at risk -- have the resources to protect themselves from harm.

In addition to the emergency funds, we ask that your supplemental request include directions for language to ensure that NSGP funds can be disbursed rapidly and with maximum flexibility to meet the urgent needs of our faith communities.

We are grateful that your Administration has delivered record funding to protect America's faith institutions. Sadly, the war raging now in the Middle East requires us to do more to keep our communities safe. A key way to ensure that is by including the Nonprofit Security Grant Program in your supplemental funding request to Congress, so houses of worship can be protected from the rising threat of hate.

Sincerely,

ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
Jewish Federations of North America
American Jewish Committee

Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America
Hillel International
JCC Association of North America
National Council of Jewish Women
Rabbinical Assembly
Secure Community Network
Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)
United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism

CC: Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Shalanda Young