

Protect Nonprofit Organizations from Terrorist Attacks

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 2022 fund the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) at \$180 million and \$180 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) NSGP. Together, these 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 supremacists– 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.”

With the growing number of hate groups and the rise in anti-Semitic incidents and anti-Asian-American 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 April 16, 2021. 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 Andrew Nicholson in Rep. Katko's office at Andrew.Nicholson@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

John Katko

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Letter Text

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 2022 (FY22) Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask you to fund the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) at \$180 million and \$180 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. Over the past year:

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security and National Counterterrorism Center jointly assessed that Domestic Violent Extremists and Racially/Ethnicity Motivated Violent Extremists (RMVEs) will continue to pose a lethal threat to faith-based communities, particularly the Jewish community, in the Homeland and remain concerned about the difficulty of detecting lone offenders due to the individualized nature of the radicalization process.^[2]
- FBI Director Christopher Wray testified before Congress that the number one threat the nation faces from domestic violent extremists stems from RMVEs, who are considered the most lethal of all domestic extremists in the post-911 environment.^[3] To illustrate his point, Director Wray recounted the arrest last November of Richard Holzer on federal domestic terrorism and hate crime charges for attempting to blow up a historic synagogue in Pueblo, Colorado and provoke "a racial holy war."^[4]
- The Nation's Homeland Security agencies assessed that domestic extremists, such as white supremacists, have advocated for violence against faith-based and minority communities, including Asian-Americans—in response to the COVID outbreak, and have called for infected individuals to intentionally spread COVID-19 in religious institutions such as mosques and synagogues.
- The Nation's Homeland Security agencies assessed that domestic extremists were using the Covid-19 pandemic to recruit members to their ranks and to incite violence against Jewish and other minority communities.^[5]
- The Nation's Homeland Security agencies warned that if the Government of Iran were to perceive actions of the United States Government as acts of war or existential threats to the Iranian regime, Iran could act directly or enlist the cooperation of its proxies, such as Lebanese Hizballah, to commit attacks in retribution, with little to no warning, including against US-based Jewish individuals and interests, among likely targets.^[6]

- Additionally, hate crimes rose to their highest numbers in a decade, including a 14% increase in anti-Jewish incidents over the previous year and constituted more than 60% of all anti-religious bias crimes reported.^[7] This constituted the 23rd consecutive year where the Jewish community was the number one target of all faith-based hate crimes reported.^[8]

Unfortunately, today's threat environment provides a compelling public interest in protecting against attacks on the nonprofit sector that would disrupt the vital health, human, social, cultural, religious, and other humanitarian services and practices they provide to communities, and which threaten the lives and well-being of millions of Americans who operate, utilize, live, and work in proximity to them. For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to strengthen the Nonprofit Security Grant Program by funding the UASI NSGP at \$180 million and \$180 million for the SHSGP NSGP.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

^[1] Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency; December 18, 2020; Link: https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Mitigating%20Attacks%20on%20Houses%20of%20Worship%20Security%20Guide_508.pdf

^[2] Joint Intelligence Bulletin, "Continued Interest in Targeting Jewish Communities in the Homeland by Domestic Violent Extremists," 3 January 2020 (IA-41058-20)

^[3] Senate HSGAC Hearing, "Worldwide Threats," 24 September 2020; Link: <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony-Wray-2020-09-24.pdf>

^[4] DoJ/US Attorney's Office, District of Colorado, 4 November 2019; Link: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-co/pr/southern-colorado-man-charged-federal-hate-crime-plotting-blow-synagogue>

^[5] DHS Counterterrorism Mission Center, "Terrorists Exploiting COVID-19 Pandemic in an Attempt to Incite Violence," 23 March 2020 (IA-43383-20)

^[6] Joint Intelligence Bulletin, "Escalating Tensions Between the United States and Iran Pose Potential Threats to the Homeland," 8 January 2020 (IA-41117-20)

^[7] FBI, "2019 Hate Crimes Statistics;" Link: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2019>

^[8] FBI Hate Crimes Statistics (1995 – 2019); Link: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/>