

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Murphy  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Katie Britt  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chairman Murphy, and Ranking Member Britt:

Thank you for your continued support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). As you draft the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025) Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask you appropriate very robust funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program under section 2009 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609a), of which half is for eligible recipients located in high-risk urban areas that receive funding under section 2003 of such Act and the other half is for eligible recipients that are located outside such areas. As you know, these programs provide critical security resources to at-risk faith-based and other nonprofit institutions located in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Security investments acquired through the NSGP include physical security enhancements, emergency preparedness planning, training and exercises, contracted security protection, 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) recognized the serious nature of these threats in their National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin, which warns that acts of extremist-motivated violence are likely to continue against faith-based institutions, schools, and racial and religious minorities.<sup>1</sup> Historically black colleges and universities faced a string of bomb threats in recent years. Additionally, the most recent FBI Public Service Announcement even cautions about an increased threat landscape since the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, where extremists have called for violence and celebrated attacks against the Jewish community. It continued that lone actors could seek to disrupt or escalate violence at religious locations, with Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Arab communities as potential targets.<sup>2</sup> There has also been an increase in hoax bomb and active shooter threats targeting houses of worship across the country, likely intended to disrupt services and intimidate congregants.

In the three months after October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) recorded an alarming 3,291 antisemitic incidents. That is an average of 34 anti-Jewish acts every day and a 360% increase in antisemitic incident reports year over year. This trend has correlated with elevated levels of islamophobia and violent

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2023/05/24/dhs-issues-national-terrorism-advisory-system-ntas-bulletin>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ic3.gov/Media/Y2023/PSA231212>

threats against other minority groups. Nationwide reporting on specific incidents underscores the frequency, complexity, and breadth of these concerns:

- Two people were shot at a Sikh Temple during an altercation.<sup>3</sup>
- A woman armed with two firearms fired a rifle inside a Texas church.<sup>4</sup>
- Police in Florida arrested a man for beating a 69-year-old man who just departed synagogue on Shabbat.<sup>5</sup>
- A New Jersey Imam was killed outside his mosque.<sup>6</sup>
- A San Francisco Catholic church was fired at with over a dozen bullets.<sup>7</sup>
- Before the start of Hanukkah, a man in New York fired a shotgun twice outside of a synagogue.<sup>8</sup>
- More than a dozen synagogues in greater Philadelphia received bomb threats on the last day of Hanukkah, prompting evacuations and mass law enforcement responses.<sup>9</sup>
- An armed man tried walking into a Jewish school in Memphis and opened fire outside when he could not get in.<sup>10</sup>

The NSGP is a critical component to the nation's response to domestic and international threats targeting the nonprofit sector, but the program is significantly over-subscribed. The most recent (FY2023) NSGP award results made this clear. According to FEMA's own numbers, they reviewed almost 5,200 grant applications, but were able to fund only 2,201, meaning 42% of grant requests were fulfilled. The total funding requested was \$678 million, but FEMA had \$305 million to allocate – a record figure, but not enough to meet the rising demand.

There was a 97% increase in NSGP-State applications. The increase of over 1,700 applications in NSGP-State this year was more applications than FEMA received in the entire NSGP process in FY2020. All 55 eligible state and territories applied under NSGP-S for the first time in the history of the program. As we have seen, the need has continued to grow for these federal funds which will become more apparent as the FY2024 NSGP application process unfolds.

Today's threat environment requires federal aid 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. These attacks can threaten the lives and well-being of millions of Americans who operate, utilize, live, and work in proximity to them. For these reasons, we thank you for your past support for this program, for your work on the \$400 million for NSGP in the National Security Supplemental, and respectfully urge you to strengthen the NSGP by providing very robust funding for the the program in FY2025.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kcra.com/article/sacramento-sikh-temple-shooting-sunday/43421542#>

<sup>4</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/02/14/us/lakewood-church-shooting-joel-osteen-texas/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> [Suspect arrested for attack on man leaving Chabad synagogue in Florida - The Jewish Chronicle \(thejc.com\)](https://www.thejewishchronicle.com/news/suspect-arrested-for-attack-on-man-leaving-chabad-synagogue-in-florida)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/crime-courts/son-slain-new-jersey-imam-arrested-gun-charge-rcna136233>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/peninsula/south-san-francisco-church-shooting/3438520/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/jewish-temple-shots-albany-new-york-hanukkah-cd1c44c4829e699a42eeaa87ef0e5373>

<sup>9</sup> [Bomb threats reported at 13 synagogues across Philadelphia and suburban counties - 6abc Philadelphia](https://www.6abc.com/news/bomb-threats-reported-at-13-synagogues-across-philadelphia-and-suburban-counties-6abc-philadelphia)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.cnn.com/2023/07/31/us/memphis-margolin-hebrew-academy-shooting?cid=ios\\_app](https://www.cnn.com/2023/07/31/us/memphis-margolin-hebrew-academy-shooting?cid=ios_app)



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Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



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James Lankford  
United States Senator



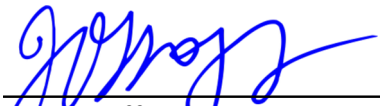
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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



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Jacky Rosen  
U.S. Senator



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Jon Ossoff  
United States Senator



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Kyrsten Sinema  
United States Senator



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Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator