

# Protect Nonprofit Organizations from Terrorist Attacks FY24

Sending Office: Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Sent By: [Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov](mailto:Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov)

Dear Colleague:

We urge you to join us in ensuring that nonprofit organizations across this country have the resources to make needed investments to secure themselves against terrorist attacks by signing the below letter requesting that the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2024 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. These accounts support a program that provides critical security resources to at-risk faith-based and nonprofit institutions located in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

With prolonged and growing threats, it is critical the Nonprofit Security Grant Program receives robust funding to ensure 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

**The deadline for signing on is COB, March 22, 2023.** If you have any questions or would like to sign the letter, please use this [QUILL LINK](#) or contact Dylan Sodaro in Rep. Pascrell's office at [Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov](mailto:Dylan.Sodaro@mail.house.gov) or Zach Isakowitz in Rep. McCaul's at [Zach.Isakowitz@mail.house.gov](mailto:Zach.Isakowitz@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Michael McCaul

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

## Letter Text

Dear Chair Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Joyce and Ranking Member Cuellar:

Thank you for your continued support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). As you work to complete the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) 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. As you know, these accounts provide critical security resources to at-risk faith-based and nonprofit institutions located in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Security investments acquired through the NSGP program include 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) recognized the serious nature of these threats in the two most recent National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletins, which warned that acts of extremist-motivated violence are likely to continue against faith-based institutions, schools, and racial and religious minorities. Nationwide reporting on related threat incidents just over the past month underscore the frequency, complexity, and geographic breadth of these concerns:

- On September 20, it was reported that jury selection will begin on April 24, 2023, in the capital murder trial of Robert Bowers, who is accused of attacking the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh on October 27, 2018, killing 11 worshippers in the deadliest attack on Jews in US history.
- On September 17, it was reported that in a letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray, US Attorney General Merrick Garland and Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke, Congressman Ritchie Torres (D-NY) called on the FBI and US attorney general to investigate and do more to respond to New York City’s surging antisemitism. The NYPD has confirmed 149 anti-Jewish hate crimes between the start of the year and June 28, representing an incident every 29 hours on average.
- On August 30, it was reported that antisemitic crimes in New York City were up 114% over the previous year.<sup>[i]</sup>
- On August 30, it was reported that Jonathan Warren, 22, of Indianapolis, Indiana, was sentenced to 147 months in Federal prison for committing a drive by shooting into the Masjid E Noor Mosque in Indianapolis, where multiple worshippers were observing the Eid al-Fitr holiday.<sup>[ii]</sup>
- On August 26, it was reported that the Las Vegas Police arrested Andrew Gorrellick, 48, on charges of making false terrorist threats to kill Jewish people in more than 40 tweets associated with his Twitter account.<sup>[iii]</sup>
- On August 25, it was reported that the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights issued a warning that antisemitic incidents were on the rise in the commonwealth and have “become a statewide and dangerous issue.” The warning reflected a jump from just two incidents reported in 2019 to hundreds of incidents reported this year.<sup>[iv]</sup>
- On August 15, it was reported that Federal authorities sought to reincarcerate white supremacist Benjamin Thomas Samuel McDowell of Conway, South Carolina, for violating the terms of his supervised release for his 2018 conviction for plotting to attack the Temple Emanu-El synagogue in Myrtle Beach “in the spirit of” the 2015 racially-charged massacre of nine black parishioners at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC.<sup>[v]</sup>
- On August 8, it was reported that Cody Steven Rush admitted to threatening to blow up the Central Reform Congregation, in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2021, while the synagogue was holding services.”<sup>[vi]</sup>
- On August 5, the nation recognized the 10th anniversary of the mass attack at an Oak Creek, Wisconsin, Sikh temple, where an armed white supremacist killed seven people.<sup>[vii]</sup>
- On August 4, Gavin Lee Casdorff, 23, of Anchorage, Alaska, was sentenced to more than five years in prison for making online terrorist threats to detonate several bombs across the campus of Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, a nonprofit institution. Casdorff made these threats while pledging allegiance to ISIS.<sup>[viii]</sup>

The NSGP program 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. This year’s (FY 2022) NSGP award results made this clear. FEMA reviewed almost 3,500 grant applications but was able to fund only approximately 1,800. The total

security investments requested amounted to almost \$450 million, but FEMA had only \$250 million to invest, including the important 5% that Congress provided to strengthen the agency’s program management. In response, DHS recommended Congress appropriate more funding to the FY23 NSGP program to align the program closer to the level of demand. As we have seen, the need has continue to grow for these federal funds which will become more apparent as the FY23 NSGP application process unfolds.

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 our request.

Sincerely,

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<sup>[i]</sup> New York Jewish Week

<sup>[ii]</sup> DoJ/US Attorney’s Office, Southern District of Indiana

<sup>[iii]</sup> Jerusalem Post/7 Israel National News Arutz Sheva

<sup>[iv]</sup> NBC LEX 18 Lexington

<sup>[v]</sup> CBS affiliate WBTW News 13

<sup>[vi]</sup> DoJ/US Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Missouri

<sup>[vii]</sup> CNN

<sup>[viii]</sup> DoJ/US Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

## Related Legislative Issues

**Selected legislative information:** Appropriations, Economy, Homeland Security