Secure Community Network Commends Department of Homeland Security for Continued Efforts to Increase Security Funding for Faith Communities

DHS Asks Congress to Fund Nonprofit Security Grant Program at $360 Million

The Secure Community Network (SCN), the official safety and security organization for the Jewish community in North America, applauds the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for its request to Congress to double funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). The department’s budget proposal would expand the program by $180 million, to $360 million.

“We are grateful that DHS, under the leadership of Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, continues to emphasize the need for increased security funding for the Jewish community and all people of faith,” said SCN National Director and CEO Michael Masters. “As we face the most complex and dynamic threat environment in our nation’s history, we greatly value SCN’s comprehensive partnership with DHS. The NSGP is a key component of that effort, and crucial to keeping our communities safe, prepared, and protected. We strongly support the NSGP and the efforts by DHS to increase funding and access to the program.”

Administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency within DHS, the NSGP provides grants to faith-based and other nonprofit organizations to secure their facilities and improve their security infrastructure from the threat of attacks by terrorists and other extremist groups. This program has a critical impact on the safety of synagogues, Jewish facilities, communities, and other faith-based organizations. The impact of the program was seen in January in the hostage situation at a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, where security equipment funded by NSGP grants facilitated the efforts of first responders.
NSGP grants have been used to improve door locks, add panic buttons in school classrooms, install cameras, build new security gates, and strengthen glass doors and exterior windows. These funds have also allowed communities to invest in security training, which is crucial to preparing for and surviving attacks.

Requests for NSGP grants in 2021 far exceeded program funding, with 3,361 applications totaling nearly $400 million in funding requests versus the program’s $180 million budget. SCN will continue to assist institutions across the country in applying for grants. Through regular security assessments, webinars, and other application support, SCN will increase awareness of the NSGP and how to effectively apply grant funds to security efforts nationwide.

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The Secure Community Network (SCN), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, is the official homeland safety and security initiative of the organized Jewish community in North America. Founded in 2004, under the auspices of The Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, SCN serves as the central organization dedicated exclusively to the safety and security of the American Jewish community, working across 146 federations, 50 partner organizations, over 300 independent communities as well as with other partners in the public, private, non-profit and academic sectors. SCN is dedicated to ensuring that Jewish organizations, communities, as well as life and culture can not only exist safely and securely, but flourish. Learn more at securecommunitynetwork.org.