

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2019

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jon Tester  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Tester,

Thank you for your work in helping to ensure additional resources for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) for Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19). Funding the NSGP program is critical to protecting communities across our nation from threats. As you craft the Fiscal Year 2020 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask you to fund NSGP under the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) at \$50 million and also fund NSGP at \$25 million for non-UASI communities, under the State Homeland Security Grant Program.

The NSGP provides critical funding to support physical security enhancements to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack. The program has improved efforts to keep at-risk nonprofit organizations safe by promoting emergency preparedness coordination and collaboration activities between public and private community representatives as well as state and local government agencies. Since today's threat environment continues to evolve quickly, the NSGP helps nonprofits plan for and ready themselves against a terrorist attack.

These funds are especially important considering the February 2019 FBI, DHS, and NCTC Joint Intelligence Bulletin (JIB), which found that domestic extremists; perpetrators of hate crimes; homegrown violent extremists; and foreign terrorist organizations will continue to pose a lethal threat to faith-based communities in the Homeland, particularly against perceived soft targets such as religious and cultural facilities. In light of this enduring threat, and the difficulty of detecting US-based threat actors, the JIB assesses that those responsible for ensuring the security of houses of worship (e.g., synagogues, churches, and mosques), cultural community centers, and other establishments or individuals associated with various faiths, must remain vigilant.<sup>1</sup>

Other reporting supports this concern. According to the public record, recent incidents targeting synagogues, churches, mosques, and other religious centers and nonprofit organizations include shooting and mass shooting, arson and fire bombing, attempted bombing, assault, death threats, hoaxes, vandalism, and property damage. These incidents illustrate the many credible threats against nonprofit institutions across the country and must be taken seriously.

With the rise of hate groups in our nation, the record of threats facing members of our community, and the February 2019 assessment by U.S. Counterterrorism agencies that the threat to faith-based communities posed by domestic extremists is enduring, now more than ever Congress needs to

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Intelligence Bulletin (IA-32337-19), February 22, 2019.

strengthen the NSGP program. For these reasons, we respectfully encourage you to fund the UASI NSGP at \$50 million and \$25 million for non-UASI, so our nation can do all it can to prevent direct threats to communities and protect at-risk nonprofit institutions from these grave threats.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Rob Portman  
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



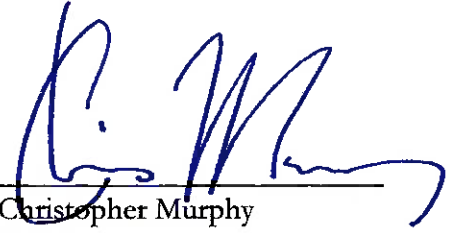
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Benjamin L. Cardin  
U.S. Senator



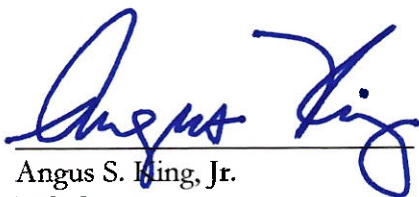
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U.S. Senator



Sherrod Brown  
U.S. Senator



Tina Smith  
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Bernard Sanders  
U.S. Senator



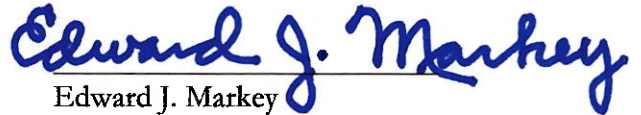
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U.S. Senator



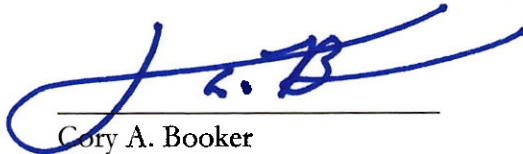
Robert Menendez  
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United States Senator



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United States Senator



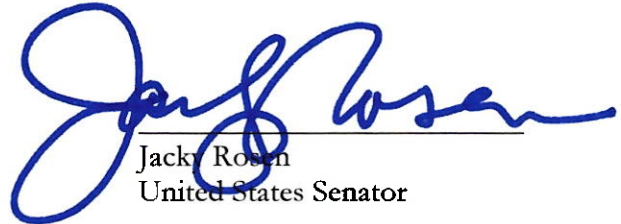
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United States Senator



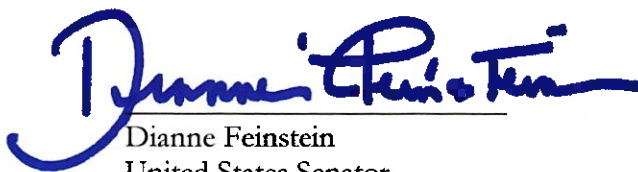
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