

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1886

To establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Best Practices for Non-profit Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of Worship within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 8, 2023

Ms. HASSAN (for herself, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. PETERS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Best Practices for Nonprofit Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of Worship within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Pray Safe Act of
5 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) AGENCY.—The term “Agency” means the
2 Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency of
3 the Department.

4 (2) CLEARINGHOUSE.—The term “Clearing-
5 house” means the Federal Clearinghouse on Safety
6 and Security Best Practices for Nonprofit Organiza-
7 tions, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of
8 Worship established under section 3(a).

9 (3) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department”
10 means the Department of Homeland Security.

11 (4) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
12 the Director of the Agency.

13 (5) FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION.—The term
14 “faith-based organization” means a group, center, or
15 nongovernmental organization with a religious, ideo-
16 logical, or spiritual motivation, character, affiliation,
17 or purpose that meets the definition of nonprofit or-
18 ganization.

19 (6) HOUSE OF WORSHIP.—The term “house of
20 worship” means a place or building, including a syn-
21 agogue, mosque, temple, and church, in which
22 congregants practice their religious or spiritual be-
23 liefs.

24 (7) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
25 “nonprofit organization” means an organization—

1 (A) of the type described in subsection
 2 (c)(3) of section 501 of the Internal Revenue
 3 Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under
 4 subsection (a) of such section; and

5 (B) determined to be at risk of a terrorist
 6 attack or other threat by the Secretary.

7 (8) SAFETY AND SECURITY.—The term “safety
 8 and security” means prevention of, protection
 9 against, or recovery from threats and incidents, in-
 10 cluding natural disasters, manmade disasters, or ter-
 11 rorist attacks.

12 (9) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 13 the Secretary of Homeland Security.

14 **SEC. 3. FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON SAFETY AND SECU-**
 15 **RITY BEST PRACTICES FOR NONPROFIT OR-**
 16 **GANIZATIONS, FAITH-BASED ORGANIZA-**
 17 **TIONS, AND HOUSES OF WORSHIP (PRAY**
 18 **SAFE).**

19 (a) FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE.—

20 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270
 22 days after the date of enactment of this Act,
 23 the Secretary, in consultation with the Attorney
 24 General, the Executive Director of the White
 25 House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood

1 Partnerships, and the head of any other agency
2 the Secretary determines appropriate, shall es-
3 tablish within the Department a Federal Clear-
4 inghouse on Safety and Security Best Practices
5 for Nonprofit Organizations, Faith-based Orga-
6 nizations, and Houses of Worship.

7 (B) PURPOSE.—The Clearinghouse shall
8 be the primary resource of the Federal Govern-
9 ment to—

10 (i) educate and publish online best
11 practices and recommendations for safety
12 and security for nonprofit organizations
13 and houses of worship; and

14 (ii) provide information relating to
15 Federal grant programs available to non-
16 profit organizations and houses of worship.

17 (C) PERSONNEL.—

18 (i) ASSIGNMENTS.—The Clearing-
19 house shall be assigned such personnel and
20 resources as the Secretary considers appro-
21 priate to carry out this subsection.

22 (ii) DETAILEES.—The Secretary may
23 coordinate detailees on a reimbursable or a
24 nonreimbursable basis as required for the
25 Clearinghouse.

1 (iii) DESIGNATED POINT OF CON-
2 TACT.—

3 (I) IN GENERAL.—There shall be
4 not fewer than 1 employee assigned or
5 detailed to the Clearinghouse who
6 shall be the designated point of con-
7 tact to provide information and assist-
8 ance to nonprofit organizations and
9 houses of worship, including assist-
10 ance relating to the grant program es-
11 tablished under subsection (c).

12 (II) CONTACT INFORMATION.—
13 The contact information of the des-
14 ignated point of contact under sub-
15 clause (I) shall be made available on
16 the website of the Clearinghouse.

17 (iv) QUALIFICATION.—To the max-
18 imum extent possible, any personnel as-
19 signed or detailed to the Clearinghouse
20 under this subparagraph should be familiar
21 with nonprofit organizations (including
22 faith-based organizations and houses of
23 worship) and with physical and online se-
24 curity measures to identify and prevent
25 safety and security risks.

1 (2) CLEARINGHOUSE CONTENTS.—

2 (A) EVIDENCE-BASED TIERS.—

3 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in
4 consultation with the Attorney General, the
5 Executive Director of the White House Of-
6 fice of Faith-Based and Neighborhood
7 Partnerships, and the head of any other
8 agency the Secretary determines appro-
9 priate, shall develop tiers for determining
10 evidence-based best practices and rec-
11 ommendations that demonstrate a signifi-
12 cant effect on improving safety and secu-
13 rity of nonprofit organizations and houses
14 of worship.

15 (ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The tiers re-
16 quired to be developed under clause (i)
17 shall—

18 (I) prioritize—

19 (aa) strong evidence from
20 not fewer than 1 well-designed
21 and well-implemented experi-
22 mental study; and

23 (bb) moderate evidence from
24 not fewer than 1 well-designed

1 and well-implemented quasi-ex-
2 perimental study; and

3 (II) consider promising evidence
4 that demonstrates a rationale based
5 on high-quality research findings or
6 positive evaluations that the activity,
7 strategy, or intervention is likely to
8 improve and promote safety and secu-
9 rity of nonprofit organizations and
10 houses of worship.

11 (B) CRITERIA FOR BEST PRACTICES AND
12 RECOMMENDATIONS.—The best practices and
13 recommendations referred to in paragraph
14 (1)(B)(i) of the Clearinghouse shall, at a min-
15 imum—

16 (i) identify areas of concern for non-
17 profit organizations and houses of worship,
18 including event planning recommendations,
19 checklists, facility hardening, tabletop exer-
20 cise resources, and other resilience meas-
21 ures;

22 (ii) involve comprehensive safety and
23 security measures, including threat preven-
24 tion, preparedness, protection, mitigation,
25 incident response, and recovery to improve

1 the safety and security posture of non-
2 profit organizations and houses of worship
3 upon implementation;

4 (iii) involve comprehensive safety and
5 security measures, including preparedness,
6 protection, mitigation, incident response,
7 and recovery to improve the resiliency of
8 nonprofit organizations and houses of wor-
9 ship from threats and incidents, including
10 natural disasters, manmade disasters, or
11 terrorist attacks or other threats;

12 (iv) include any evidence or research
13 rationale supporting the determination of
14 the Clearinghouse that the comprehensive
15 safety and security measures under clauses
16 (ii) and (iii) have been shown to have a
17 significant effect on improving the safety
18 and security of individuals who, at the time
19 of any such threat or incident, are phys-
20 ically located in the place or building of a
21 nonprofit organization or house of worship,
22 including—

23 (I) findings and data from pre-
24 vious Federal, State, local, Tribal, ter-
25 ritorial, private sector, and nongovern-

1 mental organization research centers
2 relating to the safety and security of
3 nonprofit organizations and houses of
4 worship, including from targeted vio-
5 lence; and

6 (II) other supportive evidence or
7 findings relied upon by the Clearing-
8 house in determining best practices
9 and recommendations to improve the
10 safety and security posture of non-
11 profit organizations and houses of
12 worship upon implementation; and

13 (v) include an overview of the avail-
14 able resources the Clearinghouse can pro-
15 vide to nonprofit organizations and houses
16 of worship.

17 (C) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The
18 Clearinghouse shall maintain and make avail-
19 able a comprehensive index of all Federal grant
20 programs for which nonprofit organizations and
21 houses of worship are eligible, which shall in-
22 clude the performance metrics for each grant
23 the recipient will be required to provide.

24 (D) PAST RECOMMENDATIONS.—To the
25 greatest extent practicable, the Clearinghouse

1 shall identify and present, as appropriate, best
2 practices and recommendations issued by Fed-
3 eral, State, local, Tribal, territorial, private sec-
4 tor, and nongovernmental organizations rel-
5 evant to the safety and security of nonprofit or-
6 ganizations (including faith-based organizations
7 and houses of worship).

8 (E) EXISTING PLATFORM.—The Secretary
9 may establish and maintain the Clearinghouse
10 on an online platform or a website that is in ex-
11 istence as of the date of enactment of this Act.

12 (3) ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—The Sec-
13 retary may produce and publish materials on the
14 Clearinghouse to assist and train nonprofit organiza-
15 tions, houses of worship, and law enforcement agen-
16 cies regarding the implementation of the best prac-
17 tices and recommendations under this subsection.

18 (4) CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.—

19 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

20 (i) collect for the purpose of contin-
21 uous improvement of the Clearinghouse—

22 (I) Clearinghouse data analytics;

23 (II) user feedback on the imple-
24 mentation of resources, best practices,

1 and recommendations identified by
2 the Clearinghouse; and

3 (III) any evaluations conducted
4 regarding implementation of such best
5 practices and recommendations;

6 (ii) in coordination with the Faith-
7 Based Security Advisory Council of the
8 Department, the Department of Justice,
9 the Executive Director of the White House
10 Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood
11 Partnerships, and any other agency the
12 Secretary determines appropriate—

13 (I) assess and identify Clearing-
14 house best practices and recommenda-
15 tions for which there are no resources
16 available through Federal Government
17 programs for implementation;

18 (II) provide feedback on the im-
19 plementation of such best practices
20 and recommendations; and

21 (III) propose additional rec-
22 ommendations for best practices for
23 inclusion in the Clearinghouse; and

1 (iii) not less frequently than annually,
2 examine and update the Clearinghouse in
3 accordance with—

4 (I) the information collected
5 under clause (i); and

6 (II) the recommendations pro-
7 posed under clause (ii)(III).

8 (B) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The
9 Secretary shall submit to Congress, on an an-
10 nual basis, a report on the updates under sub-
11 paragraph (A)(iii) made to the Clearinghouse
12 during the preceding 1-year period, which shall
13 include a description of any changes made pur-
14 suant thereto to the Clearinghouse.

15 (b) NOTIFICATION OF THE CLEARINGHOUSE.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
17 to the individuals, Federal agencies, and committees
18 specified in paragraph (2) written notification of the
19 establishment of the Clearinghouse, including up-
20 dates pertaining to grant programs identified under
21 subsection (a)(2)(C).

22 (2) INDIVIDUALS, FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND
23 COMMITTEES SPECIFIED.—The individuals and enti-
24 ties specified in this paragraph are the following:

25 (A) Every State homeland security advisor.

1 (B) Every State department of homeland
2 security.

3 (C) Other Federal agencies with grant pro-
4 grams or initiatives that aid in the safety and
5 security of faith-based organizations and houses
6 of worship, as determined appropriate by the
7 Secretary.

8 (D) Every Cyber Security Advisor.

9 (E) Every Protective Security Advisor.

10 (F) Every Federal Bureau of Investigation
11 Joint Terrorism Task Force.

12 (G) Every Homeland Security Fusion Cen-
13 ter.

14 (H) Every State or territorial Governor or
15 other Chief Executive.

16 (I) The Committee on Homeland Security
17 and Governmental Affairs and the Committee
18 on the Judiciary of the Senate.

19 (J) The Committee on Homeland Security
20 and the Committee on the Judiciary of the
21 House of Representatives.

22 (c) FEDERAL GRANTS AND RESOURCES OVER-
23 VIEW.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent practicable,
25 the Secretary, when carrying out subsection

1 (a)(2)(C), shall include a grants program overview
2 on the website of the Clearinghouse that shall—

3 (A) be the location for all information re-
4 garding Federal grant programs that are open
5 to nonprofit organizations and houses of wor-
6 ship;

7 (B) directly link to each grant application
8 and any applicable user guides;

9 (C) identify all safety and security home-
10 land security assistance programs managed by
11 the Department that may be used to implement
12 best practices and recommendations of the
13 Clearinghouse;

14 (D) concurrent with the application period
15 for any grant identified under subsection
16 (a)(2)(C), provide information related to the re-
17 quired elements of grant applications to aid
18 nonprofit organizations and houses of worship
19 in meeting the eligibility criteria for Federal
20 grants; and

21 (E) provide answers to frequently asked
22 questions regarding the implementation of best
23 practices and recommendations of the Clearing-
24 house and best practices for applying for a
25 grant identified under subsection (a)(2)(C).

1 (2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION RELATING TO
2 FEDERAL GRANTS AND RESOURCES.—Each Federal
3 agency notified under subsection (b) shall provide to
4 the Secretary or other appropriate point of contact
5 for the Clearinghouse for inclusion in the Clearing-
6 house necessary information regarding any Federal
7 grant programs or resources of the Federal agency
8 that are available for nonprofit organizations and
9 houses of worship.

10 (3) STATE GRANTS AND RESOURCES.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—Any State notified
12 under subsection (b) may provide to the Sec-
13 retary or other appropriate point of contact for
14 the Clearinghouse for inclusion in the Clearing-
15 house necessary information regarding any
16 grant programs or resources of the State avail-
17 able for nonprofit organizations and houses of
18 worship.

19 (B) IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCES.—
20 The Clearinghouse shall, to the extent prac-
21 ticable, identify for each State the following:

22 (i) Each State agency responsible for
23 safety and security of nonprofit organiza-
24 tions and houses of worship in the State,

1 or any State that does not have such an
2 agency designated.

3 (ii) Any grant program that may be
4 used for the purposes of implementing best
5 practices and recommendations of the
6 Clearinghouse.

7 (iii) Any resources or programs, in-
8 cluding community prevention or interven-
9 tion efforts, that may be used to assist in
10 targeted violence and terrorism prevention.

11 (d) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall, on the
12 website of the Clearinghouse, include a separate section
13 for other resources that shall provide a centralized list of
14 all available points of contact from which a nonprofit orga-
15 nization or house of worship may seek assistance in grant
16 applications and in carrying out the best practices and rec-
17 ommendations of the Clearinghouse, including the fol-
18 lowing:

19 (1) A list of contact information to reach De-
20 partment personnel to assist with grant-related ques-
21 tions.

22 (2) The applicable Agency contact information
23 to connect houses of worship with Protective Secu-
24 rity Advisors.

1 (3) Contact information for all Department Fu-
2 sion Centers, listed by State.

3 (4) Information on the “If you See Something
4 Say Something Campaign” of the Department.

5 (5) Any other appropriate contacts.

6 (e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
7 tion may be construed to create, satisfy, or waive any re-
8 quirement under Federal civil rights laws, including—

9 (1) title II of the Americans With Disabilities
10 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.); or

11 (2) title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42
12 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

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