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# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF DHS PREPAREDNESS GRANTS: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY

OF THE

## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF DHS PREPAREDNESS GRANTS: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD

**Thursday, January 9, 2020**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY,
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room 310, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Donald M. Payne, Jr. [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Payne, Rose, Underwood, Green, Clarke, King, Crenshaw, Guest, and Bishop.

Mr. PAYNE. The Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to receive testimony on, "Understanding the Importance of DHS Preparedness Grants: Perspectives From the Field."

Before we get started, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the on-going devastation in Puerto Rico from the recent earthquakes. The island is still recovering from Hurricane Rita, and to have another large-scale disaster is heart breaking. Our sympathies and prayers are with you.

Without objection, the Chair may declare the subcommittee in recess at any point.

Without objection, Members not sitting on the committee—subcommittee, will be permitted to participate in today's hearing. I will now recognize myself for an opening statement.

We are here today to hear from stakeholders about their perspectives on the Department of Homeland Security's preparedness grant programs. December—the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks revealed gaps in the Nation's emergency preparedness. DHS preparedness grants were established to address gaps by helping State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments enhance their ability to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against terrorist attacks.

As the representative for New Jersey's 10th Congressional District, I understand the importance of these grant programs. My district contains Newark Liberty International Airport, the New Jersey Transit Authority, and the Port Authority of Newark and Elizabeth Marine Terminal, this in addition to having a dense area of industrial facilities and being in close proximity to New York City.

The Newark-Jersey City area has consistently been considered one of the highest-risk urban areas in the Nation, and has been referred to as the most dangerous 2 miles in America.

Throughout my time in Congress, New Jersey's emergency preparedness has depended on financial assistance from DHS preparedness grants program. The Urban Area Security Initiative, commonly known as UASI, has particularly been helpful with supporting my district's ability to build and maintain important capabilities necessary to keep us safe. At the same time, the funding has helped ensure that first responders have the resources they need to do their jobs effectively and safely.

America's security depends on this important Federal investment. So I am disappointed in the President's regular efforts to slash preparedness grant funding. For example, President Trump's proposed over $900 million in cuts to DHS preparedness grant funding for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. The President's fiscal year 2020 budget would have cut existing preparedness grant funding by nearly $700 million.

The threat landscape is ever-evolving, and a lack of preparedness funding from the Federal Government would make it that much more difficult for States to meet their homeland security needs.

Today America is at an elevated risk of terrorist attacks following the killing of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani by U.S. forces in Iraq and because Iraq has promised to revenge jurisdictions like mine are on heightened alert and have to be more vigilant.

We are also reminded of Homeland Security's needs by events like the Jersey City shooting at the Jewish grocery store last month that claimed the lives of 4 victims including a police officer. The loss of one life is too many, and I can only imagine how this tragedy would have unfolded if Jersey City was not armed with the capabilities they were able to build with DHS preparedness grant funding.

This instance, mounted on top of nearly a dozen anti-Semitic acts that occurred in the past month in New York, more than evidence the problems we have with domestic terrorism in this country and underscores the threat against religious communities.

In light of this, I am proud to have supported Chairman Thompson's efforts to secure funding to protect nonprofit organizations at risk of terrorist attacks through his legislation, the Securing American Nonprofit Organizations Against Terrorism Act of 2019 which passed the House and the Senate in Congress.

DHS preparedness grants have proved to be an invaluable investment in America's security. I am pleased that this committee has consistently supported and encouraged robust funding for these grant programs.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses—look forward to hearing from the witnesses on how they use DHS grant funding to secure their communities, whether any improvements can be made to these grants programs in order to enhance Homeland Security.

With that, I now recognize the Ranking Member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. King, for an opening statement.

[The statement of Chairman Payne follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

JANUARY 9, 2020

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks revealed gaps in the Nation's emergency preparedness. DHS preparedness grants were established to address gaps by helping State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments enhance their ability to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against terrorist attacks. As the representative for New Jersey's 10th Congressional District, I understand importance of these grants programs. My district contains Newark Liberty International Airport, the New Jersey Transit Authority, and the Port Newark-Elizabeth Marine Terminal. This in addition to having a dense area of industrial facilities and being in close proximity to New York City, the Newark-Jersey City area has consistently been considered one of the highest-risk urban areas in the Nation and has been referred to as the most dangerous 2 miles in America.

Throughout my time in Congress, New Jersey's emergency preparedness has depended on financial assistance from DHS's preparedness grant programs. The Urban Area Security Initiative, commonly referred to as UASI has been particularly helpful with supporting my district's ability to build and maintain important capabilities necessary to make and keep us safe. At the same time, the funding has helped ensure that first responders have the resources they need to do their jobs effectively and safely. America's security depends on this important Federal investment, so I am disappointed in the President's regular efforts to slash preparedness grant funding. For example, President Trump proposed over $900 million in cuts to DHS preparedness grant funding for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. The President's fiscal year 2020 budget would have cut existing preparedness grant funding by nearly $700 million. The threat landscape is ever-evolving, and a lack of preparedness funding from the Federal Government would make it that much more difficult for States to meet their homeland security needs.

Today, America is at an elevated risk of terrorist attack following the killing of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani by U.S. forces in Iraq. Because Iran has promised revenge, jurisdictions like mine are on heightened alert and have to be more vigilant. We are also reminded of homeland security needs by events like the Jersey City shooting at a Jewish grocery store last month that claimed the lives of 4 victims, including a police officer. The loss of one life is too many, and I can only imagine how this tragedy would have unfolded if Jersey City was not armed with the capabilities they were able to build with DHS preparedness grant funding. This instance mounted on top of the near dozen anti-Semitic acts that occurred in the past month in New York more than evidence the problems we have with domestic terrorism in this country, and underscore the threat against religious communities. In light of this, I am proud to have supported Chairman Thompson's efforts to secure funding to protect nonprofit organizations at risk of terrorist attacks, through his legislation, the "Securing American Nonprofit Organizations Against Terrorism Act of 2019," which passed in the House and Senate this Congress. DHS preparedness grants have proved to be an invaluable investment in America's security, and I am pleased that this committee has consistently supported and encouraged robust funding for these grant programs.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on how they use DHS grant funding to secure their communities and whether any improvements can be made to these grant programs in order to enhance homeland security.

Mr. KING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome all the witnesses here today. I have a prepared statement. I will just insert that into the record.

I would like to first of all thank all the witnesses for being here today. I think it is especially appropriate that these precise witnesses we have here today. John Miller, obviously from New York, with the tremendous threats we face from Hezbollah in Iran, in addition to the everyday threats we face. Mr. Miller, in view of the space of horrible anti-Semitic attacks we have had in recent times and, Mr. Kierce, the terrible assault that took place in Jersey City.

Mr. Sprayberrry, it is really interesting. My daughter just moved to Charlotte, and you moved from where my district office is located down in New York. I have to say with Mr. Bishop here, from North Carolina, that you have really managed to overcome your ac-

cent. You and I don't talk alike at all, even though my office is located where you grew up. So you don't even talk like me or John Miller. Well, nobody talks like John Miller.

But very seriously, these are serious times and as the Chairman mentioned, the Trump administration and before that the Obama administration, had tried to make drastic cuts in Homeland Security in the funding. Maybe we are victims of our own success because there have not been successful attacks of the United States. Somehow terrorism recedes to the background. The fact is thankfully Congress, both under the Obama administration and the Trump administration, has restored the Homeland Security funding, but to me it just sends a bad signal when the administrations don't realize how real these threats are, how terrible these threats are, and how our world can turn upside down on a moment's notice.

So I want to thank Chairman Payne for his efforts in fighting hard for the funds, as I tried to do when I was in the Majority, when I was Chairman.

Now, again, we do live in dangerous times and that was made more dangerous last week with the killing of Soleimani which I supported but, even if I didn't, the fact is, as Americans, we have to defend ourselves.

So Mr. Miller, certainly during your testimony, whatever you can expand on as far as what we are doing with Hezbollah and Iranian operatives here in the country.

Mr. Masters, as far as anti-Semitism, it is something which doesn't appear limited to any particular group of attackers. It has been a wide range unfortunately. People are focused on anti-Semitism.

Mr. Kierce, if you could really discuss what went on in Jersey City and how you feel as far as the grant funding going to nonprofits and to various religious institutions, what has to be done to improve on those.

Mr. Sprayberrry, going beyond terrorism, the fact of natural disasters and the fact I know Charlotte—my daughter reminded me of this—has been taken off the list.

So, again, all these are so important today and, again, I think that when this committee was formed, the whole world was talking about Homeland Security. Because we have managed to do a very good job over the last 15, 17 years, somehow people think the problem is not there.

I would say the threats are as great today as they were prior to 9/11. Thankfully we have defenses in place, but of all the defenses we have in place, the enemy is constantly adapting and they can afford to make mistake after mistake. We can't afford to make any mistakes.

Again, with anti-Semitism, which many of us had hoped was just a creature of the past, the fact that that is now reemerging and, again, without going into a whole debate over climate change and everything else, the fact that we have seen such increase in natural disasters and we saw it on Long Island. Your old neighborhood, was under water with Hurricane Sandy, storms we hadn't seen in 50 years, 60 years.

So in any event, again, Chairman, I commend you for having these witnesses here today. Unfortunately, it is at a particularly appropriate time, more appropriate than we would like, but the fact is that is the reality and we are here to face reality.

So thank you and I yield back the balance of my time.

[The statement of Ranking Member King follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER PETER T. KING

JANUARY 9, 2020

I want to thank Chairman Payne for holding today's hearing to discuss critical preparedness grant programs. This hearing is especially timely considering the Department of Homeland Security's recently released National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) Bulletin highlighting concerns of potential retaliation actions from Iran or its terrorist partner, Hezbollah. While we're not aware of a specific threat to the United States, violent extremist organizations have the intent and capability to conduct attacks in the homeland with little or no warning. It is imperative that capabilities are in place to thwart any potential attack.

FEMA's preparedness grants provide State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments the ability to build, sustain, and improve capabilities to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards, including terrorism threats.

Federal funds through vital grant programs such as the State Homeland Security Grant Program, Urban Area Security Initiative, Port Security Grant Program, and Transit Security Grant Program enable local communities to support their first responder workforce and to harden their defenses against potential attacks.

From 9/11 to the Boston Marathon bombing and the San Bernardino killings, we continue to see terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. And as evidenced by the 2016 Chelsea bombing, the 2017 vehicle ramming in lower Manhattan, and the subsequent 2017 Port Authority bombing, the New York City urban area remains our Nation's top terror target.

Federal grant funding has enabled the NYPD, FDNY, and the New York City Department of Emergency Management to conduct training and exercises, provide public education and outreach, and develop response protocols, and safety initiatives to significantly increase security measures.

In his statement before the subcommittee last March, former chief of NYPD's Counterterrorism Bureau, Jim Waters, said that Federal funding, if eliminated or reduced would result in an erosion of capabilities, cessation of initiatives, and a significant limitation of NYPD's overall emergency preparedness posture.

The importance of these grants cannot be understated.

Unfortunately, time and again, Presidential budget requests have proposed slashing funding to State and local first responders—regardless of administration. We must ensure our first responders have the tools they need to get the job done and keep us safe.

I would be remiss if I didn't also mention the importance of FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. The Non-Profit Security Grant program provides critical funding to harden security at houses of worship, community centers, schools, and other cultural institutions. The unfortunate reality is that threats to religious institutions and other soft targets are not going away and, in fact, are increasing at an alarming rate.

There have been a number of attacks both overseas and domestic in places of worship. Most recently in the United States there were synagogue shootings in both Poway, California last year that left 1 dead and at the Tree of Life Synagogue in 2018 where 11 people were murdered. I have been a long-time supporter of the Non-Profit Security Grant program and was proud to be a cosponsor of Chairman Thompson's legislation to formally authorize the program.

Preparedness grants that support our States, urban areas, ports, transit systems, and non-profits are crucial to maintaining capabilities, providing training, and purchasing equipment for the overall protection of our communities and way of life. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on the importance of these grant programs and how they've supported and continue to enhance critical safety and security initiatives.

Mr. PAYNE. Well Ranking Member, I always appreciate your leadership in this area. I know you have been at this since the beginning. So we respect your leadership——

Mr. KING. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. PAYNE [continuing]. In this area.

Other Members of the subcommittee are reminded that under the committee rules opening statements may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

JANUARY 9, 2020

These grants were created after the horrific events of September 11, 2001, and the Department of Homeland Security was tasked with administering them. The new homeland security grant programs, also commonly referred to as preparedness grants, were created to provide critical resources to help protect communities from threats. While States and localities have made great strides in their preparedness capabilities since 2001, the threats our country face continue to evolve and we must keep pace with them. After 2001, the country's focus was on combating terrorism from abroad, such as our enemies from al-Qaeda, to ensure another attack would never reach our homeland.

Cyber threats, which were an afterthought when DHS was first established, have moved to the forefront of threats we face every day—and one in which our ability to respond remains sorely lacking. Recent events have brought to the forefront the threats posed by Iran and its proxies. It is not only State and local governments who must be prepared to respond to acts of terror. Houses of worship and other nonprofits have increasingly seen themselves targeted for acts of violence. That is why I was proud to introduce H.R. 2476, the American Nonprofit Organizations Against Terrorism Act of 2019, which authorizes $75 million annually through fiscal year 2024 for the Department of Homeland Security's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). The program provides grants to nonprofits and faith-based organizations to help secure their facilities against a potential terrorist attack. I am pleased the bill passed both the House and Senate this Congress and I hope that the President will sign it into law shortly. While authorizing the Nonprofit Security Grant Program is an important step, Congress must make sure that all the Homeland Security Grant Programs are properly funded to support our partners.

Unfortunately, President Trump's fiscal year 2018, 2019, and 2020 proposed budgets recommended cutting existing preparedness grant funding by nearly a billion and a half dollars in total. Though Congress has continually rebuked these proposed cuts, I am concerned the administration will once again propose cuts for fiscal year 2021. Such cuts would hinder jurisdictions from building and maintaining important capabilities communities rely on to keep America secure. Given recent events in Iran, other persistent foreign terrorist threats, and rising domestic terrorism, we must instead redouble our efforts to support State and local communities.

I look forward to hearing from stakeholders today on how preparedness grants have aided them as they make their communities safer, and how Congress can support their efforts against all forms of terrorism in our homeland.

Mr. PAYNE. I welcome our panel of witnesses. Our first witness is Mr. Michael Sprayberry, the executive director of North Carolina Department of Public Safety, division of Emergency Management Office of Recovery and Resiliency. Welcome.

Our second witness is Mr. George Kierce, the director—Greg Kierce—I am sorry—Greg Kierce, the director of Jersey City's Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. I should know that.

Mr. Kierce has previously appeared before our panel. Welcome back and thank you for your continued willingness to assist this subcommittee in its oversight efforts.

Our third witness is Mr. Michael Masters, the director and CEO of Secure Community Network.

Our fourth and final witness is Mr. John Miller, the deputy commissioner of intelligence and counterterrorism within the New York City Police Department. Mr. Miller has previously appeared before our panel as well.

Thank you, too, for your continued support of this subcommittee's oversight.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted into the record. I now ask each witness to summarize his or her statement for 5 minutes, beginning with Mr. Sprayberry.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. SPRAYBERRY, DIRECTOR, NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, NORTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY**

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. Good morning, Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, and distinguished Members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf of the State of North Carolina.

As you know, our State is intimately familiar with a multitude of risks and hazards. Like all States, we rely heavily on Federal preparedness grant funding to help the Federal Government close the National preparedness grant in order to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate potential impacts to address many of the cascading effects from these hazards. Today I will quickly discuss two.

In the Homeland Security Grant program, North Carolina has been the recipient of funding from two major programs, the State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Area Security Initiative. These two grant programs are vitally important to enhancing State and local preparedness for all hazard events to include acts of terrorism.

A key finding of the 2018 study conducted by the National Homeland Security Consortium to evaluate return on investment found that for every green dollar invested, the median return was $1.70 for State emergency management and Homeland Security agencies. True value.

North Carolina can attest to the impact of these Federal preparedness grants that have impact on catalyzing and substantiating our advancements to terrorism preparedness. This funding is utilized to develop local and State capacity for everything from building cyber capacity to funding active-shooter exercises.

Over the years the funding awarded in these two grant programs has been significantly reduced. To provide some perspective on the changes in reductions in program support, the State of North Carolina in 2009 received approximately $20 million in the State Homeland Security Grant Program, $5 million of which was use for the Urban Area Security Initiative. In 2019, we received $5.7 million and our UASI jurisdiction of Charlotte was not funded.

I would like to state for the record that the removal of Charlotte, the host of the 2020 Republican National Convention, from the list of funded UASI jurisdictions is problematic. As the State's most populus jurisdictions with a large presence of critical infrastructure to include one of the largest concentrations of financial institutions Nation-wide, the lack of funding to support the jurisdiction has put our State at significant risk.

In a time of ever-increasing threats and risks, this is time for a closer State and local partnership for more significant and faster financial investments, not continued funding fluctuations or reductions.

Regarding preparedness grants, I want to note that the Federal Emergency Management Performance Grant, EMPG, is a foundational component of the emergency management funding at both the local and State level and is essential to the sustainment of our response and recovery capabilities for all States and territories.

We greatly appreciate Congress' demonstration of support in this program with the $5 million increase for fiscal year 2020, and we are committed to continuing to demonstrate to you the return of this investment.

To better support the State's addressing preparedness response recovery mitigation effectively, we would offer the following recommendations. No. 1. An all-hazards grants approach to acknowledge the way States are now organized to address the evolving threat dynamic, implement a true all-hazards approach for grant programs beyond a narrow terrorism focus as threats and hazards evolve in order to allow States to address their new needs.

No. 2, grant flexibility, flexibility in State allocation of grant funding, particularly in recovery funds after disasters to address main strategic needs and not a one-size-fits-all approach across disasters and States.

No. 3. Well-defined risk assessment metrics. Development of a well-defined, defensible metrics to determine the risk and threat to metropolitan statistical areas and a process is that transparent and conducted in partnership with the States.

No. 4. A common application for disaster survival recovery programs. Implementation of a common application for disaster survivors that can be used across all Federal disaster recovery programs to aid in speeding the award of vital funding and support to survivors.

Finally No. 5, faster disaster funding allocation. Increase speed of disaster fund allocation, specifically with CDBG–DR. To date, North Carolina has not received its Hurricane Florence CDBG–DR at funding allocation from HUD.

On behalf of the State of North Carolina, thank you again for holding this hearing and drawing attention to the needs of the Emergency Management and Homeland Security community, working to enhance preparedness for terrorism and other threats to communities. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sprayberry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. SPRAYBERRY

JANUARY 9, 2020

Good morning, Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, and distinguished Members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I am honored to testify today on behalf of the State of North Carolina and the department of public safety in my position as the executive director of the Division of Emergency Management and the Office of Recovery and Resiliency.

Unfortunately, our State is intimately familiar with a multitude of risks and hazards, spanning everything from major hurricanes and severe weather to critical infrastructure threats such as cyber disruption. We rely heavily on Federal grant

funding to help the Federal Government close the National preparedness gap and prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate potential impacts to address many of the cascading effects from these hazards. Today, I want to discuss two specific programs within the larger Homeland Security Grant Program: First, the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) and second, the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI).

HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (HSGP)

As you are aware, the Homeland Security Grant Program originated after the September 11, 2001 attacks in order to support the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities in States, territories, urban areas, and local and Tribal governments and to develop a more secure and resilient Nation. This overarching program is comprised of 3 grant programs: The State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), and the Operation Stonegarden Grant Program (OPSG), which addresses border security.

*State Homeland Security Grant Program*

Each State and territory is awarded a minimum allocation under this program for the purposes of strengthening core capabilities in prevention, protection, mitigation, and response to all hazards faced by a jurisdiction. In fiscal year 2019, the Federal allocation for this program was a total of $525 million and the recent Federal appropriations bill increased the Federal allocation to $560 million for fiscal year 2020.

*Urban Area Security Initiative*

The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) is designed to enhance regional preparedness in major metropolitan areas, recognizing that these areas must address unique risks associated with large concentrations of residents and visitors and critical infrastructure. Eligibility for the UASI program is determined by an analysis of relative risk of terrorism faced by the 100 most populous metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the United States. In appropriating for this program, Congress has expressed its intent that the Secretary for the Department of Homeland Security fund up to 85 percent of Nation-wide risk in the UASI program.

NATIONAL AND STATE IMPACTS OF SHSGP AND UASI

These grant programs are critical to enhancing State and local preparedness for all-hazards events, to include acts of terrorism, and we remain committed to doing our part to support the Federal Government in ensuring Nation-wide preparedness. Despite this long-standing partnership, there has been a lack of information as to the return on investment of State, local, and Federal spending on SHSGP and UASI. Understanding that this lack of information may have played a role in fluctuations in funding, in 2018 the National Homeland Security Consortium conducted a study to evaluate how much money has been invested by State and local governments on terrorism preparedness, how that spending has been affected by Federal assistance, and what capabilities we as States and localities have now that we did not have in 2001. To collect this information, a survey was issued to all 50 States and to jurisdictions from 50 urban areas currently and formerly eligible for UASI funds. The goal of the survey was to determine how much money has been invested by State and local governments.

A key finding from the 2018 survey is that for every SHSGP and UASI grant dollar invested, the median return was $1.70 for responding State emergency management and homeland security agencies; for local emergency management and homeland security agencies, it was $0.92. Furthermore, return on investment generally increased when considering other jurisdictional agencies involved with, but not responsible for preparedness activities. In reviewing the survey results, the Consortium also concluded that these grant programs provided support to 251 State exercises and 123 UASI jurisdiction exercises in 2017. Lack of coordination among first responder agencies was one of the challenges identified in the 9/11 Commission Report, further underscoring that these grant programs are a key pillar of support for enhanced preparedness Nation-wide.

North Carolina can attest to the impact these Federal preparedness grants have on catalyzing and substantiating our advancements in terrorism preparedness. This funding is utilized to develop local and State capacity for everything from incident management team personnel to specialized search-and-rescue and hazardous materials teams. Preparedness grant funding is routinely used for incident response technologies to enhance our fusion center integration and cybersecurity team capabilities. Active-shooter and cybersecurity exercises, funded by these grants, are also held annually throughout the State in many jurisdictions.

As a follow-up to the 2018 report, North Carolina's All Hazards Technical Search and Rescue (SAR) Program was selected as a case study to provide additional insight into National preparedness capabilities. Funds from SHSGP grants have served as a catalyst for building the program and providing the impetus for State and local governments to contribute additional support to ensure this specialized response program was fully funded. SAR Task Forces in this program have been used regularly in disasters, rescuing 2,246 individuals by boat and 79 individuals by air during Hurricane Matthew and 5,214 personnel and 1,067 animals rescued during Hurricane Florence. Knowing we accomplish nothing alone, these teams have also been routinely deployed Nation-wide to support search-and-rescue efforts in other States.

To provide some perspective on the changes and reductions in program support, in 2009, the State of North Carolina received approximately $20 million in State Homeland Security Grant Program funds, $5 million of which was for the Urban Area Security Initiative. In 2019, we received $5.7 million and our UASI jurisdiction of Charlotte, NC was not funded.

Due to this reduction, we have not been able to fund significant new initiatives to improve our preparedness. Meanwhile, the threats and risks have evolved and have significantly reduced the funding to maintain existing capabilities. For a State with a rapidly-growing population, an increase of critical infrastructure, and associated increases in threats and risks, this funding reduction has negatively impacted our ability to protect our State and to contribute to the larger National preparedness.

I would like to State for the record that the removal of Charlotte from the list of funded UASI jurisdictions is problematic. As the State's most populous jurisdiction with a large presence of critical infrastructure, to include one of the largest concentrations of financial institutions Nation-wide, the lack of funding to support the jurisdiction has put our State at risk. Their ability to maintain response capability has been detrimentally impacted, as well as their ability to implement new programs, such as a robust cybersecurity initiative, to adequately protect their residents, visitors, and infrastructure. Of particular concern is that with the loss of their UASI funding, Charlotte will be unable to fund planned purchases of anti-terrorism equipment for law enforcement, bomb squad equipment and communications equipment. Additionally, planned exercises will be unable to be funded. With major mass gatherings and public events occurring almost weekly in the jurisdiction and with the 2020 Republican National Convention scheduled for August, the ability to respond to known threats and hazards has been diminished, not to mention the ability to proactively address emerging threats.

States have long known the impact of the preparedness grant programs on their capabilities to develop and sustain a more secure and resilient Nation, but as time has passed and Federal priorities have shifted since 2001, these grant programs have struggled. While States and localities have made significant efforts to fund terrorism prevention in this new funding era, merely sustaining those already built capabilities have slowed or stopped many jurisdictions from progress toward the National Preparedness Goal. As such, many States are already sacrificing capability, foreshadowing even more severe consequences if program funds are cut in the future.

Managing response and recoveries to natural hazards is one area of success in the State-Federal grant relationship. In North Carolina as well as the entire Nation, the Federal Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) is a foundational component of emergency management funding at both the local and State level, and essential to the sustainment of our response and recovery capabilities. EMPG gives State and local emergency managers great flexibility in managing funds and priorities. As such, according to a joint report by the National Emergency Management Association and International Association of Emergency Managers, capabilities built and sustained with EMPG, including the dollar-for-dollar match, allowed grantees to manage 23,331 events in fiscal year 2018 without additional Federal assistance or expenditures. We greatly appreciate Congress' demonstration of support in this program with the $5 million increase for fiscal year 2020, and both associations are committed to continuing to demonstrate to you the return on this investment.

ON-GOING RECOVERY IN NORTH CAROLINA

The last 4 years have been challenging for North Carolina. In addition to the multitude of other events that have impacted the State since 2016, the residents of our State have sustained significant damage and disruption from 4 major tropical weather systems: Hurricane Matthew (2016), Hurricane Florence (2018), Tropical Storm Michael (2018), and Hurricane Dorian (2019).

Damage from Hurricane Florence, now our storm of record, alone totaled more than the cost we experienced during Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Floyd combined. We were the only State where Hurricane Dorian made landfall this past year. While North Carolina is known for impact from hurricanes, in the past few years we have also received major disaster declarations for tornados and severe storms, as well as 2 Federal fire management assistance declarations. As a State which experiences a broad spectrum of natural and man-made hazards that occur Nationally, we are attuned to the needs of our residents in disaster recovery and focused on a more resilient path forward.

To lead the State's efforts to rebuild smarter and stronger in the wake of Hurricane Florence, Governor Cooper established the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR). The office provides disaster recovery coordination with services including oversight of recovery funding, processing of program applications, construction and vendor management, and public outreach and education, among many other responsibilities. With NCORR now up and running for a single year, North Carolina is on the road to a stronger recovery with a team of State, Federal, and volunteer partners dedicated to helping communities rebuild to be more resilient and better prepared to weather future events.

NCORR oversees the Community Development Block Grant for Disaster Recovery (CDBG–DR) program for the State, managing the disbursement of funds that will total close to $1 billion when the next allocation of funding for Hurricane Florence is disbursed. It should be noted, that to date, we have not received funds for Hurricane Florence which occurred in 2018. In keeping with the CDBG–DR mandate to prioritize the recovery spending in low-income areas, our Housing Recovery Programs tackle the State-wide shortage of affordable housing in coordination with partners at the State and local levels. We are seeking to instill resiliency in all of our recovery projects, which enhances coordination across all of our emergency management efforts, including our recovery support functions and the State-wide disaster recovery task force. To that end, the Governor has appointed a State Chief Resiliency Officer with 2 deputies to guide our resiliency efforts.

CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

To better support the States in addressing preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation effectively, we would offer the following recommendations:

*1. All-Hazards Grants Approach*.—To acknowledge the way States are now organized to address the evolving threat dynamic, implement a true all-hazards approach for grant programs beyond a narrow terrorism focus as threats and hazards evolve in order to allow States to address their known needs;

*2. Grant Flexibility*.—Flexibility in State allocation of grant funding, particularly in recovery funds after disasters, to address known strategic needs and not a "one size fits all" approach across disasters and States;

*3. Common Application for Disaster Survivor Recovery Programs*.—Implementation of a common application for disaster survivors that can be used across all Federal disaster recovery programs to aid in speeding the award of vital funding and support to survivors; and

*4. Faster Disaster Funding Allocation*.—Increased speed of disaster funding allocation, specifically with CDBG–DR.

*5. Well-Defined Risk Assessment Metrics*.—Development of well-defined, defensible metrics to determine the risk and threat to Metropolitan Statistical Areas and a process that is transparent and conducted in partnership with the States.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of the State of North Carolina, thank you again for holding this hearing and drawing attention to the needs of the emergency management and homeland security community working to enhance preparedness for terrorism and other threats to communities. We are acutely aware that the wide variety of threats and vulnerabilities faced by States and major urban areas continue to evolve, and if we do not evolve with them, we risk falling behind. As you consider the topics of this hearing, please remember that while the Federal preparedness programs can always be improved, they do continue to make real differences in our Nation's capacity to defend against terrorist threats.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize Mr. Kierce to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF W. GREG KIERCE, DIRECTOR, JERSEY CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. KIERCE. Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, and Members of the committee, the attacks of September 11, 2001, were defining moments in our attitudes toward terrorism. More than a decade-and-a-half later, people can still recall where they initially heard about or saw footage of the Twin Towers collapse.

In the wake of this tragedy, the Federal Government took numerous actions to better prepare our Nation for future terrorist attacks. Among those actions were new legislation and appropriations that committed to using Federal grants to bolster State and local capabilities in defense of terrorism threats and close the gaps in National preparedness not filled practically by the Federal Government.

Two of the most critical grants were the State Homeland Security Grant and the Urban Area Security Initiative. Eighteen years, both programs have made a testament to their importance. Congressional appropriations to the grant programs have diminished over time. Absent information on a return on investment, such as the corresponding contributions invested by the States and local Governments, these grants remain an easy target for funding cuts.

For example, beginning in fiscal year 2011, the SHSP and UASI grants were roughly halved over a 2-year period. Without better information about these contributions of States and localities to increasing terrorism preparedness, Federal preparedness grants may face further elimination.

In 2019, New Jersey received $36,331,372 in Homeland Security grants. Included were $20,050,000 from Urban Area Security Initiative program to benefit law enforcement terrorism prevention activities in Newark and Jersey City areas; $8 million State Homeland Security Grant, and $8.82 Emergency Management Performance Grants.

The UASI grant for Newark and Jersey City resulted in an 11 percent decrease from fiscal year 2018 funding levels. The total population associated with the Jersey City/Newark UASI is approximately 4,792,594 which equates to more than half the entire population of the State of New Jersey, making this region one of the most densely populated areas in the United States.

In the middle of this is a section of New Jersey Turnpike in Union and Essex Counties that runs to what the FBI and Government officials in New Jersey have dubbed the most dangerous 2 miles in America. This includes the largest port on the East Coast, Newark airport, major airlines, densely-populated cities, and chemical and petroleum refineries, all of which create a target-rich environment.

Cuts to the Federal programs designed to fight terrorism may mean that some hard charges are on the horizon. Law enforcement and emergency preparedness professionals are constantly training, planning, and equipping themselves to respond to threats of terrorism on the communities. They rely heavily on U.S. UASI grants to ensure New Jersey is a safe place to live and work and raise families.

Given a wide variety of threats and vulnerabilities that States and major areas face, it is not surprising they have adopted different attitudes toward terrorism preparedness.

Moreover, jurisdictions have had to formulate their approaches and make decisions, even as our Nation's understanding of what constitutes terrorism preparedness has continued to evolve and in the face of corresponding shifts in Federal priorities. For a few jurisdictions, terrorism preparedness is a Federal responsibility discharged through Federal grants.

Since 9/11, white supremacists and other far-right extremists have been responsible for almost 3 times as many attacks on U.S. soil as Islamic terrorists, as Government reported. From 2009 to 2018, the far right has been responsible for 73 percent of domestic extremist-related fatalities, according to a 2019 study by the Anti-Defamation League. More than 49 people were murdered by far right of extremists in the United States last year.

The horrific act of domestic terrorism which occurred in my city on December 10, 2019, is a prime example of this statement. At 12:43 hours the police radios crackled with urgency. In the back of the cemetery we have a PO shot in the head, down in the ground, in a lifeless conditions.

Responding police units found Detective Joseph Seals laying mortally wounded on the ground. Detective Seals was a highly-decorated, well-respected Jersey City police officer. He was a member of the department's Cease Fire Unit, a squad formed in 2013, mainly tasked with investigating nonfatal shootings.

On the morning in question, Seals was on the streets of Greenville, near Bayview Cemetery. He spotted a U-Haul cargo van which was the subject of a homicide BOLO from a neighboring city. As Detective Seals lay dead in the Jersey City historic Bayview Cemetery, a deadly rampage by the officer's killers was under way just a mile away.

A security camera captured the horror as a white U-Haul cargo van pulled up in front of a Catholic elementary school across the street from an orthodox synagogue and kosher grocery store on Martin Luther King Drive. The driver, David Anderson, clad in a dark trench coat, burst out of the car with an AR–15-style rifle in his right hand. He immediately started firing as he crossed the streets in the pouring rain.

His passenger, Francine Graham, got out, carrying a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun and followed him.

Without passing—pausing, Anderson fired one round into the Jersey City Kosher Supermarket to the right of a nondescript synagogue and upstairs yeshiva filled with 60 children. Terrified people on the sidewalk scattered. Some dove for cover. Some ran full speed down the street. Anderson and Graham disappeared into the store.

Leah Minda Ferencz, a mother of 3, owned the grocery store with her husband, Moishe Ferencz. He had left the store briefly to go to the synagogue next door for the afternoon prayer.

Douglas Miguel Rodriguez, 47, a store employee, was found near the back entrance, believed to have been shot as he sought to escape. Married with an 11-year-old daughter, he had come to the United States from Ecuador 3 years earlier.

Moshe Deutsch, a 23-year-old rabbinical student visiting from Williamsburg, was inside, getting a sandwich.

In the next few minutes 2 police officers running to the scene in the Greenville section were shot and wounded.

In the more than 3 hours that followed, Martin Luther King Drive between Bidwell and Bayview Avenues turned into a war zone. Hundred of shots were fired, bullets smacking into the Sacred Heart School on the other of side of MLK Drive where children huddled. Police helicopters hovered overhead while SWAT teams took up positions on the rooftops. A Jersey City Police Department BearCat armored vehicle rumbled into position in the front of the store, detectives firing from inside.

The siege finally ended when the armored vehicle, occupied by tactically equipped police officers, breached the grocery store, engaging both subjects. Only then did the officers find the bodies of 3 victims, along with the 2 shooters who were shot dead by police. In their abandoned U-Haul van was a pipe bomb and note. "I do this because my creator makes me do this, and I hate who he hates."

The horrific event was brought to a conclusion due to the tactical equipment and training provided to law enforcement officers, all of which were funded through the UASI grant. State and local officials are responsible for initiating the critical first response in the U.S. preparedness system which calls for the lowest possible level of Government to manage an emergency.

States have very little resources for this on their own. They have relied on the Federal Government from the beginning. They have essentially been able to stand up their preparedness activities in the last decade on the shoulders of the Federal support.

Simply put, reduced Homeland Security funding places our Nation at risk. It minimizes our capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from hazard events while simultaneously increasing our risk. If we are to continue to prepare for, respond to, and recover from evolving threats, and disasters, we will need sufficient resources to sustain and adapt our capabilities accordingly.

In closing, I wish to extend my sincere thanks for affording me the opportunity to appear before you today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kierce follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF W. GREG KIERCE

JANUARY 9, 2020

Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, and Members of the committee: The attacks of September 11, 2001, were defining moments in our attitudes toward terrorism. More than a decade-and-a-half later, people can still recall when they initially heard about or saw footage of the Twin Towers' collapse.

In the wake of this tragedy, the Federal Government took numerous actions to better prepare our Nation for future terrorist attacks.

Among these actions were new legislation and appropriations that committed to using Federal grants to bolster State and local capabilities in defense against terrorism threats and close those gaps in National preparedness not filled practically by the Federal Government.

Two of the most critical grant programs were the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI). Eighteen years later, both programs remain—a testament to their importance.

Congressional appropriations to the grant programs have diminished over time. Absent information on the return on investment, such as the corresponding con-

tributions invested by States and local governments, these grants remain an easy target for funding cuts.

For example, beginning in fiscal year 2011, SHSP and UASI grants were roughly halved over a 2-year period.

Without better information about the contributions of States and localities to increasing terrorism preparedness, Federal preparedness grants may face further reductions or elimination.

In 2019, New Jersey received $36,331,372 in Homeland Security grants.

Included were: $20,050,000 from the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program to benefit law enforcement terrorism prevention activities in the Newark and Jersey City areas.

- $8,000,000 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)
- $8,281,372 Emergency Management Performance Grants

The UASI grant for Newark/Jersey City resulted in an 11 percent decrease ($2,700,000) from fiscal year 2018 funding levels.

The total population associated with the Jersey City/Newark UASI is approximately 4,792,594 which equates to more than half the entire population of the State of New Jersey making this region one of the most densely populated areas in the United States.

In the middle of it all is a section of the NJ Turnpike in Union and Essex counties that runs through what the FBI and Government officials from New Jersey have dubbed "the most dangerous 2 miles in America".

This area includes the largest port on the East Coast, Newark Airport, major rail lines, densely populated cities and chemical and petroleum refineries all of which create a "target-rich environment".

Cuts to Federal programs designed to fight terrorism may mean that some "hard choices" are on the horizon.

Law enforcement and emergency preparedness professionals are constantly training, planning, and equipping themselves to respond to the threat of terrorism in our communities.

They rely on UASI grant funding to ensure that New Jersey is a safe place to live, work, and raise families.

Given the wide variety of threats and vulnerabilities that States and major urban areas face, it is not surprising that they have adopted different attitudes toward terrorism preparedness.

Moreover, jurisdictions have had to formulate their approaches and make decisions even as our Nation's understanding of what constitutes terrorism preparedness has continued to evolve, and in the face of corresponding shifts in Federal priorities.

For a few jurisdictions, terrorism preparedness is a Federal responsibility, discharged through Federal grants.

Since 9/11, white supremacists and other far-right extremists have been responsible for almost 3 times as many attacks on U.S. soil as Islamic terrorists, the Government reported.

From 2009 through 2018, the far right has been responsible for 73 percent of domestic extremist-related fatalities, according to a 2019 study by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). And the toll is growing. More people—49—were murdered by far-right extremists in the United States last year.

The horrific act of "Domestic Terrorism" which occurred in my city on December 10, 2019 is a prime example of this statement.

At 12:43 hrs. the police radios crackled with urgency!

"In the back of the cemetery! We have a PO shot in the head, down on the ground in a lifeless condition".

Responding police units found Det. Joseph Seals laying mortally wounded on the ground.

Det. Seals was a highly-decorated, well-respected Jersey City Police Officer. He was a member of the department's Cease Fire Unit, a squad formed in 2013 mainly tasked with investigating non-fatal shootings.

On Tuesday morning, Seals was on the streets in Greenville near Bayview Cemetery. He spotted the U-Haul cargo van which was the subject of a homicide BOLO from a neighboring city.

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His passenger, Francine Graham got out carrying a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun and followed him.

Without pausing, Anderson fired round after round into the JC Kosher Supermarket to the right of a nondescript synagogue and an upstairs yeshiva filled with 60 children.

Terrified people on the sidewalk scattered. Some dove for cover, some ran full-speed down the street.

Anderson and Graham disappeared into the store.

Leah Minda Ferencz, 33, a mother of 3, owned the grocery with her husband, Moishe Ferencz. He had left the store briefly to go to the synagogue next door for afternoon minchah prayer.

Douglas Miguel Rodriguez, 47, a store employee, was found near the back entrance, believed to be shot as he sought to escape. Married with an 11-year-old daughter, he had come to the United States from Ecuador 3 years earlier.

Moshe Deutsch, a 24-year-old rabbinical student visiting from Williamsburg, was inside getting a sandwich.

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It minimizes our capacity to mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from hazard events, while simultaneously increasing our risk.

If we are to continue to prepare for, respond to, and recover from evolving threats and disasters we will need sufficient resources to sustain and adapt our capabilities accordingly.

In closing, I wish to extend my sincere thanks for affording me the opportunity to appear before you today.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize Mr. Masters to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

## STATEMENT OF MICHAEL G. MASTERS, NATIONAL DIRECTOR AND CEO, SECURE COMMUNITY NETWORK

Mr. MASTERS. Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, distinguished Members of the committee, America's Jewish community is under attack. Thank you for taking action to stop it.

I am Michael Masters, CEO and national director of the Secure Community Network, or SCN, and it is an honor to appear before you to participate in this hearing.

To protect Jewish lives, we are counting on you, the Members of the subcommittee, to support the funding desperately needed to prevent further assaults and to train people on what to do in case of an attack. Without you, the faith-based community would be in greater danger.

SCN is the official safety and security organization the Jewish community in North America. We work on behalf of the Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish American Organizations, covering 50 national nonprofits, 146 Jewish federations, and over 300 independent communities, representing approximately 90 percent of the Jewish population in North America.

We are the Jewish community's official liaison with Federal law enforcement, particularly the FBI and DHS, and every day we are working to develop best-practice safety, security, and policies, undertake threat and vulnerability assessments, conduct life-saving training and exercises, and provide critical incident response.

We have worked with Jewish organizations in each and every one of your home States. We were in Jersey City after the attack, supporting the Jewish Federation, and earlier this week provided training to the community in Monsey, New York.

I have personally served in several law enforcement Homeland Security roles: A police officer training special weapons and tactics, and a commissioned officer in the United States Marine Corps. I previously served as the chief of staff of the Chicago Police Department and the director of the Department of Homeland Security in Cook County, Illinois.

My job and that of my team is to secure our community so that the Jewish community can pray, celebrate, and gather in peace. We are not volunteers of private contractors. We are professionals dedicated specifically to the community.

As a security expert informed by personal experience, I can tell you without equivocation that the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, or NSGP, has placed the nonprofit faith-based community in a better position to be safe and secure. That means that more Americans, regardless of faith, can worship and gather in peace. This is critical not just for the faith-based community but for the very preservation of religious freedom in this Nation.

The threats facing the Jewish community are both complex and dynamic, and at their core they derive from an evil that is thousands of years old, anti-Semitism. The Jewish community not only remains the No. 1 target of religiously-motivated hate crimes but we have seen a rise in these events to near historic levels, as well as increases in anti-Semitic incidents across the Nation. As Ranking Member King pointed out, the ideology and motivators for the individuals behind these attacks range across the spectrum.

Since the attack in Pittsburgh, law enforcement has disrupted over a dozen plots targeting the Jewish community around the country. The attack 2 weeks ago in Monsey, New York, where the Jewish community gathered to celebrate Hanukkah, was the 13th incident in New York in 3 weeks. The church shooting in Texas less than 18 hours later was the 14th deadly shooting at a house of worship in this Nation since June, 2015. These events are horrific reminders of why this hearing is so important.

NSGP funding has made our communities more safe and secure. It has placed electronic locks on exterior doors of Jewish community centers, cameras on synagogues, and panic buttons in Jewish school classrooms. NSGP funding is now protecting more communities in more places. Recent changes allow organizations in non-urban areas to take advantage of the program. From the attacks in Overland Park, Kansas, and Sutherland Springs to Monsey, New York, and White Settlement, as the threat has changed, this has been an important and critical expansion.

NSGP provides funding for training and saves lives. Today NSGP funds can now be used to support planning, exercising, and training for everyday congregants. For organizations that could not support such training prior, this can literally be the difference between life and death.

Every day we work to build relationships between our community and law enforcement from State, local, and Federal and thanks to the good work of men and women like those to my left and right. The NSGP is a component of this, fostering critical cooperation and engagement.

Chairman Payne, and Ranking Member King, I am deeply appreciative for your efforts to increase funds for this program. Last year with $60 million available, we understand that there was close to $170 million worth of requests. We are pleased that Congress increased the funding to $90 million this year to help bridge this divide. At the same time we intend to continue to work to make sure more organizations know about these funds and how to effectively apply and use them. We encourage increases to the program to meet the need.

From attacks in Pittsburgh and Poway to Jersey City and Monsey, the Jewish way of life in the United States of America is under threat. In each of these attacks, SCN's team is responding. What is required is a whole community response. No one in this country should ever question whether it is safe to walk into a religious institution. And an attack on any religious institution, regardless of size, location, or affiliation, is an attack on all of us as Americans.

The NSGP and related efforts have assisted in reducing the threat and providing peace of mind but there is much more work to do and, as recent events show, we do not have time to lose.

Thank you for what you are doing for our community and for the country.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Masters follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL G. MASTERS

09 JANUARY 2020

OVERVIEW

Chairman Payne, Ranking Member King, Distinguished Members of the committee: America's Jewish community is under attack. Thank you for taking action to stop it.

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Without you, the faith-based community would be in even greater danger.

SCN is the official safety and security organization of the Jewish community in North America. We work on behalf of The Jewish Federations of North America and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, covering over 50 national non-profit organizations,[1] 146 Jewish Federations, and over 300 independent Jewish communities,[2] all representing over approximately 90 percent of the Jewish community across North America.

We are the Jewish community's official liaison with Federal law enforcement, particularly the FBI and DHS. Every day, we work to develop best-practice safety policies, undertake threat and vulnerability assessments, conduct life-saving training and exercises, and provide critical incident response.

We have worked with Jewish organizations in each and every one of your home States. We were in Jersey City after the attack and earlier this week provided training to the community in Monsey, New York.

I have personally served in several law enforcement and homeland security roles: A police officer trained in special weapons and tactics and a commissioned officer in the United States Marine Corps, I previously served as the chief of staff of the Chicago Police Department and as the executive director of the department of homeland security for Cook County, Illinois.

My job and that of my team is to secure our community so that the Jewish people can pray, celebrate, and gather in safety.

We are not volunteers, or private contractors. We are security professionals whose full-time job is to serve the Jewish community.

As a security expert and informed by my personal experience, I can state—without equivocation—that the NSGP has placed the non-profit, faith-based community in a better position to be safe and secure.

This means that more Americans—regardless of faith—can worship and gather in peace.

This is critical not just for the faith-based community but for the very preservation of religious freedom in this Nation.

THREAT PICTURE

The threats facing the Jewish community are both complex and dynamic. At their core, they derive from an evil that is thousands of years old: Anti-Semitism.

The Jewish community not only remains the No. 1 target of religiously motivated hate crimes, but we have seen a rise in these events to near-historic levels, as well as increases in anti-Semitic incidents across the Nation.[3]

We have seen a troubling rise in domestic extremism, with the FBI pursuing over 850 domestic terrorism investigations at last count.[4]

In this environment, the FBI, Department of Homeland Security and National Counterterrorism Center have jointly assessed that domestic hate groups will continue to pose a lethal threat to religious and cultural facilities at home, especially mass casualty attacks at large gatherings and soft targets, and will be difficult to detect before they act.

Indeed, since the attack in Pittsburgh, law enforcement has disrupted over a dozen plots targeting the Jewish community, around the country.[5]

The attack 2 weeks ago in Monsey, New York, where the Jewish community gathered to celebrate Hanukkah, was the 13th incident in New York in 3 weeks.[6]

The Church shooting in Texas less than 18 hours later was the 14th deadly shooting at a house of worship in this country since June 2015.[7]

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[1] "Member Organizations," Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, accessed January 6, 2020, *https://www.conferenceofpresidents.org/about/members.*

[2] "About The Jewish Federations of North America," The Jewish Federations of North America, accessed January 6, 2020, *https://jewishfederations.org/about-jfna.*

[3] "Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents: Year in Review 2018," The Anti-Defamation League, accessed January 6, 2020, *https://www.adl.org/audit2018.*

[4] Adam Goldman, "The FBI's New Approach to Combating Domestic Terrorism: Straight Talk," *The New York Times,* November 10, 2019, *https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/10/us/politics/domestic-terrorism-justice-department.html.*

[5] Lesley Stahl, "Recovering from the Deadliest Anti-Semitic Attack in U.S. History," *CBS 60 Minutes,* October 20, 2019, *https://www.cbsnews.com/news/tree-of-life-pittsburgh-synagogue-shooting-deadliest-anti-semitic-attack-in-u-s-history-60-minutes-2019-10-20/.*

[6] Bobby Allyn and James Doubek, "Governor Cuomo Calls New York Hanukkah Attack 'Act of Domestic Terrorism'," *NPR,* December 29, 2019, *https://www.npr.org/2019/12/29/792134545/5-stabbed-at-hanukkah-celebration-in-new-york.*

[7] Frank Miles, "Texas Church Shooting is Latest of Many Attacks in US Houses of Worship in Recent Years," December 29, 2019, *https://www.foxnews.com/us/texas-church-shooting-attacks-houses-worship.*

These events are horrific reminders of why this hearing is so important.

Moreover, we must protect these vital places . . . parts of who we are. We must work to ensure that they remain open and accessible while being safe and secure.

ADDRESSING THE THREATS

Sadly, safety and security has long had to be a focus for the Jewish community.

To address these threats, SCN was created to work with and on behalf of the Jewish community. Every day, we work to create an empowered resilient community.

In addition to the on-going and committed support that we receive from law enforcement at all levels—with special recognition to the FBI and our public safety partners at DHS—and thanks to the on-going support from Congress and from the administration for the NSGP as well as the intent behind it, we know that we do not face the challenges and threats directed at our community, alone.

IMPACT OF THE NON-PROFIT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (NSGP)

How and why is this funding critical?

First, NSGP funding has made our community more safe and secure. It has placed electronic locks on exterior doors of Jewish community centers, cameras on synagogues and panic buttons in school classrooms.

In the Yom Kippur attack on a synagogue in Halle, Germany, it was a simple door lock that kept dozens of worshippers—including a large group of Americans—safe.[8]

Each week, we work with communities and law enforcement around the country: Dealing with suspicious individuals attempting to gain access to our facilities, vandals defacing our houses of worship with symbols of hate, bomb threats to our community centers.

In each of these cases, equipment similar to that which is made possible by the NSGP protects our community.

Second, NSGP funding is now protecting more communities in more places. Recent changes allow organizations in non-Urban Areas to take advantage of the program. From attacks in Overland Park, Kansas and Sutherland Springs to Monsey, New York and White Settlement, Texas, as the threat has changed, this has been an important expansion.

Third, NSGP funding provides training that saves lives. Through our Critical Infrastructure Program, SCN regularly provides security assessments to organizations. We often identify required physical security enhancements. That said, physical security solutions are only one part of a security strategy. We know by experience, and have validating survivor testimony from both Pittsburgh and Poway, that training can save lives.

Today, NSGP funds can now be used to support planning, exercises, and training for everyday citizens. For organizations that could not support such training prior, this can, literally, be the difference between life and death.

Fourth, every day, we are working to build relationships between our community and law enforcement. The NSGP is a component of this, fostering critical cooperation and engagement.

Last, and importantly, Chairman Payne and Ranking Member King, I am deeply appreciative of your efforts to increases funds for this program. Last year, with $60 million available, we understand that there was close to $170 million worth of requests. We are pleased that Congress increased the funding to $90 million this year to help bridge this divide. At the same time, we intend to continue to work to make sure more organizations know about these funds, and how to effectively apply and use them. We encourage increases to the program to meet the need.

CLOSING

From attacks in Pittsburgh and Poway to Jersey City and Monsey, the Jewish way of life in the United States of America is under attack.

In each of these attacks, SCN's team was responding. What is required is a whole community response. An attack on any religious institution in this country—regardless of size, location, or affiliation—is an attack on all of us.

No one in this country should ever question whether it is safe to walk into a religious institution, regardless of affiliation, location, or size.

The NSGP and related efforts have assisted in reducing the threat, and providing peace of mind. But there is much more work to do . . . and we do not have time to lose.

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[8] Christopher F. Schuetze and Melissa Eddy, "Only a Locked Door Stopped a Massacre at a German Synagogue," *The New York Times,* last updated October 21, 2019, *https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/10/world/europe/germany-synagogue-attack.html.*

Thank you for what you are doing. I am happy to take your questions.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you for your testimony. I now recognize Mr. Miller to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN J. MILLER, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERTERRORISM, NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. MILLER. Good morning and thank you, Chairman Payne and Ranking Member King and Members of the committee. We appreciate the opportunity to be here to testify before this committee and to sit with our partners and colleagues like Michael and Greg who are valuable partners and incredibly important in this effort.

I am John Miller, just for the record, deputy commissioner of intelligence and counterterrorism for the New York City Police Department. On behalf of Police Commissioner Dermot Shea and Mayor Bill de Blasio, I am pleased to testify before your subcommittee today to discuss the NYPD's counterterrorism and emergency management efforts and the essential role that our Federal partnership and DHS grant funding plays in the NYPD's efforts to secure New York City.

I want to be clear from the outset. I know that I and other executives of the NYPD charged with keeping the city safe have made this point before here and we will likely make it again but our ability to prevent or be adequately prepared in the event that we do not prevent a catastrophic event is dependent in no small part on our successful collaboration with our Federal partners and the funding of the Federal Government that is provided to our city.

Funding that, if eliminated, if reduced, or, frankly, not increased, will result in an erosion of our counterterror and intelligence capabilities, cessation of many of the initiatives that I will talk about today, and a significant limitation of our overall emergency preparedness posture.

Although New York City enjoys the status of being the safest large city in the Nation, we also remain the primary target for violent extremists, both foreign, home-grown, as well as State-sponsored terror networks seeking to use New York City as a pawn in their global terror campaigns.

That is not speculation. It is the consensus of the global intelligence community, and it is backed up by empirical data. It is vividly apparent to the entire Nation in light of our military's recent action again Qassem Soleimani. Unlike any other city, New York City was required to undertake an immense response to secure itself based on the action our country took in its own defense.

Now that is nothing new. In fact, these nefarious organizations and networks are in a perpetual state of planning to identify targets and vulnerabilities in New York City, particularly in the event their handlers determine attacking our homeland is in their strategic interest.

Consequently the NYPD is in a perpetual state of alert to identify and neutralize not only those seeking to attack our city but also terrorist scouts that aim to feed intelligence about our city to their managers.

Three such cases come to mind. In 2017 and 2019, sleeper agents working for the terrorist organization Hezbollah were arrested and

charged with scouting in New York City, all 3 arrested by the FBI-NYPD Joint Terrorism Task Force. In each of those cases among the 120 New York City detectives assigned to the JTTF, they were integral parts of those investigations. All 3 were arrested, and in the most recent case, Alexei Saab was arrested only this past July.

One of these suspects looked at Government targets in New York City. One of these suspects looked at critical infrastructure in the United States from Lake Michigan all the way down to the Panama Canal to help with plans to disrupt the global economy. Another looked at tourist locations and landmarks. Obviously, considering that Hezbollah is a designated foreign terrorist organization of some degree of sophistication, that is very concerning.

Since September 11, there have been more than 30 terrorist plots emanating from or against New York City with targets such as Time Square, the Brooklyn Bridge, JFK airport, the New York City Stock Exchange, the subway system, as well as major synagogues and many other sites.

In most cases these plots have been thwarted by the efforts of the NYPD and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force with our team there, using traditional law enforcement techniques, as well as cutting-edge crime fighting and counterterrorism technology.

Since June alone we have uncovered and stopped 4 plots at various stages. Last month in Brooklyn a man, who was radicalized on-line, was arrested after pledging allegiance to ISIS and was in the active encrypted pro-ISIS chat room, posting bomb-making instructions and called for attacks in New York City.

In September, a Hezbollah operative referenced before, Alexei Saab, was arrested, living in New Jersey, charged with terrorism-related crimes, after having conducted extensive surveillance on potential bombing and attack targets in the city such as the United Nations, the Statute of Liberty, Time Square, our airports, and bridges. Specifically he scouted these locations for structural weaknesses so as to inflict maximum damage and chaos.

In August, a Queens man, Awais Chudhary, was charged with attempting to provide material support for ISIS, after having planned a knife attack on the World's Fair marina park next to the U.S. Open of Flushing, Queens. He had gone so far as to purchase a tactical knife, a mask, as well as gear to hold his camera so he could film the attack and post it as ISIS propaganda.

In June, a different Queens man was arrested for obtaining two handguns with obliterated serial numbers to be untraceable so as to carry out an attack on the red steps in Time Square, shooting tourists and New Yorkers as they sat there.

Tragically in recent years, aside from all the attacks we have prevented with our Federal partners and using this Federal funding, we have had 4 attacks that have succeeded in striking our city: An explosion in Chelsea, a white supremacist who murdered an African American man with a sword as part of a practice run for a larger racist plot of murders, a terrorist who drove a truck into the West Side Highway running path, killing 8 people after running over 12, an ISIS-inspired suicide bomber who set off a homemade suicide bomb in the Port Authority Bus Terminal subway beneath the terminal, injuring 3 individuals and himself, only because of technical errors he made in constructing that device.

Freshest in our minds obviously is the rash of anti-Semitic violence that has taken place in and around New York City and the increasing trend of violent bias crimes of all types we have seen Nation-wide.

Last month the NYPD Intelligence Bureau formed a new unit, R.E.M.E., or the Racially and Ethnically Motivated Extremism Unit, which operates as a quasi task force consisting of 25 NYPD personnel detectives, intelligence analysts working side-by-side with members of the New York State police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and in cooperation with the FBI. R.E.M.E. is specifically dedicated to investigating and stamping out violence bias crimes in and around the city before they occur. In under a month since its formation, the unit has opened a dozen investigations into hate-related groups plotting or planning crimes in and around the New York area.

Mr. PAYNE. If you could wrap it up, please.

Mr. MILLER. Excuse me, sir?

Ms. PAYNE. Could you just wrap it up.

Mr. MILLER. OK. In our counterterrorism and emergency preparedness posture broadly, we should not merely imply a reactive posture. We can't operate, have not operated, and will not operate from a position that accepts there is nothing we can do to prevent and attack and instead should merely prepare to respond for the inevitability of it happening.

Our Intelligence Bureau entire mission to undercover plots before they become realized and before people get hurt or killed, that is our mission as we see it.

Now to get to the core issue here, the NYPD relies heavily on Federal funding to strengthen our counterterrorism intelligence and emergency preparedness capabilities including the security of critical transportation, port infrastructure, and other critical infrastructure. The department has received $1.9 billion in counterterrorism funds via the Federal grants since 2002, funding that began after 9/11.

While in recent years the funding has remained relatively stable year to year, the city received $26 million less in 2018 than it did in 2018. So we have seen the funding begin to decline.

Mr. PAYNE. You are going to have to end. We are going to have to cut you off. We are going far over the——

Mr. ROSE. Sir, sir, on behalf of New York City, can I cede my 5 minutes and give Mr. Miller the opportunity to finish his testimony? I won't ask any questions.

Mr. MILLER. Mr. Chairman, I—and I appreciate that, Congressman Rose.

But I am happy to include the rest of this information in the answers to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN J. MILLER

JANUARY 9, 2020

Good morning Chair Payne, Ranking Member King, and Members of the subcommittee. I am John Miller, deputy commissioner of intelligence and counterterrorism for the New York City Police Department (NYPD). On behalf of Police Commissioner Dermot Shea and Mayor Bill de Blasio, I am pleased to testify before your

subcommittee today to discuss the NYPD's counterterrorism and emergency management efforts and the essential role our Federal partnerships and DHS grant funding plays in the NYPD's efforts to secure New York City.

I want to be clear from the outset, and I know that myself and other executives within the NYPD charged with keeping the city safe have made this point before, our ability to prevent or be adequately prepared for catastrophic events is dependent in no small part on our successful collaboration with our Federal partners and the funding which the Federal Government provides our city. Funding that, if eliminated, reduced, or frankly not increased, will result in an erosion of our counterterror and intelligence capabilities, cessation of many of the initiatives that I will talk about today, and a significant limitation of our overall emergency preparedness posture.

Although New York City enjoys the status of being the safest large city in the Nation, we also remain the primary target for violent extremists, both foreign and home-grown, as well as state-sponsored terror networks seeking to use New York City as a pawn in their global terror campaign. That is not speculation—it is the consensus of the global intelligence community and vividly apparent to the entire Nation in light of our military's recent action against Qassem Soleimani. Unlike any other city, New York City was required to undertake an immense response to secure itself based on action our country took in its own defense. That is nothing new. In fact, these nefarious organizations and networks are in a perpetual state of planning to identify targets and vulnerabilities in New York City particularly, in the event their handlers determine attacking our homeland is in their strategic interests. Consequently, the NYPD is in a perpetual state of alert to identify and neutralize not only those seeking to attack our city, but also terrorist scouts that aim to feed intelligence about our city to their terrorist managers. Three such cases come to mind. All 3 sleeper agents working for Hezbollah and scouting New York City. All 3 arrested by the NYPD and its Federal partners since 2017. The most recent, Alexei Saab, arrested this past July.

Since September 11, 2001, there have been more than 30 terrorist plots against New York City, with targets such as Times Square, the Brooklyn Bridge, John F. Kennedy Airport, the New York Stock Exchange, the subway system as well as major synagogues and other sites. In most cases, they have been thwarted by the efforts of the NYPD and the FBI–NYPD Joint Terrorist Task Force utilizing traditional law enforcement techniques, as well as cutting-edge crime fighting and counterterror technology.

Since June alone we have uncovered and stopped 4 plots in various stages. Last month a Brooklyn man who was radicalized on-line was arrested, he pledged allegiance to ISIS, and was active in encrypted pro-ISIS chatrooms, posting bomb-making instructions and calling for attacks. In September, a Hezbollah operative living in New Jersey was charged with terrorism-related crimes after having conducted extensive surveillance on potential bombing targets in the city, such as the United Nations, the Statue of Liberty, Times Square, and our airports and bridges. He specifically scouted these locations for structural weaknesses so as to inflict maximum damage and chaos. In August, a Queens man was charged with attempting to provide material support for ISIS after having planned a knife attack on the U.S. Open in Flushing. He had gone so far as to purchase a tactical knife and a mask, as well as gear to film his attack. In June, a different Queens man was arrested after obtaining 2 handguns with obliterated serial numbers to carry out an attack on Times Square where he planned to target and kill civilians and police.

Tragically, in recent years 4 attacks have succeeded in striking our city; an explosion in Chelsea; a white supremacist who murdered an African-American man with a sword as a "practice run" to a larger plot; a terrorist who drove a truck into the West Side Highway Running Path which killed 8 people; and an ISIS-inspired suicide bomber who set off a home-made explosive device at the Port Authority Bus Terminal subway station that injured 3 individuals and himself.

Freshest in our minds, of course, is the rash of anti-Semitic violence that has taken place in and around New York City, as well as the increasing trend of violent bias crimes of all types we have seen Nation-wide. Last month we formed a new unit within the Intelligence Bureau, the Racially and Ethnically Motivated Extremism (REME) unit, which operates as a quasi-task force consisting of about 25 NYPD personnel working side-by-side with members of the New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania State police and agents from Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. REME is specifically dedicated to investigating and stamping out violent bias crimes in and around the city before they occur and in under a month the unit has opened dozens of investigations. It is the proactive counterpart to our Hate Crimes Unit, which investigates bias crimes after they occur.

Counterterrorism, and emergency preparedness broadly, should not merely imply a reactive posture. We cannot operate, and have not operated, from a position that accepts there is nothing we can do to prevent an attack and instead should merely prepare for the inevitability of it happening and how we should respond. Our Intelligence Bureau's entire mission is to uncover plots before they become realized and people are hurt or killed.

The NYPD heavily relies on Federal funding to strengthen our counterterrorism, intelligence, and emergency preparedness capabilities, including the security of critical transportation and port infrastructure. The Department has received $1.9 billion in counterterrorism funds via Federal grants since 2002. While in recent years the funding has remained relatively steady year-to-year, the city received $26 million less in fiscal year 2018 than in fiscal year 2008.

The most valuable asset we have in the fight against violent extremists is our highly trained and dedicated personnel. This funding has helped staff our Counterterrorism and Intelligence Bureaus, funds our Critical Response Command (CRC), our first line of defense against any natural or man-made disaster, funds our Counter Terrorism Officer (CTO) program, funds increased strategic counterterrorism deployments in the transit system and at our ports, and has enabled the Department to train our entire patrol force in counterterrorism and emergency response techniques when responding to explosive, chemical, biological, and radiological incidents, as well as training to respond to active-shooter incidents so they can engage and end coordinated terrorist attacks. This vital funding also provides critical instruction to officers in life-saving techniques that can be implemented during an on-going attack, in the effort to save lives before it is safe enough for medical personnel to enter an unfolding event.

The grant funding has been no less instrumental in building a cutting-edge technological infrastructure to support the efforts of our personnel. It allows the Department to purchase and install chemical and radiation sensors in and around New York City, to train and deploy chemical and explosive detecting "vapor wake" dogs, and to install hundreds of license plate readers throughout the city. The very same plate readers that were instrumental in locating and capturing the perpetrator of the Hanukkah slaughter in Monsey, New York. Key to all of this is our Federally-funded Domain Awareness System (DAS), which receives data from those chemical and radiological sensors I mentioned, as well as the ShotSpotter sensors, information from 9–1–1 calls, and live feeds from CCTV cameras around the city, and its advanced interface and mapping capability enables us to monitor emerging conditions and threats and to target our response in the wake of a large-scale event.

The NYPD's counterterrorism capabilities are unmatched among municipal police forces, as they must necessarily be, but we can do better. Our ability to adapt and innovate is directly tied to a continuing and increased level of Federal funding. Even as the years between 9/11 and the present day grow, the threat has not diminished. One day in the future, when New York City is no longer under constant threat, I hope and pray that we can have a conversation about how better to use our resources, but that time is not today. We cannot afford to become complacent.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. KING. I was impressed with even Max Rose willing to give up his time so we wouldn't have to listen to him.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, actually the 5 minutes is up. So he just used your time.

Mr. KING. There we go.

Mr. PAYNE. We will now go to questions, and I will start the round.

Mr. Kierce, Mr. Sprayberry, in fiscal year 2019 Jersey City/Newark UASI jurisdiction, funding was cut by $2.7 million and Charlotte UASI jurisdiction was not funded at all in fiscal year 2019. How would the cuts in UASI funding impact emergency preparedness in your respective jurisdictions?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. So, as you know, Charlotte is our—was our UASI and, that being cut, they are not going to be able—they had a cybersecurity initiative that was under way. That won't be funded. They were in the process of purchasing communications equipment. That won't be funded.

They were in the process of buying antiterrorism law enforcement equipment. They won't be able to purchase that. They had some exercises that were planned, active-shooter exercises, cybersecurity exercises. They won't be able to do that.

At communications training week, one of the things that we know from every exercise or every event that we have ever had, communications is a huge issue. So we like to concentrate on bettering our communications.

So the Charlotte UASI has also been ready to deploy assets, not just within the UASI region but State-wide and Nation-wide with the assets they have built.

I just want to reemphasize that they are the home of the 2020 Republican National Convention for us, and we continue to grow. We are the ninth-largest State in the Nation. So it is having a significant effect. Thank you, sir.

Mr. PAYNE. That concerns me a great deal that the Republican convention is there and that is a—they are a very high-risk event and that does not bode well.

Mr. Kierce.

Mr. KIERCE. Chairman Payne, I think one of the biggest issues we are dealing with, I am on the executive board of the Jersey City/Newark UASI. We met on Monday and these discussions included training is a key to being able to combat this domestic terrorism that we are all facing now.

The issues that we see is that with retirement's younger officers coming into play, failure to adequately supply them with the training and the funding necessary for the equipment is critical.

The incident that we discussed earlier in Jersey City and, as my colleague, John, had mentioned, the incident at Monsey only shows you how critical indeed it is here.

We are all seriously looking to make serious cuts which I think would undermine our preparedness levels and leave not only our UASI regions but the whole country vulnerable.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Last week's killing of the top Iranian general by U.S. forces promoted the Iranian propaganda and the government to promise revenge. In 2017, New York's computer system was hacked by two Iranians who kept the system shut down until a $30,000 ransom was paid. It is possible that Iran could execute similar cyber attacks against the United States.

What investments have your jurisdictions made in cybersecurity using DHS grant funding?

Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. We have set up a critical infrastructure committee, as it were, bringing together power, water, banking sectors, cellular communications, all of the systems that are required to work if our response in an emergency preparedness or terrorism situation is to succeed and started to exchange information with them about known signatures, IP addresses, specific malware to make sure that the simple fact that a piece of critical infrastructure is not being maintained to the highest level is not going to be the vulnerability that is going to cause systemic failure.

Our cyber efforts, our cyber analysts, our director of cyber intelligence operations, people integral to this process, the people who

built this process are all paid for by DHS, Homeland Security, and cyber grants.

Mr. PAYNE. OK. Thank you.

Mr. Kierce.

Mr. KIERCE. Pretty much echoing what John says, we, too, were—during the time when Newark was impacted, they tried to impact our communication system. We have taken measures, there again funded through UASI, to put measures in place that prevented that. There again, if, you know, things are on a cutting block, I think you have to take a realistic look at everything that we are paying for and obviously put the money toward preparedness and training and equipment. Possibility something like that could fall by the wayside. I don't think that the cities and the States really have the capabilities or the funding to do so without the support of the Federal partners.

Mr. PAYNE. OK. Thank you.

I will try to constrain my time.

I will now recognize the gentleman from New York, Mr. King.

Mr. KING. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Miller, if I could just focus for a moment on Iran and Hezbollah, obviously the killing of Soleimani has raised that to a different level. As you said in your testimony, this goes back many years, the attempt by Iranian sleepers to penetrate New York.

How confident are you that you have surveillance and knowledge of the main operatives for Iran and/or Hezbollah in New York City or the New York City metropolitan area?

Mr. MILLER. I think between the NYPD's Intelligence Bureau and the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, as well as elements of their counterintelligence squads in New York, we have developed a much better picture of the Iranian network on the ground in the United States and in New York in particular, with the recent arrests, identifying, if Qassem Soleimani pressed the red button on his desk and said events have changed to the point that we need to attack on U.S. soil, who would be on the other end of that button? So I think that is a giant step forward.

But I harbor no illusions, Congressman King, that with our ability to break up that network of sleeper agents collecting target intelligence that the government of Iran, its Quds Force, its IRGC, the machine built by Qassem Soleimani, or Hezbollah itself as a critical key surrogate would not seek to, has not sought to rebuild that network in New York and other cities.

Mr. KING. I think for the purposes of this hearing, the Federal funding you get is essential to this type of monitoring, right?

Mr. MILLER. It is. Our counterterrorism program is built on that Federal funding, and I would make the larger point for my colleagues at the table. If there was any illusion that, while New York is in the bull's-eye of that target, that somehow that kind of terrorism would not visit Jersey City to our west or Monsey to our north in Rockland County or what we have seen with extremism in Charlotte, whether it is things that we don't technically call terrorism but attacks by people like Dylann Roof in a church, in a racist attack, or the ramming attack by a car at a protest.

We need to be looking at this in the broadest sense which is our interest is obviously New York City, and our position as a target,

but our largest interest is that the Homeland Security Grant pie does not shrink because this is a National problem that we are learning turns up in places across the country.

New York depends on those places as well. Many of the plots that targeted New York emanated from outside. We need our partners to be as strong as we are.

Mr. KING. Thank you.

On the issue of anti-Semitism, I guess this is both Mr. Miller and Mr. Masters, if anybody else wants to join in, it was felt all along, rightly so, that the main threats usually come from white nationalism. None of the recent attacks in New York and New Jersey came from white nationalists.

I guess the point I am making is: Are you looking into whether or not this is multifaceted, why there is this increase from so many different quarters? I mean, anti-Semitism was for the most part it was latent, it was there, but never to the extent that it seems to be coming.

It seems to be coming from so many different quarters right now. Is it social media? Are there any reasons you can focus on as to what could be causing it and what steps would law enforcement be taking to see of the entire areas from which this type of anti-Semitism can come?

Mr. MASTERS. Thank you, sir.

So first I would point out that we have seen rises in anti-Semitism across the country. Certainly the events of the last 3 weeks, 4 weeks in New York are of great concern and we have value of the dollars, the value not just of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program but the larger DHS preparedness grants which creates connectivity with law enforcement.

It also creates connectivity and information sharing between law enforcement and the faith-based community so that we know that when we have issues in New York City that there is direct reaction and proaction from the NYPD and our State and local and Federal partners similarly across the river in New Jersey and around the country.

To the substance of the question, the rise, as I pointed out, is across the country and it is from, as you made the statement, Ranking Member King, in your opening remarks, from a myriad of ideologies and motivators.

As my colleague, Mr. Kierce, pointed out, the largest number of extremist attacks in this country where someone was killed that had been undertaken since September 11, 2001, were perpetuated by those affiliated with white supremacists or neo-Nazi ideology.

The last several weeks, though, demonstrates the complex and dynamic threat environment we are in which for the Jewish community means that we need to be prepared for that threat. We need to be prepared for the Islamist extremist threat.

One of the cases that Deputy Commissioner Miller mentioned related to two Iranian nationals that were observed—well, in the criminal complaint noted they had been surveilling a Hillel organization on a college campus, which is a Jewish organization, at the University of Chicago, as well as a Chabad house in the city of Chicago as well.

So we see foreign state, non-state actors, their proxies. Unfortunately, anti-Semitism is nearly as old as the faith and that is a reality that we have to deal with and we have to prepare in a whole community manner and that is what we are working to do.

Mr. KING. Thank you.

Mr. Payne, if I will, you mentioned about—somebody mentioned about the closeness of New York and New Jersey. I would say Mr. Payne's district is closer to New York City than most of the New York Congressional districts are to New York City. So we are stuck in this, Don.

Mr. PAYNE. Absolutely.

I recognize the gentleman from New York, Mr. Rose.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, sir, for being generous after I fell on my sword for Mr. Miller.

Mr. Miller, thank you for being here and thank you for your service to New York and the country.

Twenty-six million-dollar difference between what New York City received in 2008 and 2018, adjusted for inflation. If it had kept on going, New York City would have more than $30 million right now for additional counterterrorism associated spending.

So my question for you is two-fold. No. 1, under your understanding who makes the decision to allocate money to New York City? That is a simple question. No. 2, what would you do with that additional money?

Mr. MILLER. We have the advantage of being a $5.6 billion organization, but I would underscore, like many other Government agencies, 85 percent of that cost is personnel. That is 50,000 people that work for the NYPD. That means that smaller percentage when it comes to crime fighting. There is a reason we are the safest big city in America is what is left for the rest of that investment. That is cars, technologies, and so on.

I think it is notable that when you—you take the theory of this funding which is, after 9/11 there were big numbers because things had to be built out, and the assumption would that be those numbers would get smaller because most of the things have been bought and now it is just an issue of maintaining them.

But when it comes to technology, it becomes outmoded. When it comes to vehicles, they need to be replaced. When it comes to a major capital project like the domain awareness system which started out with 8,000 cameras and that much fiber, is now up to in excess of 20,000 cameras, that makes New York that much safer, that many more license plate readers, that many more data streams that share information with that system and rack and stack it to an inquiry that gives us decision advantage in a crisis.

As that system grows, it doesn't get less expensive. It gets more expensive and the operation and maintenance for a system like that can be in excess of $50 million a year when you consider the cameras, the fiber, the staffing, and so on.

So I think if you combine the idea that as our capability grow, they cost more.

Mr. ROSE. Sure.

Mr. MILLER. I think if you add to that, that the threat is not shrinking, the threat is more complex and more dangerous than it

was 20 years ago. The threat has also not narrowed. It has widened.

As my colleague just pointed out, we now have white supremacist groups, neo-Nazi groups, Black Hebrew Israelites, Moorish Sovereigns——

Mr. ROSE. To point on those——

Mr. MILLER [continuing]. In——

Mr. ROSE [continuing]. On those, I would just like to quickly get your opinion, Mr. Masters' opinion, ways we can help you beyond financing: No. 1, domestic terrorism charge; No. 2, designation of global neo-Nazi organizations as foreign terrorist organizations. How, in the absence of this Federal action, how are your actions constrained and hindered?

Mr. MILLER. Right now if one of our subjects or suspects sends blankets and boots to the Taliban or to ISIS in aid of their fighters, as a designated foreign terrorist organization, they are facing up to 15 or 20 years in prison for material support.

On the other hand, someone who gives material support to a domestic terrorism group like the Atomwaffen division or a violent neo-Nazi organization, white supremacist group, sovereign citizen group, you name it, is not facing the same sanctions, the same penalties, the same ability for law enforcement.

The domestic terrorism statutes on the Federal side are laden with requirements that it needs to involve either a foreign designated group, which doesn't apply to domestic, that it needs to involve weapons of mass destruction, which doesn't apply to an active-shooter plot.

We need to decide on the Federal legislative level whether we are going to draft laws that call a terrorist is a terrorist is a terrorist and they don't have to be from outside of this country——

Mr. ROSE. What about the FTO list to expand to neo-Nazis?

Mr. MILLER. I will cede to Mr. Masters, but I think it fits in the same bucket.

Mr. MASTERS. So I concur with Mr. Miller's assessment and agree entirely. Thank you for promoting this issue, Congressman.

We have seen from our perspective the connectivity between white supremacists and neo-Nazi movements domestically and overseas, whether the individuals are fighting or going to fight in Ukraine as foreign terrorist fighters or they are communicating with other organizations overseas. I think that underlying behavior is what is critical in recognizing why the designation is important.

When we see attacks, whether an individual is in Norway, attacking a camp on Utoya Island, or an Atomwaffen member from California, undertacking—attacking a community or across the United States and they are looking at the manifestos, they are mirroring the manifestos in language, in substance, in style, and you see that replicated in the Christchurch attacks and others in New Zealand, there is global connectivity to these movements.

The branches of the tree have spread out which means that we, as Americans, as a faith-based community are under attack not by an individual but by an ideology and a movement and the tools that we need in the arsenal, as you had promoted, Congressman, allow law enforcement to protect the country and allow our community to be safe and secure.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you very much.

This for the record, and I will close out, that this is what al-Qaeda looked liked in the 1980's and the early 1990's, and it is 100 percent our responsibility to act with the domestic terrorism charge and with an FTO designation.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

I now recognize the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As a brand-new member elected in September, right after the announcement by Homeland Security of the UASI grants in which my hometown, Charlotte, was omitted, I sit here today with some information before me, and I am not sure who to direct the question to, but maybe to Mr. Sprayberry.

Thank you for being here, sir. Thank you for what you do for North Carolina. The paper that I am looking at in front of me indicates that, since 2017, UASI funding has increased from $605 million to $665 million. Some increase in each one of those years.

I understand that—I am trying to discern what the policy direction is that leads to the allocation methodology that results in Charlotte's grant being eliminated. I see that—so none of that money goes to the 16th largest city in America. It appears to me, according to information my staff gathered, that 20 of the 31 cities that received funding were smaller than Charlotte. So if I am trying to intuit that there may be a focus on bigger cities, I can't discern that from that.

Can you explain to me the risk assessment methodology reform that leads to this? Is it an objective or a subjective methodology that leads to these decisions?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. We think it is bit of both, sir. We know that Congress expressed their intent to have the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to fund up to 85 percent of Nationwide risk in the UASI program. It was our understanding, based on the risk assessment for last year, that we hit 85 percent and maybe a couple of decimal points more. But subjectively, when it was briefed to the DHS Secretary, the recommendation was that Charlotte would not be funded.

We had DHS come down and brief us in Charlotte to try to become more informed. We included the folks from Charlotte, as well as from the State, and had a pretty large meeting. We wanted to ascertain just how they reached that decision and, frankly, we couldn't—we couldn't. We are still waiting on some data to be provided by DHS. We feel like these decisions are not transparent and are not done in close partnership with the State. We need to have a good understanding of just what the data is that they are using to inform their decision making.

Mr. BISHOP. Following that up, and we don't have a Department witness here for me to ask. Again, I am new. I probably could ask the Chairman or the Ranking Member and they could probably illuminate, but I will do that off-line. As long as you are here, Mr. Sprayberry, do you have any insight that—I mean, as was pointed out by the Chairman, we have the RNC convention in Charlotte this year, which seems like not the year to eliminate funding for this. But is there some sort of a substitutional thing going on, the notion that the funding, which is substantial, I think, for the event,

that somehow substitutes or that makes it less, the lower priority to fund these things through the UASI grant?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. So we were told that the 2020 RNC was not a factor for their decision. Again, we were told that when the briefing—we were on the line—and when the briefing was made to the Secretary, they made a recommendation that the Charlotte UASI be dropped, and she concurred with it.

Mr. BISHOP. Well, and I would have to just say and comment on this, that I cannot intuit the reasoning behind this decision. Smaller cities receive funding, Charlotte doesn't. Charlotte has a major event that you might think would substitute, but that is not the reason. It is inexplicable to me.

In the less than a minute you have remaining, you made reference to Charlotte—or to North Carolina not having received its CDBG–DR allocation, $168 million for Florence from 2018. Can you speak to that briefly in the seconds we have left?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. Thank you, sir. So it is actually more like $300 million dollars for Florence, and we haven't received our allocation from HUD. I would tell you that, not only have we not received it, we haven't received the *Federal Register* for that. So we can't actually get the money into our coffers so that we can begin to help disaster victims until that money—until the *Federal Register* is printed, and then we know how we can execute what they call a State action plan. Then once the State action plan is completed, it gets approved by HUD, and then we get the approval to begin to spend money.

So I would tell you, you have thousands of disaster survivors from Hurricane Florence that are still waiting on that funding to be dropped into North Carolina's coffers so that we can execute the funding.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Sprayberry.

My time having expired, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, sir.

I now recognize the gentlelady from New York, Ms. Clarke.

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank our Ranking Member, Mr. King, for this very important hearing.

I wish this topic of today's hearing wasn't so timely, but sadly it is. Across our Nation, threat levels are increasing, white nationalist domestic terrorism is on the rise, global terrorism remains a real threat. In light of President Trump's reckless strike in Iraq, we may even need to worry about cyber attacks or other retaliation from Iran.

DHS grants play a critical role in making sure our communities are prepared. But inexplicably this administration has sought to cut preparedness funding for State and local partners, even as the risk level has increased.

Commissioner Miller, thank you for being here. I am very proud of the work that you do on behalf of our city. Last year, while the administration's budget request sought decreases, I fought alongside my colleagues to ensure increased funding for nonprofit security grants in the appropriations package. Shortly after this package was signed into law last December, including our requested funding, we received a stark reminder of why it is necessary, when yet another anti-Semitic attack occurred in the State of New York.

Can you discuss the importance of nonprofit security grants for New York City's synagogues, mosques, and churches? In your experience at NYPD, what are some of the most effective measures grant recipients can take with these funds?

Mr. MILLER. Sun Tzu in "The Art of War" said, he who protects everything, protects nothing. So when you have a counterterrorism force like the CRC, 526 police officers, you have to look at the threat stream literally on a daily basis, sometimes on an hourly basis, and shift those forces around. Between those forces, the Hercules teams, you have seen them out there, Congresswoman, with the long guns, high-profile, but you can't cover 250 mosques, you can't cover 1,500 synagogues, you can't cover every piece of critical infrastructure. So you have to be strategic.

What that means is that locations that are going to be in the threat stream on a regular basis, houses of worship, other critical places, their ability to protect themselves with enhanced security, guarded access, cameras and sensors, that when there is a threat, allows them to document that. Whether it is preoperational surveillance or an incident that occurs, those are law enforcement's best friend, and that is the best layer of protection for a citizenry that in New York City is certainly aware of the threat and invested in it. I believe, you know, Mr. Masters can speak to that with more specificity, but we are entirely supportive of the funding for schools, religious institutions, and other private organizations that find themselves in the crosshairs of the target.

Ms. CLARKE. Very well, thank you.

Mr. Masters, anti-Semitic events in this country are at near-historic levels. A significant increase of violence and threats of violence against religious institutions, particularly in the Jewish community, have been unnerving, the most recent of which was a mass stabbing at a rabbi's house in New York State.

What do you think is driving this trend? In addition to ensuring robust funding for the nonprofit security grant program, what more can Congress do to be helpful in the face of rising anti-Semitism?

Mr. MASTERS. Thank you for the question. What is driving the events is a confluence of issues, but at its root is anti-Semitism. But it is effectuated through individuals that range in ideology and motivation, as Mr. Miller and I have referenced, from the white supremacists and neo-Nazis, to Islamist extremist groups, emergent groups like Moor Sovereigns, Black Hebrew Israelite movements, as well as others; simply individuals. We average 1 mass attack in this country approximately every 2 weeks. The reality is that our Jewish institutions—schools, camps, houses of worship, community centers, senior centers—are targets not just because they are Jewish, but because our community institutions are under attack during these mass events that we see. That is a reality that we have to address.

How we address that, to go back, if I may, to part of your question to Deputy Commissioner Miller, is working with facilities to undertake threat assessments. That is the first step of the grant—the nonprofit security grant, to make yourself eligible for it. Those assessments need to be meaningful. They allow us to work with law enforcement to establish a baseline of where an institution is. Then we need to use these grants to develop a strategy. A camera,

a lock, even window film in and of itself is not a security strategy; it is part of a program. Now that the funds can be used for planning and for training and infrastructure protection, it allows us to work with community institutions to develop that security strategy cooperatively in a coordinative way with law enforcement at all levels, and that is making an incredible difference around our country.

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

I now recognize the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Guest.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today. I want to thank you and the men and women that serve under your direction for the vital service that you provide to our Nation.

In reviewing the materials prior to today's hearing and listening to the testimony today, it is very apparent that these grants are multifaceted, that we are seeking not only to protect our homeland from terrorist attacks, both domestic and abroad, but then as we continue to break that down, we look at trying to make sure that we are prepared to respond to active-shooter situations, that we are prepared to protect our houses of worship, that we are preparing against cyber attacks, that we are responding to natural disasters, that we are collecting intelligence, and that we are deploying cutting-edge technology across our country in the hope to prevent future attacks.

I want to talk very briefly about a couple of those things. First, Mr. Sprayberry, I want to talk to you a little bit about your responses to natural disasters. In your written testimony, in the last 4 years, there have been 3 hurricanes and 1 tropical storm that has struck North Carolina. I know that you have talked a little bit about the importance of this type of grant funding to help, No. 1, prepare you to preposition assets and to be able to quickly respond to that. So can you talk to me just very briefly about the importance this grant funding has had for your ability to respond to a natural disaster and, particularly in this case, the tropical storms and hurricanes?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. Thank you, sir. Thank you for that question. I will tell you that it has played a critical part for us. We have saved over 7,500 individuals during those 4 storms that you were just referencing to. We did that with, not just helicopters, but also with boats, and we did it with training. Now, we didn't purchase all the boats through Homeland Security. We did a lot of that through our State funding, but we used Homeland Security funding for training.

As you know, you can't have a good, well-executed response without having a good communications platform. So we have invested heavily with Homeland Security in our 800 megahertz radio system. That has allowed all of our first responders, no matter what discipline they have, to basically tie into this 800 megahertz program. We call it VIPER. We are able to deploy anywhere in the State for whatever type of disaster and communicate with each other. We routinely practice this through exercises that are funded with Homeland Security funding.

So I can tell you we have regional response teams for hazardous materials that also go out. When we have disasters, these are big

items for us because we have a lot of HAZMAT spills due to the flooding that we have. So I can tell you that the money that we get for everything from communications to search and rescue has been key for our success and the response.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you.

Mr. Miller, let me ask you, very briefly talk a little bit about some of the cutting-edge technology that you have been able to deploy based upon funds received from this grant. You talk briefly about that on page 3 of your written testimony. But I would just ask if you could expand on that very briefly for us.

Mr. MILLER. One aspect of it is the Domain Awareness System. Another aspect of it is the hardware. But I think if you take a look at recent events, specifically when Jersey City came under fire with 2 gunmen firing hundreds and hundreds of rounds at police, NYPD sent an armada of armored vehicles purchased with Homeland Security moneys for just such a terrorist attack to back them up, if needed, as well as bomb technicians, robots, and so on.

But on the more technical end, if you look at the Monsey attack against the home of the rabbi with the 5 people stabbed, once our intelligence bureau people from the NYPD arrived at the scene at Monsey, which is fairly far outside New York City, and began to get data from them, we fed that into the Domain Awareness System. At 11:02 p.m., a DHS-funded license plate reader on the George Washington Bridge ticked to us that the vehicle wanted for that attack had just entered New York City. I was on the phone to our Domain Awareness System night watch, and they began real-time monitoring of the systems with that plate as a vehicle alert under the Royal system, and when it went into the Bronx, it ticked a second license plate reader. They went right on the division radio and said to the cops in the Bronx, this car wanted for multiple stabbings is headed your way. When it turned around, it ticked that there was a U-turn, and it was headed back into the 32d precinct. They went on the radio direct to those units. As I was heading in that direction, police officers came on and said, we have that car. We are going to stop it. Prior to that, when the suspect had gotten out of the car and gone into a store, his movements were recorded by one of the Domain Awareness System's cameras that were funded by the same funds.

Suffice it to say, these tools are used every single day in crime fighting in New York City. It is one of the reasons we have the lowest crime among major cities. But in the event of a terrorist attack, they become a critical layer of our protection. The technology is every bit as important, and the investment and maintaining that as the bomb-sniffing dogs, the bomb squad equipment, and the armored trucks, we use it all, and it needs to be maintained and refreshed, but it is critical.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Miller. I am out of time, but would the panel all agree that these grants have made America safer? Would we all agree with that?

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. Absolutely.

Mr. KIERCE. Yes, sir.

Mr. MASTERS. Yes.

Mr. MILLER. Yes.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, sir.

I now recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Ranking Member, the witnesses for appearing. I would also like to thank the staff. I do so because it is said that great people always rise to the occasion, but the greater people make the occasion, and the staff literally helps make these occasions. They are the greater people, so I thank them.

I would like to share a thought that is rarely expressed. When these horrible acts occur, Black people cringe, because the first thing that comes through their minds is this: Was the assailant Black? We really have suffered so much for so long that this issue plagues us. It is my opinion that, regardless of the race of the person, all people who perform these dastardly deeds based on hate have to be condemned. It doesn't matter what your organization is, how you got started. Maybe your intentions were honorable initially, but they are not now. We have to condemn it, because it is hate. Those who tolerate hate, perpetuate hate. Hate has to be dealt with from the top. The tone and tenor is set at the top.

Mr. Deputy Commissioner, do you agree with the premise that the tone and tenor of your organization is set at the top?

Mr. MILLER. I believe that all organizations are in some manner a reflection of their leadership, yes.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you.

I am confident that not one of you would agree that there were very fine people among the bigots at Charlottesville. I don't believe one of you would agree. If you do agree that there were some fine people, kindly extend a hand into the air.

Let the record reflect that not one hand is in the air. No fine people among those neo-Nazis, white supremacists.

The tone and tenor is set at the top. The Chief Executive Officer of the United States of America, fine people. In Charlottesville, where a woman lost her life to hate. We cannot allow ourselves to tolerate hate from any source. We have to have the courage, the intestinal fortitude to stand against it, regardless as to the source.

It is ironic that the President is cutting these grants, and some of the acrimony that we are experiencing is exacerbated by his commentary, this whole country's in Africa. There is commentary at the top that sets the tone and tenor. That is unacceptable. My hope is that we can change this.

Mr. Bishop, I agree with you, this city ought not have been cut out of this loop. It should not have been. I don't know what I can do to help you, but I will. This is not a partisan issue. It shouldn't happen. Republican National Convention is going there. I want Republicans protected. After all, I have to have someone to argue with. So I want to help.

But I want to make this final comment. We have a bill that passed the House, 290 bipartisan support. It was on the suspension calendar, 290–118, 290 for, 118 against. This bill streamlines the CDBG–DR process, so you don't have to always start at the top and have the money trickle down to various municipalities. It provides those with accounting departments that can handle large sums of money the opportunity to receive some direct funding. It is a very important piece of legislation. It has passed the House. Our chal-

lenge now is to get it through the Senate. Bipartisan ought not be held up. So we have a job to do. I respect you and I support your position.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, sir.

I now recognize—oh, Mr. Crenshaw is gone. Let me follow up.

Now, also, Mr. Kierce, I have been advised that FEMA lowered New Jersey's risk ranking. Can you discuss the impact of this concerning information?

Mr. KIERCE. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. We recently learned that our risk ranking dropped from 7 to 9. Obviously with the tier top 11 UASIs in the United States this is problematic. One of the things that we were told in a recent conference call was that DHS is not including intelligence-gathering information from the FBI, and will not be done so until 2021.

Another thing that is quite vibrant in New Jersey, we have what they call SARs reports, which is basically suspicious activity reports, which are funneled through the local police offices on a State, county, and local level. They are sent down to our regional fusion center, down with the State police in the ROIC. If those reports—and obviously they are sent through the FBI—if those reports are not being included in the analysis by DHS, that is problematic in itself.

The other thing is how do you account for extremist groups that are residing within the UASI region? There again, we are not gleaning this information. The other problem that we have too, it appears that they are not collecting information from the bomb data center, which is another good way to determine where we see additional domestic terrorism incidents. Another problem that we saw was that there is an issue with prosecutions only being counted based on the location of the prosecution on the Federal level.

I think last and probably the most important is, apparently, there was no data call done by DHS in 2019. What data calls do, it allows what we have risk mitigation planners in each one of our 70 UASI counties, to share that information. For instance, one of the things that I found quite troubling, they published a list of major events that is impacting the UASI region. Jersey City was listed for 4 events when, in fact, our documentation proves that we have over 260 major events in 2019 that had at least 1,000 people in attendance. I don't know what the answer is. I think that, you know, they have to take a serious look at how they are currently rating—these ratings are being analyzed and presented. You know, there again, my feeling is that if our rating is lower, there is a potential that they would lower our funding.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you. We definitely have to pose that question to FEMA on how they create their criteria, which, you know, I know in North Carolina, sir, with Charlotte being just totally excluded, it just makes no sense that that is the case. But these are issues that we want to raise with FEMA. So we thank you for putting them on the record.

Mr. King.

Mr. KING. Thank you.

Mr. Miller, just for the record, could you give us the total number of NYPD, both civilian and police officers, who were involved in

counterterrorism intel units, what's the total that are working every day on this issue?

Mr. MILLER. So the total number of the people who do this full-time in the NYPD for a living every day is around 2,000. When you consider 700 and some-odd in intelligence, and equal number, slightly larger, in counterterrorism than the force at the JTTF, than the forces that we task every day from SRG. But I think when you see a crisis like this, we also press a button, and with the advantageous, again, funded with DHS funding, our smartphones can make 36,000 NYPD officers, counterterrorism officers. That means sending out that license plate, sending out that picture, sending out that alert. We are prepared to do that on a regular basis.

Mr. KING. Well, sir, I would just add and I say this to Yvette Clarke, who is a good friend, this committee has worked better when it is bipartisan. I agree with you, I criticize the Trump administration with the grant funds, but this goes back to the start, even the last years with the Bush administration, they were cutting Homeland Security funds. In every year of the Obama administration they were cutting it. I think the problem we have here is the administrations look upon this as a budget issue and they look at it as being static. When this committee was formed, when the Department of Homeland Security was formed, we were talking about Islamist terrorism coming from overseas. We didn't anticipate neo-Nazis, white supremacists, Black Israelites. We didn't count on massive gun attacks.

So all this is added. Unfortunately, also, we weren't counting on all of these climate issues, the flooding. So the budget, either it stays static, it is actually being decreased. Certainly doesn't help Mr. Bishop. It makes no sense on the heel of when the National convention is coming to Charlotte, in addition to everything else, to take them off the UASI list. So what they try to do, in fairness to DHS, is work within a budget. The budget was basically established in 2002 or 2003. So we are trying to make everything fit into that budget.

I think we have to expand the size of the budget. We have to realize that we have, now, problems we didn't anticipate then. Then it was just Islamist terrorism; now Iran is much more of an issue. Not just under President Trump; these arrests are going back to during the Obama administration, of sleeper cells in New York, and the shootings that are going on, the attacks on churches. That was minimal back in 2001, 2002. Now it has fallen under the jurisdiction of Homeland Security.

So I think we should really try a bipartisan effort and not just keep this regional northeast versus the south or anything else. Realize that every area of the country has increased issues, increased problems that come under the scope of Homeland Security, and that we have to find a way to make bipartisan pressure, not just to fight every year to put the money back in the budget to maintain it, but to increase it. Be out front in saying that because, otherwise, we are on defense. Whether it is Obama or Trump. The Senate is about doing massive cuts, and we think we are heroes because we restored the money. Well, the fact is restoring the money is still a cut, and that is the reality.

So I think we should get started early on in every budget year and say that money has to be increased. This is not just not some green eyeshade accounting issue. We are talking about life and death here. None of us wants to go through another 9/11, none of us wants to go through the massive hurricanes and storms that have hit, nobody wants another temple shooting, nobody wants another church attack. To have all of this going on and we are just trying to live within the small budget, it is small in comparison overall, and yet the cost is human life. I mean, now we are very concerned with anti-Semitism because of the last several months, over the last several years. It could be something else coming up. We have to make sure that the police and all of the authorities have the funding they need.

So, again, I am saying this being critical of the Trump administration, as I was very critical of the Obama administration and the Bush administration in the last several years. This is not an accounting issue. It is a life-and-death issue and we have to face up to it.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you. I agree with you wholeheartedly. I was critical of the Obama administration too at the time of the cuts, you know. I don't know how the formulas are made for this, and that is something that we really have to get to the bottom of how the criteria is subjective or not.

You know, the linkage between New York and Jersey City and Newark. I will give you two examples that I am not proud of. The original bombing of the World Trade Center in the lower—when they tried to go low, those terrorists were living in Maplewood, New Jersey, until they did that. The Chelsea bomber ended up running to Linden, New Jersey, after he did his bombing. So these areas are so interconnected, and somehow we have to get the Department to understand the connectivity of this in order to make sure that the funding stays robust for the entire Nation.

With that, I will——

Mr. KING. Chairman, may I have jut one moment?

Mr. PAYNE. Yes.

Mr. KING. I think Mr. Miller would agree also that when you make these arrests in New York, you get intel that affects the whole country.

Mr. MILLER. I could not agree more. I think if you look at the geography of it, the first World Trade Center bomb was built in Jersey City. The 9/11 hijackers did flight training in New Jersey while living in Paterson. The individual who ran over people on the West Side Highway was living in Paterson, New Jersey. The Times Square truck bomber, Faisal Shazad, was from Connecticut. The white nationalist groups that are extending in western New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other places are all a factor in this.

New York City will fight for its share of the pot. I am sure we will do fine. But it is not about taking money from Jersey City or Charlotte. It is what you gentlemen just pointed out; a formula aside, the core here is the pot needs to be bigger for the country.

The Pittsburgh attack, as you mentioned, and others, are telling us that this is an issue that is spreading. Sure, New York is the

top target, but there is nowhere, as we are learning, week by week that is not a target.

Mr. KING. So without mentioning names, I am sure you have come up with other cities where there is a real threat from Hezbollah that are far away from New York City.

Mr. MILLER. We have often said, and I said this recently to our briefing prior to the Soleimani incident, our briefing with the Vice President of the United States at police headquarters, that events in places like Iran can change very rapidly over a period of a week or 10 days. It can change the geopolitical threat picture vis-á-vis a well-funded state actor, and that we have be prepared to ramp up to that. These are real factors that have just demonstrated themselves beyond theory.

Mr. PAYNE. As we see the circumstances, you know, that we fortify in New Jersey and New York, these actors are going to look for points of weakness where they can attack. So it is naturally going to permeate the entire Nation.

With that, Mr. Rose, if you would like another.

Mr. ROSE. I believe Ms. Underwood.

Mr. PAYNE. Oh, the gentlelady from Illinois is here. Well, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Thank you, Chairman Payne.

As we know, one of the Department of Homeland Security's most important tools for securing community organizations is the nonprofit security grant program, the NSGP. These grants help first responders, schools, nonprofits, including houses of worship, defend against terror attacks, and these grants are in high demand. I am so pleased that we just enacted a significant increase in their funding, in large part, thanks to Chairman Thompson's advocacy.

Critically, this additional funding is dedicated to suburban and rural communities like mine in northern Illinois. Communities like mine face a real resource gap in defending against threats of terrorism, and I am working on legislation to address that.

So first to Mr. Masters, Mr. Sprayberry, and Mr. Kierce, when it comes to outreach and engagement with suburban and rural communities, what do you think DHS is doing right and where are potential areas for improvement?

Mr. MASTERS. I think broadly the enactment of the increases in funding, thanks to the Members of this subcommittee and certainly led by Chairman Payne and Ranking Member King, has been instrumental. They are providing guidance and technical support to effectuate those grants. We also know that the need far outweighs even the increase.

Where things have been strong, I think that we have seen great support from the protective security advisers across the country. That said, we believe that there needs to be enhanced resourcing to DHS to allow for more protective security advisers. They are overtasked and underresourced. I also believe that information sharing, which is often done through a complex network engaging the DHS-funded fusion centers, State, local, and Federal law enforcement, is good, but there are ways to vastly improve that.

Deputy Commissioner Miller has referred to the Domain Awareness System. We would do well to have full awareness around our entire domain and learn from the example of the NYPD around the

country. Then I would just simply conclude also increasing funding and encouraging DHS to have the resources to enhance work at the cyber—on the cybersecurity front with State, local, Federal entities, and certainly the nonprofit community. This goes directly to the threat with Iran, particularly for the Jewish community. We are dealing with cyber threats every single day around the country and they know no jurisdictional boundary. So it is absolutely essential.

I will just conclude by saying, we won't know the time and place of the next incident.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. That is right.

Mr. MASTERS. We often hear the phrase, "there is no known direct credible threat." I firmly believe we won't know it until it is walking up the steps at one of our schools, synagogues, mosques, or churches, which means we need to protect the whole homeland and increase the funds, as other Members have said, to do that effectively.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Thank you.

Mr. Kierce.

Mr. KIERCE. I think one of the big things that we have in our UASI group is we cover a broad spectrum. We have the 2 largest cities, Jersey City and Newark in the group, as well as 7 contiguous counties, one of which is Morris, which is primarily a rural area. I think the information-sharing piece, which is shared across the board by all participants with the UASI group, is critical.

You know, we are fighting a terrorist today, domestic terrorism, that operates under the cloak of darkness. They use the world wide web, they use Facebook pages and other internet pages. It is extremely, extremely difficult to determine what they are going to do and when they are going to do it.

One of the things that John had alluded to before, the ANPR systems, we use them exclusively throughout the State of New Jersey, and it is critical information sharing. If we were in a situation where we had to cut back, for instance, on storage capabilities and things like that, these are the projects that would be suffering.

The cameras are another key. Jersey City has expanded our camera system to over 300 cameras, most of which are in inner urban areas, as well as critical infrastructure, and that is key in crime fighting. These are the things that we have to ensure stay in place.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Thank you.

Mr. Sprayberry.

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. Yes, ma'am. I would say that we appreciate the additional funding for the nonprofit grants. One of our challenges is to make sure that our outreach is good and thorough for, you just kind-of mentioned it, about how do we get to all the rural folks.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. That is right.

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. That is difficult. I am not going to sit here and tell you that it is not. So, you know, there is a limited amount of funding, but we want to try to make sure that we are doing that outreach.

We have heard some complaints that the turnaround time on these grants is pretty quick and so for the application. So I was speaking with Mr. Masters before, and we were talking about we need to let our folks know that we know about when these grants

are coming out and so you have got like, you know, 11 months and 2 weeks to begin preparation for your application.

So those are the kind of things that we need to get out there, because if you think about synagogues and churches out in the hinterlands of the State, you know, they might not be on the radar to understand there are grants available for them.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. And that they qualify.

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. And that they qualify.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. That is right. Because a lot of people are aware that there is money and they don't think that it is available to them. They don't know about the protective service advisers. They don't know about the resources that we have funded and put forward to this country to keep our individual communities safe, and folks have no idea.

Mr. SPRAYBERRY. That is communications. So that is still one of our challenges, but we are continuing to work. We typically spend all of our money, but——

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Sure.

Mr. SPRAYBERRY [continuing]. We want to make sure that it is equitably done and that we are addressing the threat per the risk.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Well, thank you so much for the work that you do in each of your jurisdictions and for your organization, sir, and for your testimony. We know how critically important these grants are to supporting vulnerable communities and organizations. I look forward to working with Members of this committee to ensure that their security needs are met by proactively addressing the emerging threats.

Thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

I ask unanimous consent to insert a statement for the record from the Jewish Federation of North America.

Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY CHAIRMAN DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

THE JEWISH FEDERATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

*January 9, 2020.*

The Honorable DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.,
*Chairman, Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Subcommittee, Committee on Homeland Security, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.*

The Honorable PETER T. KING,
*Ranking Member, Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Subcommittee, Committee on Homeland Security, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN PAYNE AND RANKING MEMBER KING: The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) applauds you for holding today's hearing on the importance of the DHS preparedness grants programs, which comes on the heels of multiple mass casualty attacks on faith-based communities in Jersey City, New Jersey, White Settlement, Texas, and Monsey, New York.

Regrettably this past year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated more than 100 threats to faith-based organizations, and jointly assessed with the Department of Homeland Security and National Counterterrorism Center that home-grown violent extremists, foreign terrorist organizations, and domestic hate groups will continue to pose a lethal threat to religious and cultural facilities at home. They especially warned against mass casualty attacks at large gatherings and soft targets that are difficult to detect before they occur. And they are occurring.

Reflecting on the current state of hate in America, and the resultant number of violent attacks on religious institutions and members of religious groups, we are grateful to you, the subcommittee, and full committee Chairman Bennie Thompson, for your strong support for DHS/FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), a program JFNA proposed Congress establish in the post-9/11 environment.

For our community, the genesis of NSGP came into being in reaction to Nationwide FBI warnings in June 2002 that al-Qaeda operatives using fuel trucks might attempt to bomb Jewish Schools or synagogues. Today, these threats continue. In November, 2 men pleaded guilty to acting on behalf of the government of Iran by conducting covert surveillance in the United States on targets that included Jewish facilities, such as places of worship. Additionally, in December, a Hezbollah operative was found guilty on terrorism charges for conducting surveillance on New York City targets that included daycare centers.

With bipartisan, bicameral support, Congress established the NSGP program in fiscal year 2005, to fund hardening and other physical security enhancements of nonprofit organizations deemed at high risk of terrorist attack, and to better integrate their preparedness activities with the broader State and local preparedness efforts. Eligible investments include access controls, barriers, blast-proofing, monitoring and surveillance capability, and cybersecurity enhancements, and related preparedness and prevention planning, training, and exercises.

These investments protect against the threats DHS has identified as of most concern to faith-based facilities, including bombing, arson, small arms, assassination, kidnapping, chemical-biological-radiological agent, and cyber space attacks. These are similar in nature to the physical security enhancements acquired and installed at Government, law enforcement, and military infrastructure in the post-9/11 environment. To this last point, in November, the FBI released a Lone Offender Terrorism Report that found that the primary targets of lone-wolf attacks after Federal Government facilities and law enforcement personnel are religious centers and personnel.

Prior to the establisnment of the NSGP program, there was no coordinated, centralized program that promoted and ensured at-risk nonprofit institutions meaningfully participated in and benefited from Federal, State, and local homeland security efforts. Despite legitimate non-profit threats and concerns, non-profit institutions lacked a seat at the table to participate in meaningful planning, training, target hardening, and other investments provided through the existing DHS/FEMA Preparedness Grant Programs. Essentially, the nonprofit sector was not accepted as a legitimate stakeholder and could not compete for Federal preparedness resources. The NSGP program substantially changed this.

The program is competitive and risk-based, emphasizing the protection of institutions particularly targeted due to their mission, belief, or ideology. It involves a State and local review and prioritization process, followed by a Federal review and recommendations made by FEMA, and final award determinations made by the Secretary of Homeland Security. To date, DHS has made around 4,000 NSGP awards. Reflecting on the awards, FEMA Grant Programs Directorate Assistant Administrator Thomas DiNanno testified before this subcommittee in April 2018 that while a small program, NSGP is significant to its recipients. We agree it is significant and the demand far outweighs available resources. Between fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2019, we estimate that FEMA received approximately 6,160 applications but was able to make only about 2,240 awards.

For many years, the program was limited to the Nation's top-tier high-threat urban areas. However, recognizing that today's risks have no jurisdictional boundaries, Congress, led by Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D–NY), expanded program eligibility in 2018 to include all communities—urban, suburban, and rural. We expect this expansion will lead to even more demand for NSGP resources. After the mass killing at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, FEMA expanded the program's permissible costs in 2019 to include contracted security personnel.

With continued and growing incidents of threats, attempted attacks, and deadly occurrences targeting Jewish communal institutions, and other vulnerable faith and nonprofit communities, JFNA is grateful for your concern and the elevated attention today's hearing will bring to these issues and the importance of the NSGP program. It is our hope that Congress will expand the reach of NSGP through increased funding this session, and to find ways to further promote the inclusion, coordination, and collaboration of the at-risk nonprofit sector with broader Federal, State, and local preparedness and prevention activities and investments.

Sincerely,

ROBERT B. GOLDBERG,
*Senior Director, Legislative Affairs.*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Rose.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Miller, I certainly stand with a sentence of my colleagues that this is a bipartisan failure, the absence of increased Homeland Security funding. You can't say you are tough on terrorism and not fund efforts against it, but certainly, all other levels of government have to do their part. So I am wondering if you could take a few minutes and please speak to your thoughts and sentiments regarding the recent bail reform, the bill was passed by the State, and how it has potentially affected the NYPD's efforts to counter skyrocketing anti-Semitism and the threat of violent crime, to include terrorism.

Mr. MILLER. The recent bail reform laws passed by the New York State Senate is a legislative package that was passed in the dark of night without any consultation on a meaningful level with prosecutors, judges, police, sheriffs across the State. What it means to us in New York City is that an entire laundry list of serious crimes have become expressly prohibited by law for a judge to remand someone or to set bail. Cynics have long talked about the revolving door of justice. This is no longer cynicism; this has become a reality.

Interestingly, no organization has gone further or faster toward criminal justice reform than the NYPD. We have leaned into this by, along with reducing crime, reducing arrests for misdemeanors by 38 percent, by reducing the number of summonses, by reducing stop and frisk by 92 percent, while at the same time seizing more guns, not less, than before, and reducing crime, while reducing enforcement. This was a solution in search of a problem. It is going to make the city less safe, not more safe.

Mr. ROSE. Thank you, sir.

In the wake of what has happened recently, we are certainly more aware or evermore aware of the cyber threat to New York City and the region at large. Can you confirm for the record that all pieces of critical infrastructure, critical infrastructure are right now protected from a cyber attack in New York City?

Mr. MILLER. Cyber is a moving target. Every day that we add a layer of protection of critical infrastructure, somewhere a State actor or a cyber criminal is trying to figure out another way in. So I don't know that there will ever be a State of total protection. But I can say that we have, interestingly, based on a model that was developed in Michigan, put together our critical infrastructure components across all sectors, and we have started to share information truly in a real-time basis. When one entity gets threat information, it is passed to all the entities on the theory that they are all a target.

Mr. ROSE. Is there anything else the Federal Government can do to assist? We are aware that CISA is providing or making access to some grants, obviously pushing down information. What else can we do to help?

Mr. MILLER. I think we are watching the cyber threat expand. We just launched a 4-month study beyond critical infrastructure, which is the cyber threat to National security, the cyber threat to the average Joe and Jane, and what we found was that we lost over $300 million from victims in New York City over the course of 2019 to crimes where we really have to step up to train 36,000

police officers of how to respond to a complex cyber crime when somebody calls the police, training they don't have. We are going to push resources into that, but this is going to be a continuum for many jurisdictions, and we are all going to need help. We are going to need help on the big side and the small side.

Mr. KING. Would the gentleman yield for 1 second?

Mr. ROSE. Sure.

Mr. KING. I will just concur with Mr. Rose, as far as Nassau and Suffolk, also being very concerned about the bail reform. We are facing real consequences already.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. Bishop.

Ms. Clarke.

Ms. CLARKE. I did have one further question, but before I raise that question, and the question is to Mr. Miller, is I would be a bit concerned as well about the bail reform and us using extremes. There are individuals, based on their economics, who have been detained but have not been charged for several years, and it is only because of their inability to pay their bail that they were ultimately held there. We have had some very tragic outcomes as a result of that. I do believe there should be consultation, but I don't believe that we should be throwing the baby out with the bath water.

I definitely believe that judges should have discretion, and there needs to be some more tinkering with this, but there have been some very unjust outcomes based on an antiquated bail system that we have had in the city of New York.

Having said that, I want to get back to you, Mr. Miller, because I know that, in addition to religious institutions, one of the most at-risk targets in New York City is our public transportation network, which we know has historically been the target of international plots. Can you discuss your experience with DHS Transit Security Grant Program? Are there any specific transit security projects NYPD feels should be funded under this program which haven't been?

Mr. MILLER. Madam Congressman, just for the record, the NYPD supports criminal justice reform in the legislative package and bail reform specifically. But it needs to be balanced between all the parts of the criminal justice system, which we feel it was not. But we agree with you on that.

On transit security, as you know, we have an immense transit system. It moves about 6 million people a day. While it also enjoys low levels of crime, we have seen a sustained interest on the part of international terrorist groups in hitting transit as a key part of critical infrastructure. Our last terrorist attack was a man who blew himself up in what he determined correctly was the busiest pedestrian tunnel in the subway system before the Christmas season, and he did that for a reason.

We do receive Federal funding for our transit counterterrorism teams, for our random bag checks, and our scanning for explosives and chemical. But it is—again, our concern is that that funding starts to get smaller slowly, and as that equipment needs refresh and replace, that we continue to focus on that, because it remains a top target.

Ms. CLARKE. Is there something that you think that can be done that we haven't done already in terms of these grants? We talked—I talked specifically about New York City, but transit is ubiquitous across this Nation. Mobility is something that we all strive for, and we are in a metropolitan area where we are all interconnected. So one disruption in one area means, you know, a shutdown in others. Is there something that we have not looked at that you think we need to take a look at?

Mr. MILLER. We have looked at aspects and spent Federal money on things like chemical and biological studies, including how would an agent like anthrax or another biological agent move through the system, given the tunnels and the trains and the winds and so on. We need to look at that further, because the preliminary results open additional questions. We need to look at radiation detection because, beyond the bullets and bombs, there is the dirty agent or distribution device possibility. It is—transit covers the myriad of threats. I couldn't give you a list right now today about the projects that we have on hold because of funding, but I can get it for you and respond in writing.

Ms. CLARKE. Very well. We will look forward to that.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your testimony here today, gentlemen, and your expertise and service to our Nation.

Mr. PAYNE. The gentlelady might know that two Congresses ago, Mr. Rose's predecessor and I did a surface transportation committee hearing, and it is really a critical piece that we need to stay vigilant on.

Mr. MILLER. Absolutely.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I would like to thank the witnesses for their valuable testimony, and the Members for their questions. The Members of the subcommittee may have additional questions for the witnesses, and we ask that you respond expeditiously in writing to those questions.

Pursuant to the committee rule VII(D), the hearing record will be held open for 10 days, without objection.

Hearing no further business, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:52 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

# APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN DONALD M. PAYNE, JR. FOR MICHAEL A. SPRAYBERRY

*Question 1a.* The IT system FEMA currently uses to facilitate grants has been described as labor-intensive and complex by stakeholders; creating an increased burden on users that could cause delays in resources reaching jurisdictions in a timely manner. What has been your experience with using FEMA's IT system?

Answer. Consolidation of systems has been helpful in improving the user experience. However, systems remain cumbersome, inefficient, and are not current based on grant requirements. As an example, for fiscal year 2020 the Homeland Security Grant Program has requirements for an increase in project scope and details, but no updated fields to add that information in the existing system.

*Question 1b.* What efforts has FEMA taken to engage stakeholders and users on their feedback on how to improve the facilitation of its grants?

Answer. Outside of the standard webinars completed by grants staff on how to navigate the grants portal, we have not received any surveys, technical assistance, or solicitation for suggested improvements.

*Question 1c.* Do you have any suggestions on how FEMA could streamline its IT system, as to make the grant facilitation process smoother for stakeholders?

Answer. System consolidation should continue to be pursued with a focus on improved customer service. The system consolidation should be across all FEMA grant programs. Additionally, consolidation of Federal recovery grant programs should also be consolidated into a single portal and single application to be shared across various programs.

*Question 2a.* DHS preparedness grant programs are used to fund efforts to protect State and local jurisdictions from weapons of mass destruction such as biological weapons. How would cuts to the DHS grant programs impact biological preparedness at the State and local jurisdictional levels?

Answer. Cuts in Federal funding for any of the DHS preparedness programs will correlate directly to reduced capability at the State and local level. State and local jurisdictions are reliant on this funding to maintain capacity and build additional capability when it comes to bio preparedness. With the increasing requirements on how States are to utilize Federal preparedness grant funds, States and locals have less flexibility to address the specific jurisdiction needs versus funding what DHS indicates.

*Question 2b.* How reliant are State and local jurisdictions on DHS grant program funding for weapons of mass destruction preparedness?

Answer. As mentioned above, in order to adequately maintain capacity and build capability, specifically for weapons of mass destruction preparedness and response, grant funding is needed for State and local jurisdictions. Significant capabilities have been built since 2001 and reductions have funding have already impacted those abilities. Additional funding cuts would continue to diminish the ability of State and local jurisdictions to adequately prepares and response to protect the public and critical infrastructure.

*Question 3.* As you are aware, the Homeland Security Grant Program suite consists of competitive grants that are evaluated based on risk. Over time, however, the risk has evolved. Do you believe that the current risk formula and methodology FEMA uses to evaluate grant applications accurately reflects the risk? If not, why?

Answer. The current formula does not accurately reflect risk. As discussed in my testimony, one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States, with an increase in population, business, and critical infrastructure, as well as regular major security events, was not funded as a part of the UASI program.

The analysis process is flawed in several ways. First, the States and local jurisdictions have limited-to-no input into the data utilized to evaluate the jurisdiction risk. Second, the data inputs are from a combination of Federal agencies and contractors that the States are not able to review for accuracy. Third, despite the formula, DHS

staff have indicated there is ultimately a level of subjectivity in rankings. Finally, we are provided an opportunity to offer a rebuttal to the risk ranking and as a part of that process we can provide corrected data for State or local mass gatherings or security events. For the fiscal year 2019 funding allocation process, rebuttals were provided, but were not incorporated or updated when funding decisions were made.

DHS is unable or unwilling to provide the data utilized in their risk analysis to identify funding for North Carolina. If we are being provided funding to address identified risk or threat, but then not provided the raw data that quantifies this risk, this does not support State and local jurisdictions in carrying out public safety and homeland security operations. We have discussed with DHS and FEMA that a more collaborative approach and open process needs to be undertaken. Currently, it is a closed process utilizing unclear or inaccurate data that directly impacts funding levels and has resulted in the losses of millions of dollars to North Carolina.

QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE MICHAEL GUEST FOR MICHAEL A. SPRAYBERRY

*Question 1.* In the recently-released National Institute of Justice Report (December 2019) the NIJ stated that the forensic and homeland security communities should consider cross-cutting new technologies, such as Rapid DNA instrumentation for disaster victim identification (Page 131). Have you looked at Rapid DNA deployment in regions? Are there any impediments for deployment of Rapid DNA in your area?

Answer. As a part of the State homeland security planning process, to include allocation of funding, we utilize multi-agency and multi-disciplinary groups and partners to quantify risk, threat, and prioritize activity. Our health and medical and forensic laboratory partners are engaged in these processes and are vital to developing comprehensive program direction.

The funding we are allocated each year to support homeland security programs has continued to decrease or remain at lower funding levels. As a result, our ability to implement specific initiatives, such as Rapid DNA, are impacted due to lower funding levels.

*Question 2.* Congress passed the Rapid DNA Act of 2017 which provided a pathway for new and innovative technology to be utilized for many different purposes, including rapid disaster response. This provides for identification in less than 2 hours and Rapid DNA instruments are certified by the FBI to ensure top-level privacy and security. In California, Rapid DNA instruments were deployed for victim identification for both Paradise Camp Fires as well as for the recent Conception Boat fire incident. This technology provided victim identification in hours and not weeks or months *(https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/09/05/california-boat-fire-victims-officials-id-bodies-dna-analysis/2219546001/)*. Given the response time is of utmost importance during disaster relief efforts, would it be helpful if FEMA's Homeland Security Grant program provided assistance for deployment of Rapid DNA for disaster relief in your region?

Answer. While additional funding as a part of the State homeland security program is needed, it needs to be balanced with specific program or initiative requirements. This grant program already has significant requirements on how funding must be carved out and implemented, with additional onerous requirements for the fiscal year 2020 allocations. At this time, States need to be given more latitude to implement programs based on risk, threat, and hazards, not as dictated by DHS.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN DONALD M. PAYNE FOR W. GREG KIERCE

*Question 1.* DHS preparedness grant programs are used to fund efforts to protect State and local jurisdictions from weapons of mass destruction such as biological weapons. How would cuts to the DHS grant programs impact biological preparedness at the State and local jurisdictional levels?

How reliant are State and local jurisdictions on DHS grant program funding for weapons of mass destruction preparedness?

Answer. The UASI region funds hundreds of thousands of dollars per year of equipment that covers planning for chemical and radiological events. We have phased purchases (e.g. due to the high expense of each piece of equipment, they are split into multiple grant year) for sophisticated detection equipment for our Hazmat Teams that can identify chemical and radiological agents. The detection equipment we purchase for these teams is above and beyond what the counties/cities provide as basic Hazmat equipment and supplies. We have invested in a software/service called PEAC WMD that is a comprehensive database of CBRNE agents. We have also invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into a Radiation Reception Center that requires tens of thousands per year to maintain. More importantly though, we have invested millions and continue to invest heavily in explosives equipment for

our bomb squads. The grant funding is of great importance to the advancement and capabilities of our Hazmat and Bomb Teams in the region.

*Question 2.* As you are aware, the Homeland Security Grant Program suite consists of competitive grants that are evaluated based on risk. Over time, however, the risk has evolved. Do you believe that the current risk formula and methodology FEMA uses to evaluate grant applications accurately reflects the risk? If not, why?

Answer. In terms of the risk formula, we are not provided with all of the details about the elements of the risk formula, so below are suggested changes/additions based on the limited information we are given:

a. FBI Data—Information from the FBI needs be included. We were told that FBI data was not included in the 2020 risk scores.

b. The jurisdiction where an incident occurs should "receive credit" rather than the location where a terrorist was prosecuted.

c. Hate Crime Data should be included.

d. There should be a multiplier if a jurisdiction has had a terrorist attack within the last 5 years.

e. There should be way to include data about potential terrorists/radicals living within a jurisdiction—e.g. Hezbollah.

f. Religious institutions should be included under the soft targets section.

g. Does the soft target percentage still make sense? Should it be increased given the changed threat environment?

QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE MICHAEL GUEST FOR W. GREG KIERCE

*Question 1.* As we all know, my State of Mississippi has been hurt with tornadoes, hurricanes, and flooding from natural disasters. In December, 16 counties were declared disaster areas in response to the severe storms, straight-line winds, and flooding that occurred due to Tropical Storm Olga. Bringing relief and reuniting families in a swift manner are critically important for emergency response teams.

In the recently-released National Institute of Justice Report (December 2019) the NIJ stated that the forensic and homeland security communities should consider cross-cutting new technologies, such as Rapid DNA instrumentation for disaster victim identification (Page 131). Have you looked at Rapid DNA deployment in regions? Are there any impediments for deployment of Rapid DNA in your area?

Answer. There is no impediment to procurement or use. The New Jersey State Police (NJSP) is in the process of using Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding to procure several units which will be regionally available for investigative, both criminal and disaster/victims. This is relatively new technology, but of high value in disaster response, as well as rapidly identifying suspects in criminal matters. By yielding results in under 2 comparisons can be made for both victims and suspects through the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) maintained by the FBI. DNA technology will enhance the ability of both disaster responders and law enforcement to identify victims/suspects quickly and accurately. We fully endorse the addition of Rapid DNA systems to the AEL.

*Question 2.* Congress passed the Rapid DNA Act of 2017 which provided a pathway for new and innovative technology to be utilized for many different purposes, including rapid disaster response. This provides for identification in less than 2 hours and Rapid DNA instruments are certified by the FBI to ensure top-level privacy and security. In California, Rapid DNA instruments were deployed for victim identification for both Paradise Camp Fires as well as for the recent Conception Boat fire incident. This technology provided victim identification in hours and not weeks or months *(https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/09/05/california-boat-fire-victims-officials-id-bodies-dna-analysis/2219546001/).* Given the response time is of utmost importance during disaster relief efforts, would it be helpful if FEMA's Homeland Security Grant program provided assistance for deployment of Rapid DNA for disaster relief in your region?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE MICHAEL GUEST FOR JOHN J. MILLER

*Question 1.* In the recently-released National Institute of Justice Report (December 2019) the NIJ stated that the forensic and homeland security communities should consider cross-cutting new technologies, such as Rapid DNA instrumentation for disaster victim identification (Page 131). Have you looked at Rapid DNA deployment in regions? Are there any impediments for deployment of Rapid DNA in your area?

Answer. The NYPD's interest in the deployment of Rapid DNA technology primarily focuses on its potential use in criminal case work. Nonetheless, technologies such as Rapid DNA represent the future for victim identification in disasters and

emergencies. New York City reoognizes the benefits that this technology can provide. The city's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) responds to disasters and emergencies when fatalities are involved, providing efficient response and safe fatality management services to the city, as well as identifying victims of disasters and returning their remains to families in a timely manner. In 2019, the OCME sought and obtained approval from the NYS Forensic Science Commission and its DNA subcommittee to use the ANDE 6C Rapid DNA System on buccal swabs from reference samples collected for mass disaster and missing person identification.

Consistent with the NYS Executive Law, laboratories seeking to conduct Rapid DNA analysis on any system or sample type must conduct an enhanced performance check and/or validation study subject to review and approval of the Forensic Science Commission and the DNA Subcommittee prior to such use. As mentioned above, the city's OCME completed this process in 2019.

*Question 2.* Congress passed the Rapid DNA Act of 2017 which provided a pathway for new and innovative technology to be utilized for many different purposes, including rapid disaster response. This provides for identification in less than 2 hours and Rapid DNA instruments are certified by the FBI to ensure top-level privacy and security. In California Rapid DNA instruments were deployed for victim identification for both Paradise Camp Fires as well as for the recent Conception Boat fire incident. This technology provided victim identification in hours and not weeks or months *(https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/09/05/california-boat-fire-victims-officials-id-bodies-dna-analysis/2219546001/)*. Given the response time is of utmost importance during disaster relief efforts, would it be helpful if FEMA's Homeland Security Grant program provided assistance for deployment of Rapid DNA for disaster relief in your region?

Answer. While not currently utilized by the NYPD, the NYPD supports the delivery of additional assistance through FEMA's Homeland Security Grant program for deployment of Rapid DNA for disaster relief in our region. As mentioned above, response time is of utmost importance during disaster relief efforts, and the use of such technology can potentially identify victims of disaster sooner and return their remains to families in a timely manner.

Thank you for your questions and the opportunity to comment.