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HBCUs AT RISK: EXAMINING FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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HBCUs AT RISK: EXAMINING FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Thursday, March 17, 2022

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:06 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Carolyn Maloney [chairwoman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Maloney, Norton, Raskin, Khanna, Mfume, Ocasio-Cortez, Tlaib, Porter, Bush, Brown, Davis, Wasserman Schultz, Sarbanes, Kelly, Lawrence, DeSaulnier, Pressley, Comer, Jordan, Hice, Grothman, Cloud, Higgins, Sessions, Keller, Clyde, Mace, LaTurner, Fallon, and Donalds.

Also present: Representative Adams.

Chairwoman MALONEY. [Presiding.] The committee will come to order.

Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any time.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

The Oversight Committee is holding today's bipartisan hearing to examine how the Federal Government can support historically Black colleges and universities in the face of threats to student safety. I want to thank Congressman Byron Donalds for requesting this hearing. Congressman Donalds, I look forward to continuing to work with you to support HBCUs.

Since the beginning of the year, at least 36 historically Black colleges and universities, more than one-third of all HBCUs, have been targeted by bomb threats. At least 18 HBCUs were targeted on February 1, the first day of Black History Month. Just this week, a threat targeting Morehouse College in Atlanta forced students to shelter in place. The threats of violence and intimidation have halted classes across the country and caused campuses to go into lockdown. These threats have also negatively impacted the well-being of students attending HBCUs, causing them to fear for their safety and placing a significant strain on their mental health. In one threatening call targeting Spelman College, an HBCU for women in Atlanta, a caller claimed they had singled out that school for one reason: "There are too many Black students in it."

These reprehensible threats against Black institutions echo the tactics employed by the Ku Klux Klan and others decades ago as they tried to instill terror in the Black community and prevent

Black Americans from gaining their civil rights. And today's threats come amid a rise in hate crimes and violent white supremacy across the country that have targeted the Black community and other racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

HBCUs play a critical role in promoting equity through economic and educational opportunities for Black Americans. They also provide Black students with a safe space to explore their collective identities and cultures. Our beloved former chairman, Elijah Cummings, was a proud alumnus of Howard University and a member of the board of regents at Morgan State University. He explained that HBCUs were created because other schools' racist admission policies had refused to admit African-American students. And he warned, and I quote, "While segregation has ended, structural racism still exists in society today. That is why HBCUs still matter." HBCUs matter and every HBCU student matters. That is why we must do everything possible to support them, especially when they are threatened or attacked. It is imperative that law enforcement agencies prioritize holding perpetrators accountable and working to keep campuses safe, while also pursuing a broader strategy to address the rising tide of violent white supremacy in this country.

President Biden has rightly described the threats of violence against HBCUs as cowardly and un-American, and the Biden-Harris Administration has led a strong multi-agency response to support HBCUs in the face of these threats. Just yesterday, I was proud to join Vice President Harris, a proud HBCU alumna, as she announced the Administration is making new grant funds available for HBCUs targeted by bomb threats. The FBI is actively investigating the bomb threats to HBCUs, which it has called its "highest priority." The Department of Education and Department of Homeland Security have expanded coordination with HBCUs that are providing guidance and tools to help them keep their campuses safe.

I appreciate that all three of these agencies are participating in today's hearing. And I want to remind members that these threats are being actively investigated, so our witnesses will not be able to answer any questions that could compromise ongoing investigations.

Congress also has an important role to play. Last week, I proudly voted for a resolution condemning these bomb threats, led by Representative Adams and Representative Hill, which unanimously passed the House, and Representative Adams has waived on to join us for this meeting today. But we must do more. We need to pass the IGNITE HBCU Excellence Act to increase investments in HBCUs and provide funds that can be used to strengthen campus security. Congress also must pass the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act, which would enhance the government's ability to counter terrorism. Both of these bills are bipartisan.

I also want to recognize Congressman Jamie Raskin for his leadership on these issues as chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. Chairman Raskin has worked tirelessly to confront violent white supremacy and expose its connection to the recent surge of domestic violent extremists. He has also pushed for a national strategy to combat domestic violent extremism which the Biden Administration adopted this year, so I thank him for his

partnership in this hearing. And I now yield to him for an opening statement before I recognize the distinguished ranking member, Mr. Comer, for an opening statement and Mr. Donalds also.

Mr. RASKIN. Sorry about that. Again, thank you, Madam Chair, for calling the important hearing, and thanks to Congressman Donalds for urging us to call the hearing and for his assistance in putting it together.

On January 31 and February 1 of this year, at the beginning of Black History Month, 24 historically Black colleges and universities received threats that bombs were going to explode on campus. Since the beginning of the year, at least 36 historically Black colleges and universities have received 54 different bomb threats. On Tuesday of this week, Morehouse, the famous college in Atlanta, received a bomb threat causing students to have to shelter in place.

The perpetrators behind these acts obviously are targeting Black colleges and universities, seeking to disrupt and terrorize the students, the faculty, the staff, and all of their families. No other colleges or universities have been targeted and disrupted in the same fashion. The FBI announced that the threats made on February 1 are being investigated as racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism and hate crimes. No arrests have yet been made, but we can assume at least some of the threats were animated by hatred of Black Americans and the deliberate intent to terrorize them.

For example, Bethune-Cookman University in Florida got a 20-minute threatening call from a person stating that they were a member of the Atomwaffen Division, a right-wing extremist and neo-Nazi terrorist network, and had planted multiple bombs around the university, and were orchestrating an active shooting. Howard University, which is, of course, just minutes from where we sit, has received four different bomb threats this year alone, something which, I am sure, has terrified not just the students, and faculty, and staff, but their families given the fact that we saw here in Washington at the Capitol itself shocking white nationalist-led violence that engulfed the Capitol on January 6 of last year, and ended up not just in multiple deaths, but in 150 of our police officers being injured, wounded, and hospitalized with broken necks, jaws, vertebrae, lost fingers, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress syndrome, and so on.

The violent threats against the HBCUs are part of a trend, of rising hate crimes against African Americans. Between 2019 and 2020, there was a nearly 50-percent increase in hate crimes committed against Black people in the country. Now there are spiking threats against what have traditionally been safe spaces for African Americans in the country. We can be thankful that none of these threats have yet materialized in a bomb exploding on campus like the ones we saw at Florida A&M in 1999, but that, of course, does not diminish the emotional and psychological trauma inflicted on students and the disruption to university life.

I very much appreciate that the FBI has deemed its active investigation of these bomb threats the highest priority. As the investigation unfolds, I know the FBI cannot answer questions about the status of specific cases, but I would like to know how the FBI is coordinating with the HBCUs and communities of color to address

the rise in hate crimes across the country. I look forward to hearing answers from the FBI as well as from our witnesses, from the Department of Education, and Homeland Security as to how they are working to ensure the safety and security of our students.

Most importantly, I want to thank the student leaders who are testifying before us today: Kylie Burke of Howard, Emmanuel Ukot of Xavier University in New Orleans, and Devan Vilfrard of Florida A&M. We recognize how tough these past few years have been between COVID and now these bomb threats to these formative and critical years in your young lives. We appreciate your strength, your resiliency, and your leadership that you have been showing throughout this crisis.

Madam Chair, I yield back to you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back, and I now recognize Congressman Donalds. Mr. Comer, excuse me. Mr. Comer, the distinguished ranking member of this committee.

Mr. COMER. Well, thank you, Chairwoman Maloney. I want to thank you for holding today's hearing, which Mr. Donalds requested, on the importance of historically Black college and universities and what the Federal Government is doing to respond to a string of recent bomb threats to many of their campuses. HBCUs were established during a dark period of segregation in the United States to provide access to higher education for Black Americans, who were excluded from other institutions. Higher education has historically been an important avenue in this country for Americans to be able to achieve their American Dream, and America's HBCUs have been graduating many of our country's leaders for over 150 years.

These institutions have provided avenues to undergraduate and graduate programs for well over a century, and their alumni have gone on to do great things in both the public and private sectors. All Americans who attend institutions of higher education should be able to pursue their studies in a safe environment. Unfortunately, HBCUs have recently been the subject of a number of bomb threats to their campuses. More than half of the 107 HBCUs in this country have been targeted for bomb threats since the beginning of this year. On top of all the disruptions to campuses caused by COVID–19, these bomb threats have added to the strain on students, faculty, and administrators as yet another hurdle to overcome.

Fortunately, no one has been hurt, and the Federal Government reports that, so far, no viable explosive devices have been found. Nevertheless, these threats must be taken seriously by the government and university administration officials. These threats are incredibly disruptive to campuses, requiring lockdowns, campus closures, and canceled classes while law enforcement clears that potential threat. I look forward to hearing from the lay witness panel today about the impact of these threats to campuses and especially the student body. And I also look forward to hearing from the government panel about what authorities Federal agencies are leveraging to respond to these threats, what they are doing to track down and arrest the individual or individuals responsible, and how the Federal Government is ensuring HBCUs have the resources they need to secure their campuses.

We all deserve to live in a society that affords Americans of all backgrounds an equal opportunity to achieve our American Dream. HBCUs are a crucial thread running through the fabric of the American experiment. I hope this hearing will demonstrate the importance of HBCUs in providing equal opportunities for higher education as well as the Federal Government's role in protecting Americans from the specter of rising violence across this country.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. I now recognize Congressman Byron Donalds for an opening statement and thank him for requesting this hearing.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I would ask unanimous consent to enter the following documents into the record. The first document is testimony from President Larry Robinson of Florida A&M University outlining the severe impacts of bomb threats on the educational environment at FAMU and HBCUs around the country. The second document is testimony from Interim President Powell of Bethune-Cookman University, which illustrates the unfortunate implications of bomb threats at Bethune-Cookman and other HBCUs around the country as well.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to convey my sincerest appreciation to you and your staff for agreeing to hold this hearing today. To begin, over a dozen HBCUs received bomb threats on the first day of Black History Month. In response, I immediately requested this hearing to conduct oversight over the Federal Government's response to these significant threats. Since that time, more than half of the Nation's HBCUs have received bomb threats. Florida is home to four HBCUs. As someone who attended one of those institutions—FAMU, Florida A&M University, I attended from 1996 to 1999, and we are aware of the history of FAMU with a pipe bomb incident that was exploded on FAMU's campus in August 1999—I understand the importance of America's HBCUs and the value they add to the landscape of higher education in the United States.

Every year, more than 250,000 Americans attend an HBCU. These institutions are critical to providing high-quality education to those who attend these institutions. Any attempt to threaten, intimidate, or inflict harm on innocent college students and staff, particularly students and staff at HBCUs, impedes the right to access high-quality educational opportunities. And these threats also prevent students and faculty members from securing their fundamental right to safety while their well-being is being touched.

While I requested this hearing, I hope that this hearing will not display partisan politics, but, instead, that we would be on a fact-finding mission to explore the extent of these threats and how to hold the perpetrators accountable, and how to prevent these from happening again in the future. I am pleased that the chairwoman has worked with my staff and the Oversight Republicans to make this a possibility, and I hope that this hearing today will be fruitful and will shine light on the severity of bomb threats at HBCUs across the country.

I want to thank the chairwoman and her staff for preparing this hearing and ensuring that the perspective of the students who are

here with us in panel one are heard, and that we do everything that we can to get down to the bottom of these threats against these institutions, is heard openly, and that us, not only as the Oversight Committee but also as a Federal Government overall, do everything we can to make sure that these threats are stopped and are not perpetrated any further.

With that, I yield back. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

I now recognize Ms. Mace, who is the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, for her important opening statement, and she is joining us right now.

Ms. MACE. Right now. There we go. Thank you, Chairwoman Maloney, and thank you, Congressman Donalds, for your testimony today.

South Carolina is proud of its citizens who choose to obtain higher education degrees, particularly at our historically Black colleges and universities. And in the state of South Carolina, we have several, including Allen University, Benedict College, Claflin University, Clinton College, Denmark Technical College, Morris College, South Carolina State University, and Voorhees College. We have a proud and rich history of graduates from South Carolina's historically Black colleges universities. They are made up of both two-and four-year degree granting institutions and campuses that also offer graduate studies programs. Six of these HBCUs were founded in the late 1800's, others in the 60's during the Civil Rights Movement in this country, and seven of them have been around for more than 100 years.

And our Nation's history includes regrettable chapters of exclusion and segregation. During that period, HBCUs were established, mostly in southern states, to ensure that Black Americans had access to higher education opportunities like white students. Even after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, these institutions of higher education continue to serve critical roles in ensuring access to educational opportunities, and degrees, and access for all Americans who seek them.

HBCUs are an important piece of the overall fabric of higher education in this country just like our military colleges, like the Citadel where I am a proud graduate from. So it saddens me that today we are having a hearing and we find ourselves having a hearing on a situation where a series of targeted bomb threats are disrupting campus life at HBCUs across the country. They are putting students, faculty, and administrations in fear for their lives, and this is something I know all too well about. When I was the first woman to graduate from The Citadel, the military college of South Carolina, I had threats. I had people threatening to shoot me. I had people threatening to shoot my family. And on my graduation day, there were actually bomb threats at my graduation.

And so I think back to my time in my early 20's when I was going through this process and how a series of targeted bomb threats really disrupted and affected my life and the campus where I was at, at the Citadel. And I think about the added stress of dealing with these kinds of threats, the pressure on our law enforcement to keep these communities safe, the pressures on the students, the concerns and stress on their families and the faculty, es-

pecially after students, and faculty, and the administrative employees of different universities had so much disruption with COVID–19 pandemic closures, et cetera. These threats are entirely and wholly unacceptable. No one should have to live life in fear, especially students who are pursuing their studies and opportunities and seeking to achieve their American Dream.

The FBI has prioritized this investigation, but I am concerned that these threats have been going on for over a month now and there has yet to be an arrest. Those responsible for these crimes deserve swift justice. The penalties for a coordinated campaign of bomb threats designed to instill fear in our students should be severe in this case to send a message that we will not tolerate these kinds of threats, or this kind of conduct, or these kinds of crime in our country. The impact that these threats have on our HBCU communities, it is devastating, and we have got to respond with the full force of the law and the Federal Government to mitigate such threats.

I look forward to hearing from the student witnesses today about their own higher education experiences and how these threats are affecting them and the student bodies that they serve. I also look forward to hearing from the government panel about what they are doing to bring those responsible to justice and hold them accountable to prevent these threats from happening all across the country. Our students and our citizens deserve nothing less.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back. I request unanimous consent that Alma Adams be allowed to participate in this hearing.

Without objection, so ordered.

Now I would like to introduce our first panel of witnesses who are all students at HBCUs. They will be testifying but not answering questions. First, we will have Kylie Burke who is the president of the Student Association at Howard University. Then we will hear from Emmanuel Ukot, who is the president of the Student Government Association at Xavier University of Louisiana. Finally, we will hear from Devan Vilfrard, who is the associate chief justice on the Student Supreme Court at Florida A&M University.

The witnesses will be unmuted so we can swear them in. Please raise your right hands.

Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

[A chorus of ayes.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. Let the record show that the witnesses answered in the affirmative. Thank you.

Without objection, your written statements will be made part of our permanent record.

With that, Ms. Burke, you are now recognized for your testimony. It is very good to see you again. She was at the White House yesterday for this very important ceremony.

Ms. BURKE. Thank you, Chairwoman.

STATEMENT OF KYLIE BURKE, PRESIDENT, STUDENT ASSOCIATION, HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Ms. BURKE. Good morning, and thank you to the committee for providing this platform for HBCU students to share their personal experiences. I would like to first begin by introducing myself and sharing a campus tradition we call the Howard Intro. My name is Kylie Burke. I am a graduating senior, honors political science major, psychology minor, from the Bay Area of California. And while I was born in Hayward, I believe my journey to Howard and sitting in this room here today began in rural Frederica, Delaware.

My mother moved me and my sister back to her childhood hometown just before I started kindergarten. I grew up watching the many sacrifices required of her while she worked to rebuild our lives. She managed multiple jobs, put herself through university as a single mother, and stretched food stamps every week. I have vivid memories of routinely sneaking into her room at night while she was studying and asking to sleep on the far side of her bed, which was more covered with an assortment of highlighters, books, and note cards than decorative pillows. She would occasionally indulge me by letting me attempt to quiz her, but even when she didn't, I always watched in amazement and dreamed of the day I'd be in college myself. However, in all those nights I spent curled by her side dreaming of my future, I would've never imagined the incredible purpose, community, and opportunities waiting for me at Howard University, and the opportunity to contribute to the lasting legacy of our university was simply priceless.

My eagerness to contribute, while powerful, is not unique. Across the country, there are over 100 historically Black colleges and universities developing great minds of a similar fortitude. My family story of resilience, growth, and the important emphasis placed on education is also familiar on HBCU campuses. This spring, many of us walking across the stage will be the first in our families to graduate, the first to pursue graduate degrees and carrying the advance of our family's economic futures. And I understand that everyone does not have the firsthand experience of walking across the yard or speaking with brilliant HBCU students in a classroom. Fortunately, though, the numbers speak for themselves.

While historically Black colleges and universities represent a small fraction of all four-year higher education options for students, we are the embodiment of doing more with less. Eighty percent of the country's African-American judges, 50 percent of lawyers, and 40 percent of engineers are HBCU graduates. Additionally, the Howard Medical School alone produces 50 percent of the country's Black medical doctors, many of whom go on to start their careers in underserved communities where care is needed the most. These institutions yield a societal impact that simply cannot be quantified.

So when bigoted cowardice actors began to issue violent bomb threats to Howard University and dozens of HBCUs at the start of 2022, it was clear that their intentions were to dismantle sacred pinnacles of Black excellence. Unmistakably, the highest concentration of these threats were delivered on the first day of Black History Month. Since February 1, more than half of all HBCUs in the country have received similar threats. However, I am here today to

inform the committee that not only do we condemn all perpetrators attempting to induce fear in our campuses but to also emphasize that our resilience stands as a testament to the fact that no threat, either real or fictitious, could ever stand against our legacy, our community, and our commitment to supporting each other.

Yet and still, the added stress and, in some cases, paranoia students, faculty, and staff have subsequently experienced cannot be understated and has caused universities to react in real time by balancing two crucial approaches: first, the need to protect and secure our campuses, and second, addressing the mental health needs of our communities. As president of the Howard University Student Association, it was my responsibility to aid those efforts as well. Immediately, our team began working to connect students to the information and resources they needed. We coordinated a series of leadership briefings, inviting students and senior leadership overseeing the university's response, including the chief of police, COO, and vice president of student affairs together.

We worked to establish Healing at Howard, a counselor-led session providing a much-needed safe space for students and staff to share their anxieties and experiences with each other. Howard and many other HBCUs also made the important decision to provide mental health days following the threat as well, acknowledging the weight of anxiety that fell on campuses after students were repeatedly woken up with safety alerts, sometimes as late as 2 and 3 a.m. in the morning, constantly leaving us on edge and feeling as if the next threat was all but imminent.

I am both proud and grateful for the attention, unity, and support the HBCU community has demonstrated this year, and at the very same time I recognize that Howard University has a unique privilege of being housed in the Nation's capital with proximal access to Federal agency support and assistance, unlike many of our peers. I share all this today in hopes that this context provides you all with a better, more tangible understanding of what it means to attend an HBCU, what resources are and are not available commonly to our communities.

I also hope that I have been exceedingly clear in defining what is at stake if these institutions are to be neglected, either financially or physically, because when you support historically Black colleges and universities, what you are really supporting is the next generation of Black lawyers, filmmakers, engineers, artists, doctors, and even politicians. You are supporting a better future, one where Black students know there is a safeguarded intellectual and cultural community waiting for them that is protected. And if that is not worth defending, funding, and championing, I am not sure what it is.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back.

I now recognize Mr. Ukot. You are now recognized for your testimony.

STATEMENT OF EMMANUEL UKOT, PRESIDENT, STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION, XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA

Mr. UKOT. Thank you, and good morning. Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, and the other distinguished members of

the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Emmanuel Ukot, and I serve as the president of the Student Government Association at Xavier University of Louisiana. As the only institution in the country that is both Catholic and an HBCU, it was founded in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the sisters of the Blessed Sacrament with a mission of contributing to a more just and humane society by positioning students like me to assume roles of leadership and service across the world.

As you are aware, HBCUs were established in 1837, as early as that, to provide a supportive and stimulating environment for African Americans to pursue higher education. With the designation "HBCU" defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965, Xavier is one of the Nation's 101 HBCUs across the country that seek to cultivate mission-driven and socially responsible students that are prepared to make an impact in our communities. And I hope to share just how important our HBCUs are to students like me across this country. I was asked to testify before the committee today on the importance of our country's HBCUs, share how the recent racially motivated bomb threats made against over 30 HBCUs in the beginning of February 2022 have directly impacted our students thus far, and share a student's perspective on the need for continued Federal support.

When I was in high school preparing for college, I applied to a number of institutions, but it wasn't until a friend of mine got accepted to an HBCU, and she said you have to go. You have to go. She strongly encouraged me. That is when I began to seriously inquire about also attending an HBCU. Soon after, I enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana. Not only did Xavier help me pivot in my career path, but the faculty, the staff, the administrators, and the students challenged me to identify with the University's mission and its purpose and align my aspirations with it. I realized over time that Xavier is more than academics. It is a very rigorous academic program. Xavier is more than its strong student life experience. Xavier is even more than its great athletics program as well. Xavier is a lifestyle. By educating students like me on the mission of this university and curating experiences for us to practice it, we are truly living out the mission and are further developing ourselves to make a positive impact in our communities in the long run, and the same is true for so many other HBCU students across this country.

This is why it is especially painful when dozens of HBCUs across the country, uniquely important environments for students like me, received bomb threats at the start of February 2022, the beginning of Black History Month. And as the news spread and law enforcement began to investigate, the FBI labeled these acts as racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism and hate crimes. On Xavier's campus alone, students were concerned and shared just how anxious they were, especially given the significance of the month we were in. Students approached the SGA regarding the university's counseling and wellness services, and I personally know a number of students who were too nervous and paranoid to attend classes for the remainder of the week.

While this brazen, racially motivated act had an immediate effect on our students, I also saw the potential for a larger issue at hand. In a society where racial tensions have reached boiling points over and over again in the past two years, acts of aggression like this further feed into the racial discord and friction that can affect the future generation even more than the current one. As many of us work to allow room for difficult discussions concerning race and we strive to bring our communities together, hateful acts like this further push people away from such hard, but necessary, discussions and the work that needs to be done. As our HBCUs strive to develop the next socially responsible leaders, these acts are antithetical to that same mission. This is why the support of individuals, organizations, and the Federal Government is necessary to protect our HBCUs.

So with this information, Madam Chairwoman, I would appreciate if you and the committee would consider the following recommendations. First, the FBI needs to bring those who have perpetrated these terroristic calls, instant messages, and online posts to justice. Second, HBCUs need more funding for security to set up a real apparatus. Three, if Congress reauthorizes programs which will seek to harden HBCU campuses and prepare them for these kinds of threats, then Congress should name our HBCUs in that authorizing law and provide report language in the annual appropriations process each year to ensure the departments and agencies make sure funding goes where it is necessary. Also, the mental health impacts, which we have already discussed today, of our student body should be of paramount concern. Our institutions have been approached by the executives from the American Psychological Association, noting that the triple impact of COVID–19, the ongoing racial reckoning in the country, and the bomb threats on HBCU campuses are having real and lasting impacts on our students.

Last, I would like to thank the Senate for passing Senate Resolution 534, a simple resolution co-sponsored by Senators Tim Scott and Chris Coons, and I appreciate the House for addressing this matter as well. The Senate's and the House's response sends a bipartisan and bicameral message that these types of threats against our HBCUs will not be tolerated, and we appreciate you for that.

I hope I have been able to share an intimate perspective of how my university and HBCUs across the Nation cultivate leaders and the change agents of tomorrow. HBCUs have a history of contributing to society and developing civically engaged and responsible leaders. Racially charged acts like the bomb threats are not only an attack on our campus, but they are an attack on the ideals and values of HBCUs and their collective mission. My goal is that my testimony encourages the committee to continue supporting our HBCUs in the face of these threats to our safety and our core values.

It is an honor to present this testimony. I hope the members of the committee will support these recommendations, and I thank the committee for addressing this important issue. For more information and details regarding my remarks, I ask that you read my written testimony submitted for your review. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you for your testimony and your recommendations.

We now identify and call upon Mr. Vilfrard. You are recognized for your testimony remotely.

STATEMENT OF DEVAN M. VILFRARD, ASSOCIATE CHIEF JUSTICE, STUDENT SUPREME COURT, FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

Mr. VILFRARD. Thank you very much. Good morning, everyone. My name is Devan Michael Vilfrard. I am from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I am a graduating senior from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, studying political science with a minor in pre-law, and I serve as the associate chief justice of the Student Supreme Court of Florida A&M University as well as the state president of the NAACP Youth and College Division of Florida.

To Chairman Carolyn B. Maloney, Subcommittee Chairman Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member James Comer, and Congressman Byron Donalds, thank you for the opportunity to provide public testimony for today's hearing, "HBCUs at Risk: Examining Federal Support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities." Thank you for hearing perspectives of a student at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University, otherwise known as FAMU, and perspectives of other agency representatives.

While our modern-day perspectives are essential, I would also like to emphasize that racial violence at HBCUs is a multi-generational occurrence that profoundly impacts the Black community. My family and I are living examples of this multi-generational trauma as two of my cousins have lived experiences of the 1999 pipe bombs that took place at FAMU while they were students from 1998 until 2001 and 2002, respectively.

Historically Black colleges and universities have been a long-standing symbol of support and a path toward success for Black communities across our Nation for generations and will continue to provide this for generations to come. However, bomb threats toward the Black community are, unfortunately, an experience that has shown its face as if it were a generational tradition. Many generations can recount their own experiences of bomb threats and bombs being dropped or detonated on their communities. Despite these foul, yet all too common occurrences of racism traditionally taking place in the United States, HBCUs provide a path toward success and pursuing the American Dream for Black Americans that each and every American longs for.

As a son and grandson of immigrants, I had no clue what opportunities lay ahead of me before I began college. However, if it were not for an HBCU like FAMU, I know for certain that I would not be who I am today. Although I am the first in my immediate family to attend and graduate college, as I will be crossing the stage wearing a cap and gown on April 29, 2022, I have two extended family members who attended FAMU during the pipe bombs in 1999. My cousins, William Sainvil and Wadson Sainvil, were both criminal justice scholars during the bombings. William Sainvil served 10 years under the Broward Sheriff's Office immediately following his graduation in 2001. Wadson Sainvil still serves today in his 19th year on the force as a police sergeant of the Hollywood Police De-

partment in Hollywood, Florida. Both William and Wadson are examples of HBCU excellence. They both graduated with honors and serve the community to make lives around them better through law enforcement, despite facing racial violence in the form of pipe bombs detonated during their time at FAMU.

My cousins, who are children of immigrants like I am, never expected to endure pipe bombs on their campus classes by a racist who did not want Black people to engage in higher education. Instead, they expected to excel on a campus meant for academic excellence and to chase their aspirations of becoming educated and well-rounded Americans. More than 20 years later, my cousins also did not expect their younger cousin to attend the same illustrious university while HBCUs across the Nation, including fellow HBCUs, Florida Memorial University, Bethune-Cookman University, and Edward Waters University, who are experiencing their own round of pipe bomb threats. I, too, now have anxiety about the safety of my three goddaughters, my younger siblings, and my future children as they enroll in HBCUs once their time comes to earn a formal education.

William Sainvil, Wadson Sainvil, and I are all products of success that historically Black colleges and universities produce at every graduation ceremony. HBCUs continue to be federally supported and protected as we endeavor to remove this ongoing tradition of bombing and bomb threats for HBCU students of the future. Racism has impacted minorities for generations, but institutions like Florida A&M University, and those of my fellow panelists at Howard University and Xavier University, and many more, are all ready and willing to propel minorities like us into our Nation so we can make the change that we wish to see.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and provide the perspective of an HBCU student on this important topic.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank all of you for your very powerful testimony, and I want to note that there are other student leaders that have accompanied them. I would like you to stand so we can all recognize your participation, too. And with that, you are excused, and we will welcome the next panel. Thank you.

The entire second panel is remote, so I would now like to introduce our second panel of witnesses. First, we have Ryan Young, who is the executive assistant director in the Intelligence Branch of the FBI. Then we will hear from Sean Haglund, who is the associate director in the Office of Bombing Prevention at the Department of Homeland Security. Last but not least, we will hear from Dr. Michelle Asha Cooper, who is the deputy assistant secretary for higher education and has been delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of the assistant secretary in the Office of Post-Secondary Education at the Department of Education.

The witnesses will be unmuted so we can swear them in. Please raise your right hands. Please raise your right hands. OK.

Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God?

[A chorus of ayes.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. Let the record show the witnesses answered in the affirmative. Thank you.

Without objection, your written statements will be made part of the record.

With that, Mr. Young, you are now recognized for your testimony.

STATEMENT OF RYAN T. YOUNG, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, INTELLIGENCE BRANCH, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Mr. YOUNG. Good morning, Chairman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss current threats to houses of worship and other public spaces in the United States. In these uncertain times, the FBI needs the support and confidence of the American people to secure public spaces where Americans gather every day. The FBI's partnerships with affected communities are both critical to receive threat information and provide training and preventative measures.

The FBI directly reaches out to various groups to hear their concerns, build cultural understanding, and foster trust. FBI headquarters divisions and field offices across the Nation have strong community outreach and work with minority groups, academic institutions, religious, civic, and nonprofit organizations toward crime prevention. The FBI also recognizes that hate crimes remain a concern for communities across the country and collects mandatory reporting from Federal law enforcement agencies. Reporting remains voluntary for state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. The FBI has hate crime statistics from 2020. However, reporting from 2021 will not be available until the fall. Additionally, the FBI created a Multicultural Engagement Council composed of ethnic, religious, and minority leaders to better understand and devise solutions to support these communities.

The FBI's outreach efforts are dedicated to helping individuals and families stay safe, protect houses of worship, fortify academic institutions and workplaces against violent rampages, and raise public awareness to potential acts of terrorism and extremism. Another area the FBI is focusing in on is transnational repression. If our immigrant population are victims of harassment, stalked, assaulted, or coerced in any way, especially by foreign governments, this is a violation of their individual rights and freedoms. The FBI has more information about transnational repression on our FBI.gov site, which also houses the threat intimidation guide that is translated into 28 languages.

Our Office of Private Sector's essential function is to strengthen the FBI's relationships with the private industry and academia to protect the Nation's economy and national security. OPS builds trust among FBI and its partnerships by facilitating one FBI voice and providing a consistent point of contact to promote meaningful dialog. OPS works closely with the operational divisions to communicate threats across different industries, sectors, companies, and public spaces. The past month, in the response to the numerous bomb threats targeting historically Black colleges and universities, OPS partnered with our Office of Partner Engagement and DHS to host the first of several calls to HBCUs across the country. Approximately 1,400 participants were on the first call where we pro-

vided a situational update, points of contact to report additional threats, and resources available to the academic institutions.

Although outreach with houses of worship and faith-based communities falls under the purview of the Office of Public Affairs, our Office of Partner Engagement maintains relationships with security elements in those faith-based communities. OPE works with our faith-based communities on safety initiatives and in order to ensure coordination on matters pertaining to houses of worship. The FBI created an Internal Working group consisting of OPA, our Criminal Investigative Division, and others. The creation of this working group directly led to Director Wray hosting two calls with approximately 30 faith-based community leaders.

The recent incidents involving the Colleyville hostage crisis and the threats to HBCUs underscore the importance of having strong relationships before a crisis. As part of the FBI's response, OPA was able to quickly contact local faith leaders, minority and academic HBCU connections because the FBI had preexisting patterns of engagement and established by our community outreach specialists. In January 2022, OPA met with U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and also conducted partner calls with Congregation Beth Israel to discuss issues related to their protection and security. In these discussions, the FBI shared information about resources developed along with DHS, including detailed guidance and plans to respond to crises, such as active shooter or bomb threats. In February 2022, OPA and OPS hosted a partner call about bomb threats to HBCUs with our national faith-based minority partners. OPA provided FBI resources and active shooter training to protect academic institutions. OPA also held a large webinar planned with the Church of God in Christ to discuss protection of houses of worship.

In closing, houses of worship and HBCUs, along with other public spaces where people gather, require robust protection efforts. These efforts require effective partnerships, and the FBI places a strong emphasis on partnering with community leaders to build trust and share relevant information to protect public spaces and fulfill our obligation to the American people.

Chairman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity to discuss the FBI's efforts to protect HBCUs and houses of worship. I appreciate your continued support and look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. Mr. Haglund, you are now recognized for your testimony. Mr. Haglund?

STATEMENT OF SEAN HAGLUND, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE FOR BOMBING PREVENTION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. HAGLUND. Good morning, Chairwoman Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today on the efforts of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security's Office for Bombing Prevention in response to the recent spike in bomb threats to historically Black colleges and universities as well as the broader community.

Public gatherings and crowded places are increasingly vulnerable to acts of terrorism and targeted violence because of their relative accessibility and large numbers of potential targets. Organizations of all types and sizes, including businesses, critical infrastructure, owners and operators, schools, and houses of worship, face a variety of security risks. DHS is specifically concerned about increasing targeting of the African-American community, houses of worship, and educational institutions.

Since early January 2022, U.S. law enforcement agencies witnessed a marked escalation in the number of bomb threats directed against historically Black colleges and universities across the country, resulting in campus evacuations and lockdowns. These recent incidents reflect the use of bombs and other explosive devices as an enduring tactic intended to threaten and intimidate a specific population or group, and recent data reveals that improvised explosive device-related incidents in the U.S. are increasing. This escalation has also served as a stark reminder that even the threatened use of bombs poses a serious risk to our local communities.

Beyond disrupting lives and creating fear, bomb threats cause harm to commerce and draw on precious law enforcement and first responder resources. Additionally, unsubstantiated bomb threats can create complacency that can lead to increased vulnerability. The Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, or CISA, partners with HBCUs and the local community, collectively, to protect HBCUs and prepare them to respond to bomb threats. CISA's Office for Bombing Prevention helps leverage the collective resources and expertise of DHS to accomplish this critical mission objective.

To reduce risk to the Nation's critical infrastructure, OBP develops and delivers a diverse array of services to enhance awareness of threats from IEDs and to build nationwide counter-IED capabilities. Our efforts focus on engaging these institutions to ensure that they have the information, training, and tools necessary to mitigate risk and to respond to the threat. OBP has initiated outreach in coordination with CISA's protective security advisors to all HBCU institutions targeted by the recent bomb threats to assist with enhancing their security posture and highlight available CISA resources. With a specific emphasis on bombing prevention, this outreach and offer of assistance is being expanded to all HBCUs.

In response to the current threat, OBP has conducted numerous virtual bomb threat management trainings for HBCUs and other stakeholders over the course of the last few weeks, including two customized training sessions in early February, reaching a combined 461 participants. We have also fielded special requests for training through CISA's regional offices. In the coming days, OBP will deliver a customized bomb threat management session followed by a meeting and panel discussion in conjunction with the Atlanta University Center Consortium composed of four member institutions: Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, and Spelman College. This event will be broadcast live and made available to all HBCUs nationally. We strongly encourage other stakeholders across the community to utilize our training sessions either virtually or in person and have personnel ready to respond to additional requests as they come in.

Though the dramatic spike of threats to HBCUs is very concerning, the unfortunate reality is that it is not a novel concept. HBCUs and minority communities receive bomb threats each year. I want to assure the committee and the community that responding to threats to HBCUs is a DHS-wide effort. The Department will continue to ensure security officials from each HBCU have access to the latest threat information through our suite of information-sharing platforms. We will continue to work with each HBCU to ensure their security officials not only have access to that information but are able to operationalize this information in their training, assessment, and security planning efforts. The Administration understands that enhanced information sharing and preparedness is the foundation of our approach to prevent, detect, and mitigate acts of violence.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and for this committee's continued support of the Department. I look forward to continuing to work closely with you and other Members of Congress to keep our community safe and secure. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. Thank you. Dr. Cooper, you are now recognized for your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MICHELLE ASHA COOPER, PH.D., ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ms. COOPER. Thank you and good morning. Good morning, Chair Maloney, Ranking Member Comer, Chair Raskin, Ranking Member Mace, Representative Donalds, and other distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on the Department of Education's response to the ongoing bomb threats to historically Black colleges and universities. Let me begin by stating that we at the Department condemn these acts and believe that these and other forms of violence have absolutely no place in any of our educational institutions.

As you have already heard, since January, more than one-third of our country's HBCUs have received one or more bomb threats. While thankfully no explosive devices have been found, significant trauma and disruption has been done by threatening the safety and security of these campuses. These feelings are not just felt by those on campus but also extend to parents, family members, alumni, and the broader community.

Because of these ongoing threats, including the one that just occurred this week, learning has been disrupted, critical resources have been diverted to the emergency response, and there has been an increased burden on campus mental health systems. These threats have occurred since January, but the majority were concentrated in February, which, as you know, is Black History Month, and Black History Month experienced at least one threat per week at an HBCU. We believe that this timing may be an attempt to exploit tensions in our country and to remind the HBCU community and, by extension, Black people to not take our assumed safety for granted.

It is the responsibility of the government to protect its citizens, which includes those studying and working at HBCUs. At the De-

partment of Education, we have worked in partnership with the other Federal agencies, including the ones who are joining on this panel today, to provide a whole-of-government, multi-agency response. Immediately after the initial threats in January, Education Secretary Cardona and Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas hosted a briefing with more than 40 presidents of HBCUs to share information on grant programs, training resources, and other tools available to strengthen campus safety and security. The White House Initiative on HBCUs is also coordinating a governmentwide response through its Campus Safety and Resilience Cluster led by the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security. In February, the cluster hosted an event that was attended by more than 300 HBCU faculty, staff, and administrators. Leaders and staff from the Department of Education have contacted all targeted campuses.

Secretary Cardona and I have had one-on-one conversations with some students and campus presidents. We also visited several HBCUs to learn firsthand about what is being done to support students and what needs remain unmet. I have also spoken directly with HBCU alumni and community leaders about the effects of these bomb threats. Every college student and every president said that they will not be deterred from providing or receiving an education. We also heard that campus leaders do not have all the resources at their disposal to respond appropriately to the ongoing threats and are not fully aware of the resources available through the Federal Government to assist.

In direct response to these needs, just yesterday, Vice President Kamala Harris, alongside Secretary Cardona, announced that targeted institutions are eligible for Project SERV grants from the Department of Education. These grants provide short-term funding to educational institutions that have experienced a violent or traumatic event, and can be used to help to restore the learning environment. The Vice President also announced a resource compendium that describes a range of services and various roles of different Federal agencies in responding to these threats.

In closing, let me reiterate we condemn these threats and will do our part to support HBCUs and their students. We recognize that there is tension in our larger society that can sometimes spill over into our educational institutions. Whether it is a school shooting, a bomb threat, or other form of intimidation, they have no place in our schools or colleges and will not be tolerated. We are committed to working with each of you and our colleagues from other Federal agencies to protect our campuses and keep our schools safe.

Thank you, and I am pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back, and I thank all of the participants for their testimony today.

I now recognize myself for five minutes for questions.

There is a long history of threats of violence against Black institutions, including churches, schools, and communal spaces. These threats are intended to intimidate and terrorize the people who attend these institutions. So it is critical that the Federal Government does everything, absolutely everything, in its power to respond to these threats and to prevent new ones. I would like to ask

Mr. Young, in addition to investigating the threats, the FBI builds partnerships with public and private sector institutions to increase information sharing and collaboration. How can this effort benefit HBCUs that have been or may be targeted by threats?

Mr. YOUNG. Good morning, Congresswoman. Again, thank you for this question. For us, and I wanted to rely on my comments, this is our highest priority right now. This is run by our Counterterrorism Division. It is being led by the Joint Terrorism Task Force in those offices. The investigation is spread across 31 field offices. And because of challenges with the investigation, we have added on other divisions from the Criminal Investigative Division to our Operation Technology Division, to our Cyber Division, as well as our Weapons of Mass Destruction. To ensure that we can manage the information flow, within two days of the notification of these bomb threats, we hosted our first call with presidents and the security of those institutions to make sure that we could share exactly what was happening, understanding, make sure that they were prepared, understood that their safety was our highest priority, and we wanted to make sure that they remain vigilant. And as we say in our business a lot, if they see something, say something because it is tips from these universities, from people, from bystanders that are our most prominent leads.

One of the other things we have been asked is, is encryption effective. Some of these threats have come in through encrypted platforms, which is challenging for attribution. When it comes to sharing information, it is absolutely vital that we have brought all of our state, and local, and Federal partners into these calls so that they could be aware of any of these issues in their territories. We also directed, by Director Wray, for field office leaders to reach out to those institutions, meet with those presidents, and keep those lines of communication. And us in partnership and lockstep with DHS, we have continued to host calls with our law enforcement partners and make sure that we continue to give adequate updates.

With that, we share intelligence. We share intelligence through not only our 56 field offices, but as well as our fusion centers to make sure that, like I say, going back, that these institutions remain vigilant. We do not want anything to lull into complacency. As my colleague in DHS said, we have not found bombing devices at any of these locations, but we have to treat these the exact same way as the highest priority, and make sure that we got our subject matter experts and bomb technicians responding and conducting a thorough investigation the same way every time.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Well, thank you. I understand we can't ask you anything about your investigations, the progress of them or how you are progressing. So I do want to know, if these threats aren't addressed by law enforcement, is there a risk that these students may be intimidated from attending HBCUs? There could be dire consequences. I guess that is a better question to an educator, so let me ask you this. There has been a lot of allegations of foreign influence in our country. Do you see or suspect any foreign influence in this type of attack that is taking place, and what does the FBI think is causing it? I have been an educator my whole life. I have never seen this ever, ever, ever before. Why is it emerging now? Do you have any sense of what is causing this?

Mr. YOUNG. To the first part of your question, ma'am, we do not see any foreign influence. We do see foreign influence on a lot of our other matters, and that is a very high priority, especially when it comes to elections. The challenge of this, what we have seen, the rise of this has been common with what we have seen in the number of investigations. There is divisive capability. I think there is an understanding that people are online and are radicalizing a lot more, and I think that there is a sense of they want to target and intimidate this community, and that is why this is our highest priority. We do not want to diminish any aspirations of students that are attending those schools, and that is why this remains, as our director said, our highest priority.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you, and we look to future updates. I would like to turn to Dr. Cooper. What steps is the Board of Education taking to ensure that HBCU students, parents, and school administrators understand their security is a top priority of the Federal Government, that the FBI and every other body that has responsibility is turning their attention to helping them?

Ms. COOPER. Thank you for your question. At the Department of Education, we do not tolerate any form of hatred, bias, or discrimination. We, too, are prioritizing our support to historically Black colleges and universities and working alongside other government agencies to do a multi-agency response, to make sure that we are all doing our part to ensure the safety and well-being of these campuses. Earlier this year, actually right immediately after the initial threats came, Secretary Cardona, our Education Secretary, alongside Secretary Mayorkas from Homeland Security, hosted a webinar and briefing where they brought together HBCU leaders to talk about the response and to really hear and listen to what their needs were in contending and dealing with these threats, and to make sure that they were aware that there were government services and supports available to them.

There was also a subsequent briefing that was co-facilitated through our White House Initiative on HBCUs. It was hosted through their Campus Safety and Security Cluster, which is coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice. And the cluster brought together well over 300 participants from HBCU campuses to talk more about what to do in a bomb threat, what the resources are, and things of that nature.

In addition to that, we have done direct outreach to these campuses. Our goal has been to listen to and engage with HBCU leaders and students, and there has been a representative, a leader from the Department of Education who has reached out to each and every campus. In addition to that, Secretary Cardona, our undersecretary, and I have visited several of these campuses to see firsthand how they are contending with the response and to get a sense of what additional resources, what else we would be able to do to support them. In doing that, we heard several things. We heard consistently, just as we heard from the students on the prior panel, that these threats were clearly intended to invoke fear and intimidation. But among the students, among the administrators, among faculty, there is the spirit of strength and resilience, and that was consistent at each and every campus.

We also heard that the mental health needs of students and the campus community have been exacerbated. You have to remember, as you know, we are all living through this pandemic, and the Black and brown communities have been hit really hard by the pandemic. And that was talked about a great deal, especially in our visit we made to North Carolina Central where Secretary Cardona hosted a roundtable on mental health.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The time——

Mr. COMER. Madam Chair?

Chairwoman MALONEY. I know. They are pointing out that my time has long expired.

Ms. COOPER. Oh, OK.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Everything you are saying is very important, but my time has long expired, so I now recognize the gentleman from Florida. I went tremendously over with my time, so I yield as much time as he may need to express and ask the questions that are deeply concerning to him. And thank you for bringing this important issue to our attention. I yield.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, first, what I would like to do, Ms. Cooper, I probably want to give you another 30 seconds to finish your thoughts. I think you are on an important line there. I want to just give you the opportunity to finish your thoughts there.

Ms. COOPER. Sure. I will definitely talk about how we heard about mental health, and also it is really important to know that we heard from campus leaders that the threats highlighted the vulnerabilities in their security infrastructure. They all had emergency plans, but these threats have been helped them to see that they need to modernize, and that all of the resources that they needed at their disposal were not yet available to respond appropriately to these threats.

Mr. DONALDS. Thank you so much. Dr. Cooper, my apologies. I want to obviously recognize your credentials. My next question is actually to Mr. Young and Mr. Haglund. It is kind of a joint question. Obviously, we know that the FBI is still in the process of doing their investigations on these threats. Can you both kind of speak to what is the response time to HBCUs when these threats are issued? How long does it take for your team to get on the ground, do the initial investigations, and kind of give an all clear so that students and faculty can return back to normal operating procedures on campus?

Mr. YOUNG. Congressman, I can start, then I can turn it over to my colleague at DHS. One of the things that we have asked on our calls, and one of the things that we have asked our leaders that are engaging with these, you know, HBCU presidents, is, you know, time is of the essence. The faster they can get that notification of the hateful message, as fast as they can get it to us, time is of an urgency. One, we treat these as they are absolutely a bomb threat with the understanding that there could be a bomb on the other end. These are run by our Joint Terrorism Task Force, but they are run parallel with the state and local law enforcement in those areas. Because it is a bomb threat, we are going to respond with bomb technicians, and there will be bomb technicians with the state and locals, the FBI. The Hazardous Device School trains all

bomb technicians across the United States so that we understand and we look at these threats the same way, and we are interchangeable on the scene.

Once we get to those different locations, it depends on the size of the location if there is any specificity to where the bomb could be or where that threat came in. Because they come in from different measures, we will also be looking to our folks looking at cyber to look to see if we can serve immediately legal process to identify attribution that gives us additional leads. I can't give you an exact timeframe because every situation is going to be a little bit different, but, again, you know, we are treating these as the highest priority, and we are responding with our best assets.

Mr. DONALDS. Mr. Haglund, I don't know if you want to add to that or——

Mr. HAGLUND. Yes, sir, Congressman, if I could please. So through the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's regional field course, we do have the ability to follow that initial response by law enforcement personnel at a very rapid pace. So those regional staff members would come in after the resolution of that immediate crisis to then be able to offer the types of products and services that we develop out of the Office for Bombing Prevention. And so, optimally, we would like to come in prior to an event and provide those training and awareness resources, but certainly after an event, we can come in. We have a range of awareness products, learning instructional type videos, one-on-one, in-person courses where we can deliver onsite. And those courses really serve to then build that preparedness, and resilience, and just awareness of the threat.

And so we have courses that allow folks to identify the difference between unattended and suspicious packages or items, bomb threat search procedures, bomb threat management plan development. And so those regional staff members can follow in very quickly to provide those amplifying resources to build that preparedness for future events. Thank you.

Mr. DONALDS. No. Thank you. I will wrap up here. I just want to really thank, obviously, the witnesses, FBI, CISA, OBP, and, obviously, the Department of Education in your response to HBCUs and these threats. I think it is important. I think it goes without, frankly, saying that we take all of these threats against any university seriously, specifically with what appears to be systematic threats against HBCUs. And we would just implore you guys to continue your investigative efforts to bring those responsible to justice as quickly as possible.

With that, I yield back to the chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back. The gentlelady from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton, is recognized.

Ms. NORTON. I thank you, Madam Chair, for this important hearing, and it is very timely. It comes right when it should. I want to thank all of the witnesses and to especially acknowledge Kylie Burke who attends Howard University here in my district, the District of Columbia.

Among the, at least it looks like, 36 HBCUs that have received bomb threats since the beginning of the year, two of them, Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia, have

been among those who have received threats, and some HBCUs have received multiple threats. Now, we are fortunate that there have been no actual bombings, but every one of these threats have significantly disrupted the lives of students and, of course, of the entire educational institution. Mr. Haglund, is there any way to approach these threats with fewer disruptions?

Mr. HAGLUND. Thank you, Congresswoman. So the resources that we provide out of the Office for Bombing Prevention in many ways specifically look to do that. That consequence mitigation or consequence management is woven throughout those resources, and the resources are really intended to cover the spectrum, from students to faculty to security staff, and weave that common methodology of bomb threat management throughout that entire community. And so in terms of being able to restore activities more quickly if the bomb threat management plan is in effect and people are aware of the steps to take through that plan that can certainly be a key factor, a key tool in minimizing that type of consequence.

And just in general terms, more awareness of the nature of the threat, how these threats can be categorized and responded to, our partnership with law enforcement, that sharing of information, all those elements through the various resources that the Office for Bombing Prevention provides, I think helps restore those services more quickly, alleviate some of the tension involved that you would normally, you know, obviously experience in a bomb threat situation, and meet those needs that you are referring to.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you. Well, we recognize that it takes working together, that the FBI and law enforcement can't do this by themselves. So this question is for Mr. Young. Mr. Young, how can HBCU administrators work with law enforcement to minimize the distraction these bomb threats cause?

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Congresswoman. I would say we have reached out, I think, through those HBCUs. We have worked with the IT departments in those institutions to make sure that we get information as quickly as possible. As you may be aware, the majority of these threats have come in by phone, you know, unfortunately. We are trying to minimize disruption. You know, the students' safety, the safety of those schools is our utmost and highest priority. So, you know, us getting time on target, sharing, you know, our procedures, our requests, making sure that we continue to engage with the presidents at all levels of the school, and the security of that school is vitally important to, you know, minimize as much disruption as possible.

Ms. NORTON. Dr. Cooper, these students have been through a lot with coronavirus, entirely new ways of attending school. Are students missing out because of these disruptions? How detrimental are these shutdowns and class cancellations on the student experience or the educational experience?

Ms. COOPER. Thank you for your question. In terms of are the students missing out, I would say no because the campus communities, they are rallying to support one another. The broader HBCU community, which includes alumni, are doubling down on their efforts to make sure that the students stay supported and that campus leaders are supported. But I do think that we cannot underestimate the dual trauma that has occurred, the trauma that has

been brought forward by the pandemic and now with these bomb threats. And mental health is a serious issue, and I think that we are doing our best to make sure that these institutions have the resources to respond appropriately.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you. My time has expired.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. We now recognize the gentleman from Wisconsin. Mr. Grothman is recognized.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you. Just, you know, playing around on the internet as we do when a new topic comes up, I wasn't aware this was so common. I see that Harvard in their stuff say that they get a several bomb threats a year, and I guess my own alma mater, the University of Wisconsin, had to empty two buildings last year because of bomb threats. I would think that sometimes when threats are called in, they are investigated by local police. Sometimes it comes through the FBI. This is for Ryan Young. How many bomb threats a year do you guys investigate?

Mr. YOUNG. I don't have that data at this moment, sir, but we can give it to you. I will say for us, we have seen, you know, targeted efforts and hate crimes rising over the past couple years. But, again, you know, the American people, their safety, you know, our commitment to their safety is always going to be the highest priority. Going back, I mean, this——

Mr. GROTHMAN. You must have some idea, don't you? A thousand, 50? Are most of them——

Mr. YOUNG. I don't have that, sir. I don't have that number right at this time, sir, but I will get it to you and your staff.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I was asked to help out with a bomb threat a while ago in my district. There was a threat to a grade school, several grade schools around the country actually, and it turned out it was just one person actually issuing the threats from another country. But it was amazing the damage and fear that one person could do, and in that case they did track down someone. You haven't tracked down anybody on these threats yet. So we can kind of understand what is going on here, just guess at the number of threats you have actually tracked down, or give us some examples of people who make bomb threats in the background that the FBI has succeeded in tracking down.

Mr. YOUNG. In regards to this, you know, we are over 59 threats, as has been said earlier. Some of these institutions have received multiple threats. Most of them, the majority, overwhelming majority, are coming by phone. Some of these have come in by encrypted platforms. It is across 31 field offices, but we do have this narrowed down to a group.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I mean, in the country as a whole. I am not talking about separation of these guys yet. How many people a year does the FBI, about, arrest or identify as making bomb threats, and then we can maybe talk about what motivates these people.

Mr. YOUNG. I can get you that. I can get you that number, sir.

Mr. GROTHMAN. You don't know? About 50, 100? You don't know.

Mr. YOUNG. I will say, sir, it is well more than 100.

Mr. GROTHMAN. That you catch. That you catch.

Mr. YOUNG. I can get you the numbers that we catch, but there are a number of bomb threats, and some of them, you know, are never caught, unfortunately.

Mr. GROTHMAN. So you catch about over 100 people a year phoning in bomb threats or emailing in bomb threats.

Mr. YOUNG. I will get you that number, sir. I was prepared for this matter and places of worship and our procedures.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I mean, the one I dealt with, I think it took them about three weeks, and it was a pretty good job when they caught him because it was somebody from another country, which kind of amazed me they were able to catch him, and he made lots of calls or emails. I can't remember what he was doing. But how long does it usually take between the time the threat is called in and you guys do identify somebody?

Mr. YOUNG. A lot of it depends on how it comes in. I would say we get 5,000 tips a day. If we had a bomb threat come in, we would treat that as a threat to life, so it requires an immediate response. We run about 10 to 15 threat to lives a day, and depending on if we can find attribution, if we can find the video, if we have a prosecutor that we understand the, you know——

Mr. GROTHMAN. Right. What I am saying is, you must have participated in some of these in the past.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. When somebody calls in a bomb threat and you find somebody using phone records or whatever, how long is it between when it is called in usually—just think of the ones in your mind that you have dealt with personally—and the person is eventually identified?

Mr. YOUNG. Some we have identified that day. Some have taken much longer because of the complications of how those were called in.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Percentage-wise, how often you find somebody? I mean, do usually expect to find somebody? You must——

Mr. YOUNG. Sir, we are going to treat these things seriously. We are going to give them all high priority, our best resources. I can get you the numbers of——

Mr. GROTHMAN. You have no idea. If I say I got a bomb threat at University of Wisconsin in Madison and we call the FBI, what are the chances you can identify this person? You have no idea. You catch them 10 percent of the time, 60 percent of the time, you have no idea.

Mr. YOUNG. I don't have that information at this time.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Well, thanks.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Raskin, is now recognized.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Haglund, does the fact that none of these bomb threat suspects have been identified yet suggest that it is of a common origin, that there is one person or one group working together and that they are professionals, if you will? Would you expect out of a group of 59 bomb threats, at least for one or two, a handful, to be solved?

Mr. HAGLUND. Congressman, thank you for your question. I would respectfully just suggest that that is more of a law enforcement perspective.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. Mr. Young, can ask you to opine on that?

Mr. YOUNG. Could you repeat the question, sir?

Mr. RASKIN. Well, my question is, if there were 59 bomb threats leveled at the HBCUs and none of the cases have been solved, does that suggest that that somebody is working together, or maybe it is one person, or it is one group of people, and that they have been able to, you know, conceal themselves? Would you expect out of a group of 59 bomb threats, if they were all from different sources, that at least a few of them would have been identified, the culprits?

Mr. YOUNG. Like I say, at present, sir, we believe we have, you know, the majority selected down to one person and a small group. Our concern after that is some maybe copycats, and that is where our investigation is at.

Mr. RASKIN. Got you. You know, there were pipe bombs left at the Republican National Committee and the Democratic National Committee on January 6th as part of the violence that was targeting the Capitol. And I remember talking to one Capitol officer who said the ones who threaten don't bomb and the ones who bomb don't threaten. Is that your experience, that the threats generally are not followed up with actual bombing, but when there is going to be a violent attack, they don't give notice?

Mr. YOUNG. I think consistently with, you know, where the bombs have either, you know, been put together as we saw with, like, the package bombs that targeted a number of Congress, you know, there was not the same warning. And I think that is consistent with what you saw with the devices that were placed at the RNC and DNC.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Young, Ms. Mace spoke of the fact when she was at the Citadel and she was the first woman graduating, or among the first women graduating, that there were, I can't remember if she said a bomb threat or certain kind of violent threats, leveled there. Do you find that these threats come at occasions of public prominence like Black History Month, like the first woman graduate from an institution, and so on?

Mr. YOUNG. I don't have that exact data, sir, but I think for us, we do think with the bomb threats, you know, at the beginning of February at Black History Month, we believe this, and we have treated this as domestic terrorism. We believe that this is, you know, meant to inflict harm, you know, with the African-American population attending those schools. And I would like to add that there was also a number of historically Black churches that have been included in these bomb threats as well.

Mr. RASKIN. Right, and, of course, there has been a history of actual bombs and fires at historically Black churches. OK that is all I have got, and, Madam Chair, again, thanks to you for calling the hearing, and I yield back to you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins, is recognized. Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Madam Chair, for holding this hearing, and I thank the ranking member and my colleagues here today, and the witnesses. Madam Chair, there should be no systemic fear at our colleges and churches in America. That should not be a dynamic that Americans should have to consider on a regular basis. The fear of a terrorist act should just not be a regular condition

that Americans have to consider in our universities, our churches, or anywhere else. So it is completely appropriate that we investigate this, and I very much appreciate that this hearing has been called and that our panelists have come forward.

I would like to dig into the statistics a little bit so that we can put this in perspective. And, Agent Young, I am going to be asking you some specific questions, sir, from your law enforcement perspective. As a police officer myself, I personally responded to bomb threats. Generally, the suspects that you ultimately identify there, if you are able to, are generally more mischievous actors than perhaps should be considered with actual violent intent. But the impact of the bomb threats, especially when we look from a historical perspective within our historically Black colleges, and churches, and universities, you know, that is a disruption. That is the level of fear that we should absolutely investigate in the most aggressive manner possible, and arrests should be made.

So I am going to jump into the numbers here, Agent Young. My own research shows that there is a great swing in reported cases of bomb threats annually: 1,693 in 2014 to 1,670 in 2015, drops to 1,536 in 2016, down to 1,228 in 2017, back up to 1,627 in 2018, and the 2020 numbers are half of that, down to 818. So I suspect that if you dig into the raw data of those statistics, the FBI would reveal that there was a couple of very active suspects that were identified and stopped.

So this year, 59 historically Black colleges and universities have been targeted with bomb threats. That is absolutely unacceptable, and this committee is looking for guarantees from the FBI that there are going to be arrests made. Now, you say that you have identified one particular suspect, a juvenile that you believe is responsible for the majority of these threats, Agent Young. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Congressman. That is consistent with the messages that we have shared with both law enforcement and with the historically Black colleges——

Mr. HIGGINS. OK. So we have identified one disturbed and troubled youngster that is allegedly likely responsible for the majority of this steep increase in threats. So can we expect that the March numbers will be more in line with the 4-, 5-, 6-year trends that we can look at from FBI statistics, because that would help America to be reassured that the FBI has responded effectively and professionally. If you have identified a young man, and surely you have interaction with him, which means he has stopped. So can we expect the March numbers to be back in line with regular annual numbers?

Mr. YOUNG. I can't give you that commitment at this time, sir. I mean, in the end, it is going to——

Mr. HIGGINS. Has the juvenile suspect been interviewed by the FBI?

Mr. YOUNG. I can't give you any updates on that.

Mr. HIGGINS. Well, you say he has been identified. I imagine he has been interviewed. So, Madam Chair, let me just say that we expect guarantees from the FBI that arrests will be made and there should be consequences because we will just not sit idly by and allow American citizens to consider terrorist threats a regular

condition of their daily life, whether it is at universities, churches, work, or anywhere else. We expect the FBI to perform. Thank you, Madam Chair, for holding this hearing, and I yield.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Mfume, is recognized.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Good morning. I want to thank you and the ranking member for convening us on what everybody clearly agrees is a very, very important and timely topic. My thanks also to Chair Raskin, who chairs the Subcommittee on Civil Rights, and to Mr. Donalds for bringing this matter to the committee's attention immediately, and for Representative Adams, who joins us today as a non-committee member, but someone who has spent her entire life in South Carolina and around the country fighting for and advocating on behalf of historically Black colleges and universities.

And may I just say also, even though their presence is not noted here on the program, the organizations that have worked to service historically Black colleges and universities through the good times and the bad times are the United Negro College Fund, NAFEO, and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. We appreciate their work. It has been ongoing and not just evidenced as a result of this issue. And this issue, quite frankly, is one of racial hatred, and I don't know any other way to put that. Hate radio, hate speech, hate crimes, and hate acts have manifested themselves over time and, today, have brought us into the convening of this meeting because it is, again, affecting historically Black colleges and universities. And I say "again" because this is not a new phenomenon, but it is racial hatred, and it doesn't bode well with us, and it doesn't say much, I think, about the country that we love.

It continues to dominate too many aspects of American life, both at home and sometimes even abroad. And it particularly affects, in this case, a race of people who have suffered, endured, and survived two centuries of slavery, oppression, deprivation, degradation, denial, and dis-privilege. And so the fact that we are talking about this says that while we may have come a long, long way, we clearly as a Nation have a long, long way to go.

I want to say to the students, who I hope are still with us, that you gave excellent testimoneys and should be proud of the way you represented your respective colleges and universities. Most of us, Madam Chair, would have never imagined being asked to give testimony before a congressional committee at the age of 23 or 24. And so I hope for these students that the service that they provide today and have provided will serve as a precursor of what I hope will be a life of service and a life of activism that lies before each of them. They are our best and our brightest, and their testimoneys were very much appreciated.

Madam Chair, like several other members of this committee have expressed, I, too, am a graduate of a historically Black college and university. It is Morgan State University, just 40 miles from the capital in Baltimore, founded four years after Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. And for the last 155 years, Morgan State University has been turning out men and women who have contributed to our society, like so many other historically Black colleges and universities. In my instance, not only was I a

graduate, but after I finished completing my graduate work elsewhere, came back, and I have served on the board of regents at that university. I have been on that board for over 32 years now, and for the last 10 years, I have actively served as chairman of the board of regents. So my view on this, my perch, my perspective is one that I think is close enough to be able to, with some level of assuredness, articulate what I think the issue is here in a way that draws me right back to what I said before: it really is about racial hatred.

Dr. David Wilson is the president of Morgan State University. He has given a number of testimoneys on panels like this and on the national media networks. I would like to ask with unanimous consent to have his last official testimony representing this particular issue of these threats at HBCUs entered into the formal record of these proceedings.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Without objection.

Mr. MFUME. Thank you very much. I am running out of time, but I want to underscore what I said earlier. This is not a new phenomenon. For the last 150, 160 years, Black colleges and universities have continued to face an inordinate amount of threats against their operation. And to the extent that this hearing helps to underscore that and publicize it, again, I want to commend you and the other members of this committee for convening us this day. And I yield back any time I have remaining.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Keller, is now recognized. Mr. Keller.

Mr. KELLER. Thank you, Madam Chair, and Ranking Member Comer, and to our witnesses for being here today.

Violence on any level is unacceptable. This topic is especially pertinent now as the conflict in Ukraine continues. However, we here in the United States cannot advocate for peace internationally without also addressing violence within our own borders. In many cities across the United States, violent crime rates are at an all-time high. Murders increased by 25 percent in 2020, disproportionately affecting minorities. Black Americans were 10 times more likely to be homicide victims than their white counterparts. Mr. Young, as a member of law enforcement, what effect do you think defunding and decreasing police forces would have on the already high crime rates?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say we stand with our law enforcement partners. We find them essential to addressing crime. We have seen a number of crimes that have come up over the last couple years. One of those things that we are talking about today, hate crimes, hate crimes with victims, we have a 55-percent increase with African-American-targeted crimes. I can't say that the problem would get any easier with less law enforcement on the streets. We find them absolutely vital to sharing information, ensuring that we get what is happening in their areas, and being able to paint that national threat picture across many of our programs.

Mr. KELLER. And so, again, I guess I would just sort of ask, which sectors of our population would experience the greatest impact from these kind of policies?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say based upon our current statistics, I would say it is, you know, definitely, you know, inner city, high-population areas, areas of low income, you know, areas that have different minorities and diaspora communities that may not understand the threat intimidation, that they have their civil rights, and I think this would be a continued challenge. And I think, you know, with hate crimes, we have mandatory federally required reporting, but we do not have that with the state and locals, and we believe that is a gap. The more accurate data we have, the better conclusions and better decisions we can make with our money, our resources, and our engagement with our law enforcement partners.

Mr. KELLER. So basically, it would be those sectors of our country, those people, those that have advocated for defunding police and so on. It would be those people they profess to care so much about. I guess I just want to go on to the next thing. Threats against any American should not be tolerated, but threats against our students are especially intolerable. Schools should be an environment in which students can grow, learn, and develop their skills, not one that they learn to fear. Mr. Haglund, what can Congress do to ensure the safety of our students across all sectors, including historically Black colleges and universities?

Mr. HAGLUND. Thank you, Congressman. So immediately following the latest round of threats that we have seen, the CISA Regional Field Force prioritized this effort and began a direct engagement with the HBCUs. To date, all the HBCUs have been directly contacted. Fifty-five have responded with specific interest in the resources that the Office for Bombing Prevention can provide. We have scheduled six courses already. As I mentioned in my opening comments, this Saturday we have the training event scheduled with the Atlanta University Center Consortium, and so we have received a tremendous amount of interest in these resources.

And so the resources exist. Obviously, we are surging right now to meet this demand, but I think the biggest thing that we can do, that you can help us with, that our communities can do, is elevate the awareness that these resources exist. They are readily available. These are valuable resources that can be used to elevate preparedness to build the strength and resilience that you have heard from these students, and help support them in dealing with this threat.

Mr. KELLER. Thank you. I appreciate that, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from Michigan, Ms. Tlaib, is recognized for five minutes or as much time as she may need.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you so much, Chairwoman. I really appreciate this hearing. You know, we are only 76 days into 2022, and yet in these short two-and-a-half months, we, of course, have heard that 36 of our amazing historically Black colleges and universities have received bomb threats. Eighteen of those, as we all know, came on the first day of Black History Month. There is no explanation for this other than racist desire to terrorize Black communities across our country. I know the people in my district know this sort of violence and hate all too well. Many of my neighbors and residents are lifelong fighters in our collective struggle for equity, respect,

and peace in our country. The dates may have changed, but the tactics and the racist hate remain the same.

So now, Mr. Young, I understand you cannot answer questions about ongoing investigations into the current bomb threats, but I do hope that you may have some answers for the American people. One question I do have, and, again, I hope that you do understand this, and I will be contacting the Department of Justice in regards to some of these issues. But how many Federal criminal statutes exist right now that covers Federal crimes of terrorism?

Mr. YOUNG. I would have to get you those different——

Ms. TLAIB. From what I know, Mr. Young, it is about 57 different Federal criminal statutes. Fifty-one of them apply to cases the Federal Government designates domestic terrorism. I know Congress already codified the definition "domestic terrorism" in Federal criminal law in 2001. I just hope we are actually having the will and the courage to enforce it. So, Mr. Young, I know one of my colleagues did ask this question, but, you know, I am wondering is it that you don't know the answer or you all are not collecting the information of how many bomb threats were made against HBCUs in 2021, 2020, and 2019.

Mr. YOUNG. I believe that we would collect that data, ma'am. I don't have that data with me at this time.

Ms. TLAIB. I mean, OK. It is ironic because we have a hearing, but I do want our committee members to know whether or not the FBI actually tracks these domestic terrorism acts toward Black colleges, so we will followup. How many arrests were made in connection with the bomb threats against HBCUs during those years, and did any of those arrests result in prosecution, sir?

Mr. YOUNG. I will get you that data, ma'am. I don't have that with me at this time.

Ms. TLAIB. Do we know of any arrests in connection to any of the bomb threats been made?

Mr. YOUNG. I don't know at this time, but I am positive that my organization does.

Ms. TLAIB. You know, Mr. Young, and to all my colleagues, I don't think we need new laws or statutes. What we do need is a will and political courage to take this crisis in our country very seriously. It isn't just protecting our historical Black colleges, you all. It is about communities of color across our country. It is about Black-led churches, Black-led organizations. What this all says to me is what Black and brown communities have been saying to me and for all of us for decades is the FBI, an agency founded by a white supremacist whose headquarters is still proudly named after Mr. Hoover, systematically fails to protect Black and brown communities in our country.

The FBI clearly has a troubled history of failing Black and brown Americans, and it is time that we all work together to change it. After all, as the FBI's failure to pay attention to this issue suggests, our government is indeed failing to arrest people and prosecute them for making bomb threats against HBCUs. Violent racists are effectively being given, right now because we are not doing this, the green light to continue to terrorize my Black neighbors because our government has failed to adequately address this issue. And, Madam Chair, I want to urge the FBI and our committee to

urge the FBI and Department of Justice to take this extremely seriously and use current laws that exist to investigate and prosecute these threats so similar extremists are not emboldened to continue terrorizing Black communities. It may be colleges today, but tomorrow the same violent criminal will go to our local Black churches. We have seen it already.

Again, thank you so much for this important hearing. Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you so much. The gentlelady from South Carolina, Ms. Mace, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for participating in this hearing this morning, which is very important. As I mentioned earlier today when we had the students from historically Black colleges and universities, I want to thank them for being here as well. But I never knew as an 18-year-old going into the Citadel that that experience would prepare me for the job that I have today, serving South Carolina's 1st congressional District and working on a number of civil rights issues.

As I mentioned earlier, as the first woman to graduate from the Citadel, I received many threats on my life, even a bomb threat at my college graduation, and, frustratingly, that threat was never resolved. And so I understand that frustration when you have over 59 bomb threats in the first quarter of this year and no arrests have been made. And I empathize with those students and the colleges and universities that are having to, unfortunately and unfairly, deal with this issue.

I also happen to represent a district in South Carolina's 1st Congressional District that, unfortunately and devastatingly, has dealt with some of these issues that we are broaching today, including six-and-a-half years ago, almost seven years ago when a white supremacist came to Charleston, South Carolina and murdered nine Black church members. I also represent an area where Walter Scott was murdered, and also more recently, just over a year ago, I represent the family of Jamal Sutherland, who was tased to death in his jail cell for missing a bond hearing that he had no constitutional requirement to attend. And so the work that I have done on the Civil Rights Subcommittee on Oversight has been very meaningful and important work, and I want to thank those from the Federal agencies and the students who are here today to answer some of our questions.

I wish we had more data on the increase of threats at HBCUs. It sounds like we don't have that. It sounds like members from both sides of the aisle would like to request that information because I would like to know more on the violent crime statistics, how they have increased during COVID–19, the kinds of threats. But I also would like to know the percentage of threats that have been solved based on these investigations.

And so one of the questions I had for Assistant Director Young today is, from a law enforcement perspective with these threats at HBCUs, whether it is the FBI or not, can you speak to what resources may or may not have been deployed across the campuses when these threats have been happening? What has been done to help communicate these threats clearly to students and the cam-

puses? How did the FBI respond? I would like to hear a little bit more about that, please.

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Congressman. Based upon the different situations, and when they came in, and when those reports came to us of the different threats, most of them, as I said, came through telephone. Some came through email. Some came through——

Ms. MACE. My question is how did the FBI respond, how did local law enforcement respond to these campuses, the students, the administrative officials at these colleges and universities when these threats happened?

Mr. YOUNG. So we engaged with our local law enforcement. Our local law enforcement in those areas respond. Our members of our Joint Terrorism Task Force respond. Our bomb technicians respond. Our Evidence Response Team responds, personnel that can look at doing legal process for potentially subpoenas because these are threat to life situations. We also, like I say, with our local law enforcement, set up a perimeter, making sure that we go through and clear. Like I say, K–9 resources for bomb dogs are brought to those different locations to clear as expedited as we can. We understand this is absolutely disruptive. I mean, we call it terrorism for a reason.

Ms. MACE. Right. And then working with local law enforcement, has that been successful with the threats to the HBCUs? Do you feel like that has gone fairly well? It sounds extensive, but the working together between state, and local, and Federal authorities?

Mr. YOUNG. Absolutely. Our partnerships with state and locals are absolutely so vital to what we do in regards to, you know, the violent crime task force or what we would say our Joint Terrorism Task Force. We bring in a diverse population of Federal and local law enforcement.

Ms. MACE. Thank you. I got two more things I want to address real quick. I have 30 seconds left. As a state lawmaker before coming to Congress, I worked on a law enforcement data bill that would have prevented Dylann Roof from buying a gun and going down and murdering nine Black church members in my congressional district and wouldn't have affected anyone's legal right to own a firearm as a Second Amendment supporter. How important, I mean, is law enforcement data to the FBI in assessing these threats?

Mr. YOUNG. Data is absolutely essential to us being able to make, you know, quick decisions I would say.

Ms. MACE. And one last question, "yes" or "no." Would defunding the police adversely affect Black, and brown, and African-American communities if we were to do that when it comes to these threats? "Yes" or "no."

Mr. YOUNG. It would negatively affect all communities.

Ms. MACE. Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back.

The gentlelady from Florida, Ms. Wasserman Schultz, is now recognized.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you, Madam Chair. Three out of four HBCUs in my home state of Florida were among those recently targeted with bomb threats. For Floridians, these threats brought back painful memories of the 1999 bombings that actually

occurred on FAMU's campus and the long history of terrorism and racially motivated violence targeting the Black community. We owe it to the students, professors, and campus personnel who were traumatized and had their academic pursuits disrupted by these cowardly threats to enhance our response to domestic terrorism. The improvements needed include better Federal and local law enforcement coordination, which really is what prompts and drives my question.

Mr. Young, do you know if the FBI received an inquiry from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement on the threats that were made to Florida HBCUs? And if so, can you broadly describe how you are coordinating with FDLE?

Mr. YOUNG. I am not aware about that piece, but I will say that from my time as a long Florida resident and part of your constituency, I would say the Florida Department of Law Enforcement was a vital partner with the FBI. They were on a number of our task forces as well as the Joint Terrorism Task Force in the three offices in that state.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Would you be able to check specifically on that question for me, please?

Mr. YOUNG. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much. And what level of coordination does the FBI have with campus police departments? Do they have enough resources, and are there ways to further leverage those relationships? Mr. Haglund, if you could help answer that question, but, first, if we could have Mr. Young answer.

Mr. YOUNG. I am sorry, ma'am. I thought that question was going——

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Young, no, that is directed to you.

Mr. YOUNG. Could you repeat?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Sure. What level of coordination does the FBI have with campus police departments, and do they have enough resources, and are there ways to further leverage those relationships?

Mr. YOUNG. So we interact with a number of them. So there are associations that represent those campus police. We also we get them as members of our Joint Terrorism Task Force that we engage with them at the working levels. We engage with them as an assistant director in our Office of Partner Engagement. We do a lot of coordination with those associations, sharing intelligence, ensuring any time there is a threat that is national, we make sure to put those products out broadly so that they can protect campuses and institutions. So we hit them at all levels, ma'am.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. And, Mr. Haglund, actually I have a different question for you. I understand that DHS is now working directly with HBCUs to improve their security procedures. And Florida A&M University, for example, is actively working with DHS to enhance safety and security on campus, including conducting threat assessments, training, and outreach. What other actions can HBCUs take if they want to have a proactive approach in preparation for potential threats?

Mr. HAGLUND. So the way our resources are structured in the Office for Bombing Prevention are to make them as widely accessible as possible and to meet the needs of everyone from administrators,

security professionals, down to everyday citizens and students. And so if you look across the spectrum of the resources that we offer, some are very basic awareness type products: a card that you can keep by your phone to annotate certain types of activity in terms of recording a bomb threat where we could help law enforcement in their investigation. There are short videos that are available online. We have web-based classes. We have virtual instructor-led webinar courses that we deliver, all the way up to the most complex are those instructor-led courses that can be delivered onsite. All those resources are delivered free of charge, so we do have a pretty wide range and spectrum that ranges all the way from the very technical to security professionals down to that more information awareness type.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. OK. Well, coordinating with them and communicating with them to make sure they are aware of that would be incredibly helpful. Last, a signature event in my state is the Florida Classic, the annual game between Bethune-Cookman University and FAMU that stands as the largest Black football game in the Nation. But the Classic is more than a historic rivalry between the Rattlers and the Wildcats. It is a national family and friend reunion that celebrates culture and showcases amazing bands. It has drawn millions, literally, from around the Nation to Central Florida. What unique security challenges arise with these types of large, high-profile events, and what resources can DHS bring to the table to help ensure people continue to feel safe attending the Florida Classic, because I can't stress how important that is for this marquee event in our state. Mr. Haglund?

Mr. HAGLUND. Certainly. So through our regional staff, we have the ability to support special events exactly like that, and it could be things from the Super Bowl across the spectrum to smaller-rated events at the local level. So I would suggest that through that regional staff, they have the opportunity to provide vulnerability assessments, to look at specific facilities, and match the needed resources that aren't maybe exclusive to the Office for Bombing Prevention but cover a wider range of threats. And so through that process, through the engagement with the CISA regional staff, they can match the event directors with the right resources to support the preparedness and planning efforts for those events.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you. Interagency coordination and information sharing with local law enforcement are crucial to addressing hate crimes and extremist threats. Thank you, Madam Chair, for this important hearing.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you, and the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. LaTurner, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. LATURNER. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. Very quickly before I begin with my questioning, I just want to note I have a young lady from Kansas, Alexa Marshall, shadowing me today. I am so glad to have her. And it is spring break, so all four of Suzanne and my children are here, and the youngest is with me this morning. He has been policing very militantly those not wearing green today. I am glad to see most in this room look safe. So I just wanted to welcome them and appreciate your indulgence.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. [Inaudible] inclusion.

Mr. LATURNER. Absolutely. Mr. Haglund, in your testimony, you talked about the Administration's National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism and it will improve the Federal Government's prevention of and response to domestic terrorism. Can you explain the specific ways that this new strategy improves the United States' response to domestic terrorism incidents?

Mr. HAGLUND. Congressman, so I will speak specifically to our role in the Office for Bombing Prevention and would be happy to get back with you with a broader DHS answer. Within the Office for Bombing Prevention, we focus specifically on that space that allows us to target preventing bombing attacks, protecting against, mitigating the consequences of, and then responding to those types of events. And so, as I mentioned before, we do have a fairly broad spectrum of training offerings that we provide. We provide just right around 700 courses per year to 22,000 students, and so we have a pretty high capacity to support counter ID preparedness in that perspective.

Across some of the other functionalities in our office, we host the TRIPwire information sharing website. That is a fantastic resource for us to share critical information that is distilled down to a non-law enforcement sensitive level with our partners so they can maintain situational awareness of the threat. I would say between our TRIPwire website, our courses, probably the best resource for people to reach out to is the CISA.gov/OBP site. That is really a one-stop source to access all of those resources that I have mentioned. And so that is specifically what we do in that counter ID space.

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Haglund, I also serve on the Homeland Security Committee where I have had the opportunity to interact with Director Easterly and discuss cybersecurity issues affecting my district specifically. When she was testifying before the committee in November, I spoke about a business in my district which was the target of a ransomware attack. The cost of halted operations, lost revenue, and the ransom, which they did pay, was a huge burden on that business. Compared to events like these where the impact is more easily identifiable by looking at a business' ledgers, how can determinations be made regarding the economic impact of a bomb threat to a university?

Mr. HAGLUND. Congressman, I appreciate the question. I think that would vary widely depending on the nature of the bomb threat, how the response was conducted. I would be happy to circle back with a more definitive answer. But generally, I would say the economic impact can vary widely depending on how the bomb threat plan is executed at a facility, the scope of any impact, any curtailment of operations, and things of that nature. So I would say it would vary significantly.

Mr. LATURNER. Dr. Cooper, you mentioned in your testimony that you are working with HBCUs to identify specific needs as a result of the current environment, referring to the increased threats. What feedback have you received from these educational institutions on what their needs are at this time?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, thank you for your question. So we have heard consistently that there is a need for mental health supports for their students and their staff, as well as the need to shore up their

infrastructure related to security and things of that nature. And so those are the main things that we are hearing, that the security system is outdated and needs to be modernized, and these ongoing threats have shown us that there is a vulnerability there.

And so in response to that, we have created a resource compendium to make sure that the institutions know where they can go to get access to resources across the Federal Government, a multi-agency effort that is being coordinated along with the others on this panel. So there is a resource compendium that is now housed on the Department of Education's website with the White House Initiative on HBCUs that outlines all of those various resources. And we also are providing Project SERV grants, which are small, one-time grants that can help to restore the learning environment, and those funds could be used to help with some things, such as crisis counselors.

Mr. LATURNER. Thank you. Really quickly, Assistant Director Young, how can we improve the state and local partnership with Federal agencies, like the FBI, to better address these types of threats?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say, you know, participating in the different task forces, going to quarterly threat briefings, making sure that you are engaged with the FBI because we share a lot of intel. We share it at the lowest level so we can make sure that it can go wide across the different departments and municipalities. But engagement with all the Federal agencies is vital at, you know, mitigating these threats.

Mr. LATURNER. Thank you, and thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you very much. Ms. Kelly from Illinois is recognized.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Haglund, the Office for Bombing Prevention was established in response to terrorist events, such as the Oklahoma City bombing. The Bombing Prevention Act of 2022, which would formally authorize your office, was favorably reported by the House Homeland Security Committee two weeks ago. One provision of the act directs the Office for Bombing Prevention to provide, and I quote, "training, guidance, assessments, and planning assistance to the public and private sector to help counter the risk of terrorist explosive threats." How does your office coordinate with HBCUs to plan for and help counter bomb threats?

Mr. HAGLUND. Thank you, Congresswoman, and we are aware of the Bomb Prevention Act and certainly look forward to reviewing that in deeper detail. In terms of our engagement with the HBCUs to prepare for and prevent these types of attacks, I think, as I mentioned, we have a very robust field presence through the CISA architecture, and so we have the opportunity through those field forces to engage at that local level. And they represent a wide range of interests that include physical security as well as cybersecurity, subject matter expertise when they engage with these HBCUs.

And so in terms of preparing for a bomb threat, certainly they have full access to all the resources that we have in the Office for Bombing Prevention, and they are really the conduit between our

headquarters' programs and delivery in the field. And so through their subject matter expertise, their relationships they build at the local level, they are able to match those best resources to the needs and maybe capability gaps that they determine exist at these facilities. And so like we have seen already, several of the HBCUs that we have already engaged with have requested either existing training or specialized training that we can then deliver. And that is how we best meet the needs of those individual institutions.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you so much. In preparing for this hearing, we have heard anecdotally that not all HBCUs have the same security measures in place for preventing and responding to bomb threats. Have you found this, that some are more prepared or have more resources than others? You know, what level would you say the different colleges are at? Are some really good, you know, prepared, and some not so much, some not at all?

Mr. HAGLUND. So, Congresswoman, I think as you would expect, there is a range. I don't have a definitive scope for those, but what we are doing is through this series of engagements that we have coming up over the next several weeks, that will give us an opportunity to make some observations and gather some lessons learned that might shed additional light on that specific question.

Ms. KELLY. And then will you give those colleges and universities that feedback once you find out?

Mr. HAGLUND. Exactly, and that is our best opportunity then to match those resources where we see where there might be a capability gap or lack of resources.

Ms. KELLY. The FBI recently reported that bomb threats are occurring at an unprecedented rate in 2022 with at least 57 organizations, including, as was mentioned before, houses of worship and HBCUs being targeted. Mr. Young, what can you tell us about the increase in bomb threats this year and the types of entities being targeted and why do you think that is? Is there anything more besides racial targeting?

Mr. YOUNG. I was going to say, you know, there is a, you know, a myriad of reasons why, you know, people look to inflict terror on different locations. You know, in regards to what we have seen, based upon those messages for the historically Black colleges and universities as well as those places worship, those were absolutely hate crimes, and they were targeted at that community to inflict fear. And it is our full intention to bring those subjects to justice.

Ms. KELLY. Now, I have another question. I don't have any historically Black colleges in my district or, frankly, in Illinois, but we have minority-serving institutions, such as predominantly Black institutions. Are they also being targeted? We have minority-serving Black, minority-serving Latinx. What about those institutions?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say in regards to this matter, we have had 59. Some other facilities were, you know, tied to historically Black, you know, areas. Like I say, going back, is we are always concerned with minorities and, you know, communities of color being targeted.

Ms. KELLY. Well, I have, like, Chicago State University. I know my time is running out, but I just hope they are getting that, you know, attention also. Thank you so much to all the witnesses.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Clyde, is now recognized for five minutes.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you, Madam Chair. The opportunity to seek higher education in our country is a treasured experience that has existed in America even before our Nation's founding. Our founding fathers, and even those that came before them, took great pride and often promoted education in America. These institutions of higher learning should be places in which students seek to increase their knowledge through peaceful discourse and engagement in the curriculum of their choice, and any legitimate security threat to that environment must be taken seriously by a school's administration and our law enforcement apparatus. All people are made in the image of God, and all life is precious and should be cherished.

I thank the chairwoman and ranking member for agreeing to my colleague and friend's request to engage on this important issue as my home state of Georgia is represented by 10 historically Black colleges and universities.

Now, while the media has reported that some of the threats were not credible and actually perpetrated by a juvenile engaged in a grotesque hoax, I do recognize the seriousness with which incidents like this must be approached and have several questions for our FBI witness. So, Assistant Director Young, in your testimony, I believe you said that most of the threats came by phone. Is that correct? Can you confirm that, or were some by email or by regular mail, or how did they come, sir?

Mr. YOUNG. So the majority, I think 55 came by phone, four by email, one by an instant message, and one was posted on a blog.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. Thank you. And so were these threats directed to the administrators, or did any come to students, or how exactly were they received? Who was the end recipient?

Mr. YOUNG. They were targeted at, you know, those institutions, students at that institution. It was targeted against, you know, the African Americans at those churches and historically Black colleges.

Mr. CLYDE. I am actually asking who the recipients of those were as in, you know——

Mr. YOUNG. Oh.

Mr. CLYDE. Was the person who actually got the email, was it an administrator or was it a student, or how did it actually show up there?

Mr. YOUNG. It came from different means, so some were on the, you know, the help lines and different email addresses that were set up for those institutions to collect information, blogs that were associated. So, you know, different victims or different people had seen those and reported them. We have subsequently, you know, reached out in our engagement with those universities to give them better procedures on, you know, how to take, you know, different identifiers. Like I say, time urgency on that, making sure that it gets to us as quickly as possible.

Mr. CLYDE. OK.

Mr. YOUNG. And I think——

Mr. CLYDE. All right. Thank you. And you said that no devices were found. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. Yes, sir. There have been no devices, but we do not want any of these institutions to be lulled into complacency because that does not mean that one of these won't be a real threat with a real device.

Mr. CLYDE. Sure. Absolutely. Absolutely. Agree with that. Now, in your opinion, were any of these threats actually credible?

Mr. YOUNG. We look at them as all credible, sir. We are going to follow all leads. We are going to take all legal process. We are going to, you know, build out——

Mr. CLYDE. OK. When I say "credible," I mean was the person who actually made the threat, were they capable of carrying through with the threat actually to a physical action other than simply a verbal threat?

Mr. YOUNG. I can't comment on that part of the investigation, sir.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. So you don't know. All right. All right. So how many other bomb threats have been reported to the FBI so far this year? Do you know that information?

Mr. YOUNG. I don't have that, sir. I can get you that information.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. I would like to know that to know where we are in context here.

Mr. CLYDE. And then, so is this string of bomb threats at HBCUs unique to this year, or were HBCUs targeted like this last year and the years before?

Mr. YOUNG. I don't know about these specific institutions. I think when we look at our hate crime statistics that our numbers have gone up with the African-American community. I think——

Mr. CLYDE. So for HBCUs, we had these kind of bomb threats last year and the year before. Is that what you are telling me?

Mr. YOUNG. No, that is that is not what I am saying, sir. I would say that there are different communities of color, different institutions that have consistently been a target of terror, and, I was going to say, we investigate those as acts of terror.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. But this is the first year where we have seen this kind of activity against HBCUs. Is that your testimony?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say this is the first time we have seen a situation where the event started at the beginning of February, which is, you know, Black History Month, in these numbers in that coordinated effort. And going to what we think the connected ones are with potential copycats, that is where we would probably differentiate.

Mr. CLYDE. OK. Well, thank you very much. I appreciate your testimony, and just to note that when you have an increase in crime and people are not punished for it, then you have an increase in all sorts of crime. Thank you, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from Massachusetts, Ms. Pressley, is now recognized.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the panel of students who shared their stories and demonstrated so clearly the brilliance of our Nation's HBCUs. The bomb threats facing HBCUs really must be properly contextualized by America's long history of anti-Blackness and white supremacist violence against our community. So I really appreciate the chair, you hold-

ing this space today. Even in the midst of this hearing, we see some who would seek to underestimate and to discredit the ferociousness of these threats.

For generations, there have been many seeking to intimidate and terrorize Black folks, and they have intentionally targeted pillars in our communities across the country, from the recurrent attacks on our Black churches, including the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church that killed four little Black girls in 1963 in Alabama, to the predominantly Black churches set ablaze by white men in my home state of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mere hours after the election victory of President Barack Obama. Along with our churches, our HBCUs have been sources of community pride, the epicenters of Black brilliance, and, yes, the constant targets of white supremacists dating as far back as 1865 when arsonists killed 46 Black people at Lemoyne-Owen College in Tennessee, to the 1960's when Fisk University and North Carolina A&T received numerous bomb threats. The string of threats in 2022 are not an anomaly but a chilling chapter in the long and troubling crisis of white supremacist violence.

Dr. Cooper, I would like to discuss the implications of this long history of violent intimidation on Black academia specifically. During enslavement, Black folks were lynched for learning to read. During Jim Crow, we fought for equality in education and still do today. Today, our HBCUs students are being threatened with bombs. To a hate-filled few, there is nothing more dangerous than an educated Black person. So, could you speak to the reoccurrence of these threats, Dr. Cooper, and what that impact is in generational trauma amongst those in the HBCU community, and what would help prospective students, do you think, feel secure in considering studying at an HBCU in the future other than our, you know, dismantling white supremacy and holding those accountable who commit these egregious acts? But if you could just speak to that generational trauma and what are you are hearing from the student body as to what would help them to feel more secure.

Ms. COOPER. Thank you for your question. Certainly we recognize that the current events have to be considered within the current and historical context of race-based violence that is, in fact, an unfortunate part of American history. We have seen these types of threats and bombings before in the Civil Rights era, but at the Department of Education, we do believe that violence and fear do not belong in our educational institutions. We believe that it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to do our part to protect our students, and we also believe that these bomb threats should not be taken lightly.

HBCUs, they represent a small part of our higher education system, yet they have an outsized impact and punch above their weight. They enroll about 3 percent of Black students, yet they are the producers of 40 percent of the engineers, 50 percent of the lawyers, and over 70 percent of the doctors, teachers, and judges. They come from HBCUs. So it is very important for us to be responsive to these bomb threats and to take them very seriously because these institutions have a very important role in contributing to the economic work force and in the solvency of America and our future.

Ms. PRESSLEY. And so, in terms of prospective students or current students, what have they expressed to you in terms of any of their fears and what would allay those fears?

Ms. COOPER. The students are very concerned about the ongoing nature of these threats, and their administrators are being responsive to that in as many ways as they can. And for our part, we are listening to them and doing our best to engage and work alongside of them to be responsive to those needs. So we have made sure that we are providing a resource compendium so that administrators know where they can go in the government to get access to the resources to support their students, and we are allowing for Project SERV grants to be used as last-dollar support to help with some outstanding needs that they may have to help restore the learning environment. Students do have strength and they have resiliency, and they believe that they are going to continue, just like their predecessors, to move forward with their education. They do not like the fact that they have to continue to deal with these types of issues even in this modern context of 2022, but they are moving forward.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Thank you. And I think it is so important that we bring Congresswoman Adams' bill to the floor and support this IGNITE bill for HBCUs who have been under resourced but have been outsized in their contributions for generations. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Fallon, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you, Madam Chair, and you look great in green today on St. Patrick's Day of all days.

[Laughter.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. FALLON. I just heard one of our colleagues say, and I am going to quote, "There is nothing more dangerous than an educated Black person." I could not disagree with that statement more. I would like to say there is nothing more wonderful than an educated American, and their pigmentation is as irrelevant as it is immaterial.

Director Young, so I am reading that we had 59 bomb threats at HBCUs from the beginning of the year until the middle of February. So my question to you is, and I think I know the answer, but I just want to make sure, because I was in another committee hearing, that there have been no arrests made. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. That is correct, sir. I was going to say the first one was notified to us on January 31, so with this, we are not going from the beginning of the year. It was January 31 and continued through the month of February.

Mr. FALLON. OK. And, you know, when you have threats like this, it is hard to measure the fear that it can construe and cause, but there is also a cost in disruption, of course, of the university, and there is a cost of the investigation that you are all involved with as well. So we don't have any arrests made, but then I read that the FBI believes these are emanating from six tech-savvy juveniles. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. Yes, correct, sir.

Mr. FALLON. All right. So we haven't made any arrests, so how do we know that they are coming from six tech-savvy juveniles?

Mr. YOUNG. Some of them come from encrypted platforms, and so it has been, you know, challenges with attribution.

Mr. FALLON. So how would we know the ages of the people, the perpetrators if we don't know who they are?

Mr. YOUNG. I can't go too much more into the investigation, sir, but I will let you understand that this is a high priority. We are utilizing not only our counterterrorism resources and those of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, but folks with our Operational Technology Division to help with some of the complications with, you know, technical issues as well as our Weapons of Mass Destruction Division——

Mr. FALLON. Right.

Mr. YOUNG [continuing]. And as well as with cyber.

Mr. FALLON. So we don't know who they are, but we know they are juveniles. And then how do we know what their motivations are if we don't know who they are? I am confused.

Mr. YOUNG. Like I said, I don't want to go too much into the investigation, sir, but based upon the statements that were made, that were received by those divisions, they were what we would call racially motivated.

Mr. FALLON. Right, from the statements, but we don't know who it is yet because I have just seen this before where some of them are actually, you know, not only to the point of credible, but they are folks that certainly had a racial motivation, and then there are some false flags as well. What I want to ask, Director, if you know, what are the penalties for something like this? Let's say we get a conviction. Somebody called in a bomb threat. Is there a difference in the penalties if it was genuinely motivated by hate or if it was just somebody that wanted to get out of taking a test, or are they the same because I think they should be the same.

Mr. YOUNG. You know, if it is threats of violence and they are called-in threats, they are treated exactly the same. And there are, what I would say, additional penalties depending on what is developed through the investigation, and, you know, I would just leave it at that.

Mr. FALLON. Well, because if somebody calls in a bomb threat regardless of their intent, whether they just want to get out of a test or they really have a hatred, it is still causing the same fear. It is still causing the same disruption. It is still causing the same cost from an investigative standpoint. So I would be firmly in favor of increasing penalties for this because it is something that just takes so much time away from what we are trying to do here, which is educate young people.

Mr. YOUNG. I would add, sir——

Mr. FALLON. Yes, please.

Mr. YOUNG [continuing]. That, you know, we receive between, you know, 5,000 just call-in tips a day as well as call-ins to our, I was going to say, through the internet that are pushed through to us as far as tips. And a number of these are what we call threat to life, you know, bombing matters being one of them, that require immediate response.

Mr. FALLON. And, Director, do you have any idea how much this costs the FBI? Do you guys ever——

Mr. YOUNG. I mean——

Mr. FALLON. Go ahead.

Mr. YUNG. For us, terrorism is our No. 1 priority. We don't want more terrorism, but——

Mr. FALLON. Well, nobody wants more terrorism. What I am asking is specifically on these bomb threats because it does cause the college disruption, and it causes fear to the students and the faculty, and then it costs a lot of money in law enforcement, both campus, local, and at the Federal level.

Mr. YOUNG. It takes significant resources across all levels, sir, and we send out our subject matter experts in regards to evidence, in regards to, you know, bomb technicians. So, yes, it takes a significant amount of resources across law enforcement as well as the disruption.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you. I know I am over in time. I would just love to be able to quantify that at some point. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you.

Mr. FALLON. I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlewoman from Ohio, Ms. Brown, is now recognized for her questions.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Chairwoman Maloney and Ranking Member Comer, for holding this very important hearing. I appreciate the student leaders who shared their experiences and thank this panel for being here with us today. I would also like to just reiterate and associate myself with Congresswoman Pressley's comments regarding the statement that she made, which was, "hate-fueled people are fearful of an educated Black person." And if that weren't true, there wouldn't be lynchings for people who were reading or fighting for equal rights, so I just want to make that distinction for my other colleague.

The string of recent bomb threats against HBCUs are also cowardly, hate-fueled, and despicable acts of terror. These bomb threats are not just threats to the physical safety of HBCUs and their students. They are also attacks on the mental health and well-being of the students, the faculty, and the staff, so, Dr. Cooper, targeting HBCUs, especially at the beginning of Black History Month, is nothing short of despicable. Can you speak to how these bomb threats against HBCUs, especially during Black History Month, might have affected the mental health of the students?

Ms. COOPER. I am happy to answer your question. Thank you. So as you said, there were certainly a number of these that occurred during Black History Month, and they have continued to occur as recently as this week. We did several campus visits. One was to Tennessee State University and another was North Carolina Central. In each of these, we spoke to students, and Secretary Cardona even facilitated a roundtable on mental health issues at North Carolina Central University along with Governor Cooper, the Governor of North Carolina. And the theme of mental health, the stressors of the pandemic, now the bomb threats was just persistent and ongoing. We heard it over and over again. And I think we have to remember that just because no explosive devices have been found, we cannot underestimate the violent impact and the trauma that this has had on our students and others on the campus community.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. I was pleased to see that yesterday Vice President Harris announced additional resources to Project SERV grants targeted toward HBCUs that have been impacted by the bomb threats. In addition to executing the implementation of these grants, what steps in the Department of Education can they take to help the institution address the mental health needs?

Ms. COOPER. So we are doing several things to address the mental health needs here at the Department of Education. Certainly Project SERV grants will be one of those things. Institutions who have been impacted by these bomb threats will get outreach from someone on our team who will work on an individualized basis to make sure we are understanding what needs remain unmet and how Project SERV dollars, which are small, last-dollar funds, can support them. In addition to that, we have other resources through our Title III grant programs as well as some HEERF dollars that might be able to help broader mental health issues that are associated with the pandemic. We have guidance that will be forthcoming within the next month or so related to how institutions can use those HEERF dollars, which are broadly for pandemic recovery, to support institutions and students at this particular time.

Ms. BROWN. Well, thank you again. As a student myself of Wilberforce University and another proud alumni of HBCUs, I am grateful. And I believe that we must continue to work to hold those responsible for these threats accountable and prevent any future copycat attacks so that students attending HBCUs don't live in constant fear. They deserve safe spaces. HBCUs are building the next generation of Black leaders, and Congress must continue to recognize their contributions in the most important way possible by forwarding the support, the infrastructure, and the investment to keep them and our future leaders safe and secure. So thank you very much, and with that, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back, and the gentleman of from Kentucky, the ranking member, Mr. Comer, is now recognized for his five minutes.

Mr. COMER. Thank you, Madam Chair. My questions will be referenced to Assistant Director Young. Sir, I understand this is an ongoing investigation and there are certain things you can't disclose, but I think you can sense from our side of the aisle the frustration that there haven't been arrests made yet. I understand that the FBI has identified persons of interest in the case. Could you say how many different people are involved in these bomb threats? Is it primarily one or two, or are there, you know, dozens? Can you say how many persons of interest you have identified in these cases?

Mr. YOUNG. For a number of them, we have it, you know, tied to around six individuals with one being a little bit more specific. After that, it gets a little bit more complicated, and I would like to, just with the ongoing investigation, just leave it at that.

Mr. COMER. What is the FBI doing through its task forces to ensure that copycats don't surface, and what are you doing to protect historically Black colleges from those who threaten violence like what we have talked about today?

Mr. YOUNG. I think they need to understand that we take these things very seriously, and our intention is to bring these individ-

uals to justice. And justice should hopefully mitigate future people that think that they can intimidate and discriminate against, you know, these populations of color.

Mr. COMER. So it is my understanding that some of these individuals are using sophisticated cybertechnologies to mask their identities and make the bomb threats. Can you tell the committee what the FBI is doing to make sure it stays one step ahead of criminals who use sophisticated technology to threaten violence?

Mr. YOUNG. Yes, it is a constant, what we call, digital literacy, making sure that we are, you know, training our work force at all levels to understand so that when we get to some of these more critical, or, well, I would say difficult situations, that we get them to the subject matter experts. I would say one of the things that we do in our Operational Technology Division is we procure different technologies to test it so that when it is used against us, we understand the mechanisms, what we need to do to defeat it. I would also say that we coordinate across our intelligence community so when other new technologies come about, we are looking to level set, have a greater understanding. We also coordinate with foreign partners to make sure what other technologies that are being put together by foreign adversaries or foreign governments, that if it is utilized or used to influence or inflict harm to U.S. citizens, that we can recognize that and understand how to place attribution and bring those individuals to justice should they conduct criminal activity.

Mr. COMER. Let me go back to the persons of interest. What is the FBI doing to ensure that those persons of interest don't make other bomb threats to disrupt other universities?

Mr. YOUNG. I would say we have conducted an aggressive investigation. I think, you know, without divulging any other information, that I think individuals know that they are under the scope of an investigation, and, I was going to say, mitigating future activity.

Mr. COMER. Well, let me conclude by saying this. We strongly hope to read very soon that you all have made an arrest or arrests with these suspects because it just seems like there is a pattern all across America to not make as many arrests, this criminal justice reform, which there are aspects that I support. But it seems like there has been a lot of decreased arrests, decreased prosecutions. We have seen countless criminals released early in the form of COVID or in the name of criminal justice reform. I know there are a lot of people that have referenced mental health.

You know, we had a situation in Louisville, Kentucky, where one of the leading candidates for mayor had an assassination attempt by him in broad daylight, and less than two hours later the suspect was apprehended and less than two hours after that was released, and advocates were claiming mental health issues. So, you know, I don't know what is going on here. This is serious. I understand the FBI is taking this very seriously, but we certainly hope that there are some arrests made and some people are held accountable for these acts of violence.

Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentleman yields back.

The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Sarbanes, is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you, Madam Chair. Count me a little bit perplexed by the last 45 seconds of what we just heard from our colleague across the aisle, but I want to thank you for this hearing. Obviously, last week, the House stood strongly in condemning the recent threats of violence against many HBCUs, including Morgan State, Bowie State, and Coppin State Universities in the state of Maryland. I am glad that we are examining how to better support these institutions and their students with this hearing today. As we all know, HBCUs were created in response to the long and unjust history of Black Americans too often being denied admission to institutions of higher educations across our country. Today, the HBCUs continue to offer quality education for millions of students, including large shares of low-income and first-generation college students.

Dr. Cooper, according to your testimony, approximately 60 percent of HBCU students rely on Pell Grants, while many others rely on other forms of need-based financial aid. I was pleased that the omnibus legislation passed last week included a $400 increase in the maximum Pell Grant award, but I think we can go further than that. Many of us have advocated to go further than that. Could you just talk about how the recent increase in the Federal Pell Grant will impact the educational opportunities and economic security of HBCUs students?

Ms. COOPER. I am happy to talk about that. Certainly college affordability is a very important issue, one that we take very seriously. And as we know, we need to be increasing the number of students who are enrolling and completing our colleges, and to do that and do that well, we need to make sure that college is affordable. And so the Pell Grant increase of $400, the highest in over a decade, is really going to be very advantageous to students at HBCUs where well over the vast majority of those students rely on those grants to enroll and persist in completing their degrees.

Mr. SARBANES. Thanks very much. We also know that the chronic underfunding has forced public HBCUs to rely more heavily on Federal, state, and local funding than their non-HBCU counterparts. Again, I am pleased that the recently passed omnibus included historic investments in HBCUs, but the recent threats of violence have made it clear that more is needed to ensure these institutions have the necessary resources to create not only high-quality learning environments but also safe environments. Dr. Cooper, again to you, how is the Department of Education working to provide additional resources—you have touched on this a little bit, but maybe you could offer some further perspective—additional resources to HBCUs in the wake of recent violence, and what more can we do here in Congress to support those efforts?

Ms. COOPER. Sure. So I think you are absolutely correct when you say that the threats have certainly exposed a longstanding funding inequity. These institutions have been the recipients of historic underfunding on so many different fronts, and that has contributed to the infrastructure vulnerabilities that we are contending with, given some of these bomb threats. And so some of the commitments that we have made at the Department of Education,

we have made historic investments through the Biden Administration in support of HBCUs. To date, it has been $5.8 billion, and these include funds related to the American Rescue Plan as well as the HBCU Capital Financing Program that forgave $1.6 billion in infrastructure debt and that supported 45 HBCU campuses.

In addition to that, we have our Title III funds that support HBCUs, and given the targeted, repeated, and ongoing nature of these bomb threats, Project SERV dollars have been opened to HBCU campuses that have been impacted by a bomb threat. Project SERV will provide small, short-term, last-dollar funds to restore the learning environment. And certainly there are additional needs related to these threats, and we are working as a whole-of-government approach in the resource compendium that was also released yesterday by Vice President Kamala Harris, provide some of the resources that you have heard, the others on this panel talked about. In addition, it talks more about some of the grant opportunities, some of the trainings, and some of the guidance related to mental health and other ways that we can support the institutions at this particular time.

Mr. SARBANES. Thank you so much. I mean, existing funding streams and then special responses to some of these situations, if you put all that together, I think HBCUs can feel more fortified and strengthened as they deliver these really amazing and high-quality educational services across the country. But we have to stay focused on that and make sure that they continue to feel fortified. Thank you for your testimony.

I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlewoman from New York, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you. Thank you, Chairwoman. We are seeing that hate crimes are on the rise across all demographics in the United States, but I would like to take a moment in this hearing and we discuss the rise of hate crimes and bomb threats targeting the Black community specifically. Mr. Young, according to the FBI's most recently published data, there were 2,871 hate crimes against Black Americans in 2020, and that was a nearly 50-percent increase in one year over 2019. My understanding is that this was the highest-recorded number of hate crimes against the Black community in 15 years. Is that correct?

Mr. YOUNG. That is correct. That is correct, Congresswoman.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. In fact, this also seems to be the largest spike in anti-Black hate crimes that has ever been recorded since the FBI started the hate crime statistics reporting in 1991. That is also correct, yes?

Mr. YOUNG. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. I am interested a little bit about the current threats targeting Black institutions. How does this current spate of threats against HBCUs compare to those directed at them in the past?

Mr. YOUNG. I was going to say, just if I could add to your first part, one of the things I want you to be aware of is when we look at our priorities over this last year, we have increased our civil rights response because of this spike to what we would call a national threat priority, so that gets our highest level of resources

and investigation for our criminal investigation programs. So in regards to the spike, you know, I don't have year-to-year, but I will say, you know, traditionally, there are, you know, racial, you know, crimes directed at the African-American community as well as the Jewish community. I think, as you know from one of your constituents up there, these are communities that are frequent targets, and that is why it is absolutely essential that we have clear lines of communication, that they know what their civil rights are, and that they know that they are a priority. But I was going to say, could I add any more to your question?

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you. Actually, if I may, I wanted to ask Mr. Haglund a quick question, and perhaps if we have time, we can go back. In January of this year, DHS published a National Terrorism Advisory System Bulletin that warns that there is currently a heightened domestic violence extremism threat environment in the United States. The bulletin stated, and I quote, "Mass casualty attacks and other acts of targeted violence conducted by lone offenders and small groups acting in furtherance of ideological beliefs and/or personal grievances pose an ongoing threat to the Nation." Mr. Haglund, there is a bit of friction, a little bit, in the language of that bulletin because we know two things to be true. One, we know that white extremists are driven by violent white supremacist ideological beliefs, but two, we also know that violent extremism poses the largest current threat to domestic security in the United States.

So I am curious about this language that the agency is using around "lone wolves." You know, I think some folks would ask, wouldn't it be accurate to say that this violence isn't actually a result of lone wolves but part of a larger concerning pattern of growing white supremacist ideology in the United States, including membership, in a very large degree, of digital and in-person white supremacist organizations?

Mr. HAGLUND. Thank you, Congresswoman. So I believe the intent of the document is to cover a wide spectrum. Here in the Office for Bombing Prevention where we specifically look at bombing threats, that is where we focus our attention. And we look at instances like a Nashville-type bombing where you do have a lone individual as an example of a significant act that had cascading consequences. And then you look at these bomb threats, and obviously these are open investigations, and my FBI colleague has explained that, you know, there is more to follow here, that we will see how this plays out through the investigations. But I think the intent of the document is to cover a broader perspective, but we are very narrowly focused on that bombing perspective here in the Office for Bombing Prevention.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Thank you very much. I yield my time.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back, and the gentlewoman from Missouri, Ms. Bush, is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. BUSH. St. Louis and I thank you, Madam Chair, for convening this hearing.

As the Congresswoman for St. Louis, home of Harris-Stowe State University, my alma mater, I unequivocally condemn the rising tide of white supremacist violence against our historically Black colleges and universities. For decades, our beloved institutions of

Black education have been subjected to the brutality of white terror with very little recourse available to those hurt along the way. I urge my colleagues to consider the long-lasting implications of providing carceral solutions to social problems, particularly in relation to the health and safety of Black students. We have to ask ourselves, does increased police presence at our HBCUs make our Black students, Black faculty, and administrators feel safe?

In discussing the recent bomb threat with leaders of Harris-Stowe, the need to drastically improve their campus safety infrastructure with additional external lighting, modern camera systems, reinforced windows, and electronically secure doors is a top priority. Our HBCU administrators are calling for consistent Federal support to retain campus staff for mental health and counseling services that provide trauma-informed care to students on campus. I am proud to support legislation like H.R. 3294, the IGNITE HBCU Excellence Act, to significantly improve the infrastructure and security of HBCU campuses. Congress must take strides to reverse the decades-long trend of underinvestment, of neglect, and of violence against HBCUs.

Mr. Young, the FBI has labeled activists like me in the movement to save Black lives "Black identity extremists," and use this classification to surveil and imprison Black protesters. Can you explain how domestic counterterrorism methods like mass surveillance will not harm Black students activists specifically on HBCU campuses?

Mr. YOUNG. Good morning, Congresswoman. I was going to say, you know, when it comes to domestic terrorism, we identify them as you know, first anti-government, anti-authority extremism. The second one is racially or ethnically motivated, you know, violence extremism, and then some other, you know, criteria after that, but it is all around violence. And so we do not police free speech. We are not here to infringe on anybody's First Amendments, but, you know, we also go over and, you know, outreach to those communities so that they understand that we are there to support them, that they have a voice to reach out to, that they understand what their First Amendment rights are, and that, you know, anybody that discriminates against them is wrong.

As I told the previous Congressman, civil rights has been elevated to our highest priority in our criminal investigative divisions. And, you know, we purposely and deliberately reached out to these universities when these threats happened. We wanted their resilience. We did not want to diminish any other aspirations or any fear, and we needed to make sure that we had clear lines of communication at all levels. And so we don't want any community in America to feel threatened or intimidated.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. Dr. Cooper, your written testimony evoked your father's memory of the tragic Orangeburg massacre in which white state troopers indiscriminately fired into a crowd of Black students and killed three people. In cases where the threat of white supremacist violence comes from law enforcement officials, what resources can the Department of Education provide to keep our HBCU campuses safe?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, thank you for that. My father was a graduate of South Carolina State University. He attended that institution

because at the time, there was no other institution in the state of South Carolina that would have allowed him to attend and attend safely. So I recognize that this threat of violence is one that has been a part of the HBCU story for quite some time.

At the Department of Education, we are working in conjunction with our partners and the law enforcement arms—Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice—and we are taking their leads in terms of the enforcement aspects of these threats. And we are working directly with HBCU partners and institutional leaders to make sure that we can help them support students' academic, social, and emotional needs throughout this endeavor.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. Can you, Dr. Cooper, describe how HBCUs, like Harris-Stowe, will benefit from the Department of Education Project SERV grants to improve the infrastructure and help to bolster student and faculty safety?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, I would be happy to, and I should also add that the president of Harris-Stowe is one of the presidents that Secretary Cardona and I had an opportunity to speak to. And one of the things that we have been doing is listening and learning, and so these resources that we have put together—the Project SERV grant dollars as well as the resource compendium that provides a layout, simplified, streamlined, easy-to-understand information about the whole-of-government response and support for HBCUs—is a direct response to some of the things that we heard from Harris-Stowe's president. So we thank her for that.

Ms. BUSH. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Cooper, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back.

Wait. First, I have to announce that before we move on, Executive Assistant Director Ryan Young has a very hard stop at 12 p.m. due to pressing Bureau business. Executive Assistant Director Young, we thank you for your participation today, and you are excused. Thank you for participating in our hearing.

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlewoman from Michigan, Mrs. Lawrence, is recognized for five minutes.

[No response.]

Chairwoman MALONEY. You are muted, Representative Lawrence.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I am unmuted now. Thank you so much.

Chairwoman MALONEY. OK. Thank you.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. As the vice chair of the congressional Black Caucus and also as the founder and co-chair of the Black Jewish Caucus, this hearing is very important to me. I have a few questions as I continuously look at these issues of hate crimes.

Many of our HBCUs are already facing critical funding needs prior to these bomb threats to their campuses. The institutions are limited in how they can prepare and respond to threats when they lack resources to boost their security and implement best practices. How do you perceive the gap? You know, we know the reality, that there is this personal desire and agency desire to provide security, but the reality of implementing those things. Do you have any comments on how the Excellence Act will enhance or take care of that gap? And I will send this to Mr. Sean Haglund and Ms. Cooper.

Mr. HAGLUND. Thank you for the question Congresswoman. So we have not seen through our historic engagement any significant differences in the ability to apply the processes and procedures that we recommend through the resources that we provide. I think we will have another opportunity as we move forward here with some of the engagements that I mentioned in Atlanta this weekend, some of the other courses and in-person engagements that we have got over the next several weeks to probably get a finer level of detail on where some of those particular gaps may be that you are referencing. But we don't have any historical context for that, but certainly it is an area that we will continue to reflect on and highlight as we move forward with these engagements that are result of the heightened level of awareness right now. And we do hope we get some good observations and lessons learned over the next several weeks.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Well, I just wanted to comment because I am very active with the Black Jewish caucus, and when the threats to the synagogues were made, there were instant investment into surveillance. There were training that took place with the synagogue members to prepare them, drills and all of that. So, Dr. Cooper, how can I be assured that the Black colleges, HBCUs, are going to be prepared other than just a sense of heightened awareness?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, I am happy to respond. So we certainly know that there is historic underfunding that HBCUs have had to contend with for quite some time. There was a study that was done by the Government Accountability Office that found that HBCU land grant institutions were under funded by at least $12.8 million compared to its predominantly white peer institutions. In addition to that, HBCUs tend to have much smaller endowments than their comparable peer institutions in the state. So funding is a very real issue, and we have heard from college presidents who we have spoken to repeatedly that they have had to divert their small resources that they currently have to the bomb threats.

So the ongoing need for resources is very real. The Administration, we are committed to doing our part to continuing to support HBCUs through the various funding pots that we have available to us, which includes the HBCU Capital Financing Program, the Title III grants, and now, in addition, Project SERV. The resource compendium that we have released as a part of our response to the bomb threats also provides a list of resources that are available to HBCUs, related to the bomb threats specifically, to help Department of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, Department of Justice, and the like.

So we are hoping that with the whole-of-government, multi-agency response, that we will be able to knit together the types of resources that at least help HBCUs weather this particular storm.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the fact that there is an awareness that there is a funding issue and there will be a gap. Earlier this year, the co-chairs, which includes myself of the congressional Caucus on Black Jews, requested a briefing from the Department of Justice and the FBI on these recent hate crimes, and I look forward to working with you all to determine what steps you can do and take to reverse the alarming trend of hate crimes

and keep our campuses safe. And I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to act now.

Thank you so much, and I yield back.

Chairwoman MALONEY. The gentlelady yields back. I now recognize the last Member of Congress to question today, and she is the gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Adams, who is herself an educator and the founder and co-chair of the HBCU Caucus. I want to thank her for her selfless and dedicated work on behalf of HBCUs and for staying the entire hearing on this issue. Ms. Alma Adams.

Ms. ADAMS. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Ranking Member Comer. It has been an incredible meeting. Thank you for the interest.

The eyes and the ears of the U.S. Congress are squarely focused on what is happening to our HBCUs. I remember W.E.B. Du Bois, who said, "Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for for 500 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental." And so I want to begin by thanking our students who came today for their courage for they are HBCU strong. I am, as you said, a two-time graduate of North Carolina A&T, taught at Bennett College, both HBCUs. I taught at Bennett for 40 years and am founding co-chair of the bipartisan HBCU Caucus. And it really breaks my heart that there are those who would seek to harm students who look like those who testified today and my grandson, who is a junior at Howard, because of where they go to school. Terrorism and racism have no place on college campuses or anywhere else. These were hate crime, acts of terror. And so the students who testified today reminded me, and all of us it should, of why we invest in education of our young people and our future leaders because HBCUs, as has been said, produce top-notch talent and future leaders.

Assistant Secretary Cooper, as a former faculty member, I have had numerous conversations with the presidents and chancellors about the threats. I know that these threats have had negative impacts on students, on faculty and staff, and they are major disruptions on the academic programs, and they really don't have the resources that they need. And so many of these threats came to our schools in the early morning hours. Dr. Wims of Alabama A&M told me that his school received a threat at 2:30 a.m. And you mentioned that the institution should have the resources that they need, so my question: what resources can we provide for schools to help notify students and address these threats that occur at any hour?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, ma'am, I am happy to answer your question. I think what we were hearing, these early morning bomb threats are a common occurrence now, and we recognize that it is putting a stress and a stretch. It is stretching and stressing the campus security infrastructure, and we are hearing that repeatedly about the need to modernize their infrastructure and to improve and create some alert systems that can help.

You know, I have talked a little bit about what we are trying to do at the Department of Education with the resources that we currently have available, Project SERV grants, those small grants to help with last-dollar needs. The Title III grants can help with that,

but they also are helping with other needs to help to buildup the academic and the fiscal management infrastructure. There are the HEERF dollars that support the recovery. We have these various pots, and we are doing our absolute best to continue to be responsive, but we recognize that there is some need that is unmet. So we certainly——

Ms. ADAMS. Well, let me——

Ms. COOPER. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. ADAMS. OK. So I want to continue with that.

Ms. COOPER. OK.

Ms. ADAMS. So we have seen that the Biden Administration and Vice President Harris just announced that they are eligible for the SERV Program. So how can we ensure that these schools have immediate access to these necessary resources given the immediate threat?

Ms. COOPER. Yes. We will have someone from our team reach out to all of these institutions who have been impacted. We have already had some outreach, but we are going to have another outreach to let them know about Project SERV.

Ms. ADAMS. Well, thank you so much. You know, we know that our campus infrastructure is not where it needs to be, and I was listening to the representative from Michigan. We have had to make all kinds of adjustments, particularly with COVID and so forth, so, yes, they have had to use the resources that they have and to supplement those. So what else should the Department of Education and the Federal Government be doing to help address this challenge?

Ms. COOPER. Yes. So at the Department, we are going to continually use the resources available to us. That includes Title III, Project SERV, the HBCU Capital Financing Program, and we would be happy to partner with Congress on any type of effort that could really help to serve, to strengthen the safety and security of HBCU students and their administrators. We know that over 46 percent of HBCUs have some type of deferred maintenance that totals over $67 million, and we really would want to work in partnership with the Congress and state budgets, who are showing some fiscal strength in Fiscal Year 2022. We think this could be a good time to use those healthy budgets to recommit and repay the debt that is owed to state-sponsored HBCUs.

Ms. ADAMS. Great. Let me just say in closing, thank you very much for being here. Thanks to all the witnesses. And, Chairwoman Maloney, I want to thank you for hosting this hearing. I am grateful for your leadership and, particularly, your support of my legislation, the IGNITE HBCU Excellence Act, which would help resolve some of the things that we are talking about. I am grateful as well to UNCF, TMCF, and NAFEO, who have been consistent allies and friends to our schools. And, Madam Chair, thank you so very much and to all of my colleagues. I want to yield back. Thank you.

Chairwoman MALONEY. Thank you, and thank you to all of my colleagues who participated today, and thank you to all of the government witnesses. A very special thank you to Ranking Member Comer, and thank you, again, to Congressman Byron Donalds for requesting this extremely important hearing. I also want to thank

Congressman Jamie Raskin for his partnership on this issue and his commitment to combatting violent white supremacy. His staff worked alongside my own dedicated staff, some of whom are HBCU graduates themselves, to prepare for today's hearing.

I am particularly thankful to our student witnesses for conveying the vital importance of historically Black colleges and universities and sharing their personal experiences with these horrific threats. These students personify why we are fighting to ensure that HBCUs have the resources they need to help keep students safe. I am personally invested in ensuring that each of these students reach their full potential and that these institutions stay strong and vibrant.

I would also like to thank our witnesses from the Biden-Harris Administration. We appreciate the work that each of you and your agencies are doing to support HBCUs and keep their students safe. Your presence today following Vice President Harris' announcement yesterday of new funding for HBCUs truly demonstrates the Administration's whole-of-government response to these threats.

Today we heard first-hand accounts detailing the impact of these bomb threats on our college students, our Nation's future leaders. These threats are reminiscent of the shameful terrorist acts of the Ku Klux Klan during the Civil Rights Movement. Today's threats come amid a rise in hate crimes and violent white supremacy in our country, which has targeted the Black community and other racial, ethnic, and religious minorities. I want to repeat my earlier statement: HBCUs matter and every HBCU student matters. We must do everything we can to bring those responsible for these threats to justice and ensure HBCUs continue to be the centers of pride and excellence that they have been for student leaders across our country for decades.

And with that, all of our panelists, I, again, want to reiterate how much we appreciate their remarks, and I commend my colleagues for participating.

With that, without objection, all members will have five legislative days within which to submit extraneous materials and to submit additional written questions for the witnesses to the chair, which will be forwarded to the witnesses for their response. I ask our witnesses to please respond as promptly as you are able.

Chairwoman MALONEY. And with that, this hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]