



## **Nonprofit Security Grant Program Funding Improvement Act**

*Reps. Susie Lee (D-NV) and María Elvira Salazar (R-FL)*

### **The Need**

As incidents of hate crimes rise throughout the country, nonprofit organizations—especially religious institutions—are being increasingly targeted for violence and harassment. To ensure their own safety, churches, synagogues, mosques, and religious schools must divert scarce resources away from serving their communities to pay for security cameras, guards, and emergency trainings.

Recognizing this threat, Congress created the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) in 2004 to provide federal grant funding for target hardening and physical security enhancements to nonprofit organizations at high risk of terrorist attack.

Unfortunately, under current law, nonprofit organizations selected to receive an NSGP grant must pay out of pocket for approved critical security upgrades and then wait months—or even years—to be reimbursed. This places these organizations in an impossible situation: cut into their limited budget to ensure the safety of those they serve without any idea of when they might see that money or forgo critical security upgrades to ensure they can continue their work unabated.

### **What is the Nonprofit Security Grant Program?**

The NSGP, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), helps nonprofit organizations prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist or extremist attacks. The program funds target hardening, physical security improvements, and related preparedness activities for nonprofits at high risk of terrorism or hate-motivated violence. It also encourages coordination among nonprofits, emergency responders, and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments.

Nonprofit organizations may apply for up to \$200,000 in funding per site. Applicants with multiple sites may apply for up to \$200,000 per site for up to three sites, for a maximum of \$600,000 per nonprofit organization per state.

Organizations do not apply directly to FEMA. Instead, they submit applications through their state's designated administrative agency (SAA). The SAA reviews and scores applications, then forwards recommended projects to FEMA for final approval and award decisions.

Once approved for an NSGP grant, approved nonprofits must first spend their own money on eligible security projects then submit documentation to their SAA for repayment. FEMA reimburses only costs included in the original application and formally approved.

Reimbursement timelines vary widely. Some payments—including final closeout reimbursements—can take years. This delay forces nonprofits to absorb short- and medium-term financial costs, which can be especially difficult for smaller organizations with limited reserves.

**What Would This Bill Do?**

This bill would amend Section 2009 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. § 609a) to require that NSGP awards be issued to approved nonprofits in advance, rather than as a reimbursement for costs already incurred.

Although current grant language contains some ambiguity about advances, that option remains unclear and underused. This legislation would remove that uncertainty and explicitly authorize advance funding.

By allowing advance payments, FEMA could better support approved nonprofits that lack upfront capital, speed implementation of needed security measures, and strengthen protection for vulnerable communities.

**Endorsements:**

Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), Anti-Defamation League (ADL), National Association of Counties (NACO), The Sikh Coalition

**For more information or to cosponsor this bill, please contact:**

Trey Webster ([trey.webster@mail.house.gov](mailto:trey.webster@mail.house.gov)) in Congresswoman Susie Lee's office or John-Mark Kolb ([JohnMark.Kolb@mail.house.gov](mailto:JohnMark.Kolb@mail.house.gov)) in Congresswoman María Elvira Salazar's office