

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 17, 2022

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711-2428

Governor Abbott:

As Members of Congress who represent districts throughout Texas, we have grave concerns about your administration's decision to prematurely open and close the application window for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). By setting the State application deadline before the FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is made public you deny applicants the ability to properly fill out their applications. Such an arbitrary deadline jeopardizes public safety by putting Texas nonprofit organizations who could benefit from these essential grant dollars, at a significant disadvantage. You must immediately correct this disastrous decision.

On January 15, 2022, the country watched in horror as a gunman held four people hostage at the Congregation Beth Israel Synagogue in Colleyville, Texas for over 10 hours. Unfortunately, the antisemitic attack in Colleyville is not an outlier. Domestic terrorism and violent hate crimes targeting faith-based and charitable organizations have drastically increased over the last decade. The number of hate crimes reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2020 was the highest level in 12 years.

We are grateful for the quick response from first responders and law enforcement at every level of government that helped bring an end to the hours-long standoff. However, the attack in Colleyville is evidence that the federal government must do more to support efforts and initiatives that work to ensure safety for our communities, faith based institutions and non-profits.

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program provides much needed funding to help nonprofit organizations at risk of a terrorist attack. These grants allow organizations to prevent and protect against potential attacks by supporting critical security enhancements, training, and other emergency preparedness planning.

For fiscal year 2022, Congress provided \$125 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative NSGP and \$125 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program NSGP. FEMA, the agency under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), responsible for dispersing these funds to States so they can be allocated to local organizations, is expected to publish their announcement for applications of the funds soon. Yet Texas chose to close their application for interested applicants in March 2022, long before the state was able to view the FEMA announcement and tailor their application to the specific FEMA guidelines. Instead, local entities

who otherwise would have been successful in their applications and benefited from these critical funds that can help boost their preparedness from attacks may be denied due to improperly filed applications having had to submit their applications without the proper guidance.

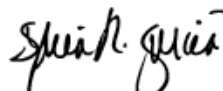
Given the significant threat faced by Texas religious institutions and other charitable organizations, it is imperative you provide clarification to your decision by answering the questions below no later than **Tuesday, May 31, 2022**.

1. Why did the application period open and close before the FEMA NOFO for FY22 was issued?
2. Is the state willing to reopen their application period?
3. How does the state plan to notify applicants if their application is incomplete or does not meet the requirements under the FEMA NOFO?
4. Should Texas reopen the application period, how long would an applicant have to update their application if it is not consistent with the requirements under the FEMA NOFO?

Sincerely,



Colin Allred
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
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Lizzie Fletcher
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