



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Before the Whistle: Assessing Information Sharing and Security Collaboration Ahead of Major Events

February 24, 2026

I welcome the opportunity to discuss information sharing and security collaboration for upcoming events like the America 250 celebration, 2026 FIFA World Cup, and 2028 Los Angeles Summer Olympics and Paralympics. Democratic Members of the Committee represent communities that will host these events, and we all have a vested interest in ensuring their security for local residents and visitors alike.

Rep. Nellie Pou, who serves as the Democratic lead on the Committee's "Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States" and whose district will host the World Cup final, is an outstanding leader on this issue.

Several of our other Members from New Jersey, New York, and California represent districts that will host or are located near World Cup and LA 2028 events. They, too, are championing robust Federal, State, and local partnerships to ensure successful events.

The Federal government has a critical role to play to support State and local governments that are hosting these events, which will draw millions of visitors from across the country and around the world.

Historically, administrations of both parties have collaborated with communities hosting major events like these.

Their relationships may have not always been perfect, but everyone worked from the premise that a safe, successful event was good for the host communities and the country as a whole.

Unfortunately, that has not been the case with the Trump administration. In fact, the Trump administration's record when it comes to supporting communities through information sharing, law enforcement collaboration, and necessary Federal funding is — in a word — atrocious.

President Trump has politicized the Federal government's relationship with States and cities. He has called governors and mayors he disagrees with names, sent troops and secret police to their streets, and blocked State and local law enforcement from investigations in their own jurisdictions.

The Trump administration has even withheld congressionally appropriated funding based on whether communities are "red" or "blue." Apparently, this President thinks that only those Americans who voted for him deserve support from the Federal government. That's not how our country is supposed to work.

His petulant, punitive behavior towards communities he doesn't like is a warning sign about whether his administration will fulfill its responsibilities to World Cup and LA 2028 communities and stakeholders.

Right now, I am extremely concerned that the Federal government is withholding critical financial support to communities that will soon play host to World Cup events.

Congress appropriated \$625 million last year to help World Cup host cities bolster security and ensure the safety of everyone associated with the matches and fan events. It is FEMA's job to provide these funds through the State Homeland Security Program, but DHS is weeks overdue awarding the money.

Kristi Noem has no problem wasting taxpayer money to buy herself multiple new jets, but she can't manage to get this money to communities where it is desperately needed. It's outrageous.

States and host cities — who are already laying out huge sums of their own taxpayer dollars and have dedicated untold local resources for these events — are getting worried — and rightfully so. Time is running out to finalize security preparations. Congress has already appropriated this money — there is no excuse for DHS to stick local taxpayers with the tab. It must be released without further delay.

To make matters worse, several States are already suffering under Republican cuts to the State Homeland Security Grant Program, Urban Area Security Initiative, and Emergency Management Preparedness Grants.

The Trump administration needs to stop playing politics with security. Today I hope to hear from our witnesses about what the lack of Federal support means for their communities — and what keeps our witnesses up at night as they think about the events later this year.

And finally, to the governors, mayors, and public safety professionals across the country working to make America 250, the World Cup, and LA 2028 safe and successful — Democrats see your hard work and are doing everything we can to ensure the White House fulfills its responsibilities to you. I hope my Republican colleagues in Congress will do the same.

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