



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Mr. Wolf:

Today, the Department of Justice designated New York City, Portland, and Seattle as “anarchist jurisdictions” pursuant to a “Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients That Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities” issued by President Trump on September 2, 2020.¹ This decision jeopardizes the security of Americans to serve the President’s political agenda, and I urge the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) not to act on this improper designation.

President Trump’s Memorandum directed DHS and other Federal agencies to identify funding, including homeland security preparedness and response grants, that could be withheld from New York City, Washington, D.C., Seattle, and Portland.² These cities are among the 32 jurisdictions DHS has designated for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program, which provides grant funding to high-threat, high-density urban areas to assist them in building, sustaining, and delivering capabilities used to prevent, prepare for, protect against, and respond to acts of terrorism.³ As the terrorist threat evolves, it is more important than ever to ensure our first responders have the resources necessary to plan, train, and respond effectively to emerging threats. That critical goal will be fundamentally undermined by any arbitrary cuts in Federal funding for jurisdictions that have obviously already experienced severe terror attacks and that, by DHS’ own assessment, are at high risk of further terror activity.

DHS has consistently ranked New York City as having the highest risk of terrorism in the Nation, and the New York Police Department relies on Federal homeland security grants to fund a large portion of its law enforcement and counter-terrorism operations. It is unconscionable that the President would take Federal funding from U.S. cities that, again by DHS’ own

¹ The White House, Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients That Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities (Sept. 2, 2020) (online at https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/memorandum-reviewing-funding-state-local-government-recipients-permitting-anarchy-violence-destruction-american-cities/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).

² *Id.*

³ *DHS Announces Grant Allocations for Fiscal Year 2020 Preparedness Grants*, Department of Homeland Security, June 30, 2020, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2020/06/30/dhs-announces-grant-allocations-fiscal-year-2020-preparedness-grants#>.

assessment, require Federal assistance to build and maintain vital homeland security capabilities. That President Trump would cut such funding this month, as we observe the 19th anniversary of the deadliest terror attack on American soil, is an insult to the memory of those who lost their lives on 9/11.

Again, I urge you not to jeopardize our Nation's homeland security by withholding funding from New York City, Portland, Seattle, or any other American city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman