



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee Ranking Member Delia Ramirez (D-IL)

State and Local Cybersecurity: Escalating Threats, Federal Partnership, and the Resilience of America's Communities

May 21, 2026

I want to start by expressing my solidarity with the Islamic Center of San Diego and my condolences to the families of Amin Abdullah, Mansour Kaziha, and Nadir Awad, who were murdered in a horrific, hate-fueled attack on the Muslim community. We must recommit ourselves to rooting out violence and hatred in all their forms.

Since the incident, we have learned that the two suspects espoused hateful views about Muslims and Islam, Jewish people, the LGBTQ+ community, Black people, and people across the political spectrum. They also expressed beliefs that white people are being eliminated, echoing the dangerous White supremacist Great Replacement theory.

I raise these details because, as Members of Congress, we must remember that our words matter. Words mattered to 6-year-old Wadee Alfayoumi, who was murdered because of dangerous anti-Palestinian rhetoric. There are too many examples of children put at risk by the reckless misinformation, hate speech, and propaganda that fuel these kinds of heinous attacks.

We, as elected officials, have an obligation to hold ourselves to the highest standards, rejecting dehumanizing rhetoric and working to end all forms of bigotry so that no children, families, or communities suffer as a result. In addition to being responsible for our words, today we address our responsibility to address cybersecurity threats facing our State and local governments.

We are facing a rapidly evolving landscape:

- The Administration initiated unlawful military operations against Iran – a country with a track record of responding to military operations via its cyber capabilities.
- Last month, Anthropic announced Mythos Preview, a highly capable AI model that has proven to be exceptionally effective at identifying vulnerabilities in software and writing exploits for them.
- And in less than six months, state and local governments will administer the midterm elections – a target of past foreign interference efforts.

While our work should be focused on responding to the rapidly changing cyber landscape and supporting state and local governments to defend against cybersecurity threats, the Trump administration has done the opposite.

- Trump and his loyalists have eviscerated the workforce at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency – leaving it with over 1,000 vacancies.
- They have eliminated CISA's election security team and defunded the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center and the Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center.

- They have reassigned cybersecurity professionals to ICE, and even the FBI's cybersecurity staff is stretched thin.

There are real consequences when the Federal government guts the personnel and the resources we have dedicated to identifying cybersecurity risks and mitigating them. State and local governments store significant personally identifiable information about people in their communities – from information about school children to those receiving public benefits to small business owners. Failing to support cybersecurity efforts at the State and local level puts that information at risk and jeopardizes the privacy of the public.

State and local governments also have the responsibility of administering free, fair, and secure elections. It is the federal government's responsibility to ensure they have the support and resources necessary to do so. Thanks to the efforts of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke – the former Chair of this Subcommittee - the Federal government invested \$1 billion over four years in State and local cybersecurity through State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program – but the program issued its final grants in FY 25.

While I appreciate the efforts of the Full and Subcommittee Chairmen to extend this important program, I am concerned Republican leadership doesn't have a plan to move the bill. The officials I have spoken with have articulated frustration that so many of the CISA personnel they relied on and trusted no longer work at the Agency, and support to the MS-ISAC and EI-ISAC was eliminated.

If Congress doesn't reauthorize the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant program, the message we will be reinforcing is: you're on your own. That is unacceptable. We need to change course, and renewing the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program is a step in the right direction.

#

[Media contact](#)