



# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Joint Subcommittee Hearing Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)**  
***The Nonprofit Security Grant Program and Protecting Houses of Worship: A  
View from the American Jewish Community***

**February 08, 2022**

In early 2020, in the wake of anti-Semitic attacks on Jewish communities in New York and New Jersey, including a deadly invasion of a rabbi's home during Chanukah, the Committee held a series of hearings on the topic. At the time, we received testimony from a diverse group of Jewish leaders about what the Federal government should be doing to respond to the rise in anti-Semitic terrorism and violence.

They issued an urgent call for increased funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program—which Congress answered. Funding was doubled to \$180 million. Earlier this Congress, the House passed the Build Back Better Act which would add \$100 million to the program.

Last week, we received compelling testimony from Jonathan Greenblatt, the head of Anti-Defamation League, about how the Jewish community is a primary target for violent extremists from across the ideological spectrum. Certainly, last month's attack on Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas illustrates that fact — as the perpetrator was cheered by both violent white supremacists and Islamist terrorists.

Today, we are fortunate to have a hero in our midst. Rabbi Cytron-Walker, thank you for joining us and being so willing to share your story. I understand you relied on knowledge gained from security trainings to bring the incident being to a peaceful conclusion, and your steadiness and courage were undoubtedly important factors.

On the subject of the Colleyville attack, I would note that the Committee is conducting aggressive oversight into this incident and met just last week with FBI. While the attacker appears to have been motivated by the desire to force the release of an Islamist terrorist, the approach he took was predicated on the belief in historic and dangerous anti-Semitic tropes about so-called "Jewish power." Such tropes are a prominent feature of a number of conspiracies espoused by Qanon and others and put real people in danger. It falls to all of us to speak out loudly against them.

As someone with a long history with the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, I am pleased that we are holding this hearing today to get testimony on the record about the importance of the program and why its funding should be significantly increased.

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Media contact: Adam Comis at (202) 225-9978