

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 23, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Mr. David Richardson  
Senior Official Performing the Duties of FEMA Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Secretary Noem and Mr. Richardson:

We write to express our concern about the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) continued refusal to open applications for nearly \$2 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) preparedness grant funding and to award the remaining \$115 million in the Nonprofit Security Grant Program National Security Supplemental funding appropriated in 2024.<sup>1</sup> We urge you to ensure FEMA begins the grant application process, as required by law, and make awards without further delay.

DHS preparedness grants are essential tools for building and sustaining core capabilities to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism and natural disasters. States, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations rely on these grants to bolster emergency preparedness, support first responders, and strengthen infrastructure security and resilience. Congress appropriated the following grant funds for FY 2025:<sup>2</sup>

- Homeland Security Grant Program
  - Urban Area Security Initiative (\$554 million)
  - State Homeland Security Program (\$374 million)
  - Operation Stonegarden (\$81 million)
  - Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (\$14 million)
- Nonprofit Security Grant Program (\$275 million)
- Transit Security Grant Program (\$95 million)
- Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program (\$9 million)
- Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (\$2 million)

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<sup>1</sup> Pub. L. No. 118-50.

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. No. 118-47, § 303; Pub. L. No. 119-4, § 1101(a)(6).

- Port Security Grant Program (\$90 million)
- Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (\$320 million)

FEMA was required to publish notices of funding opportunities for these programs by May 14, 2025, but chose not to comply with that legal obligation.<sup>3</sup> Now over two months late, the Trump administration's inability or unwillingness to begin the grant application process has stalled planning and preparedness efforts nationwide and jeopardized FEMA's ability to obligate the grants by the end of the fiscal year as required by law.<sup>4</sup>

Your inaction comes as communities face an increasing number of severe natural disasters, such as the flooding in Kerr County, Texas, which tragically claimed over 100 lives. Without FEMA funding, emergency management functions such as staffing, planning, and coordination suffer, leading to slower disaster response times, gaps in emergency communication, and limited capacity to manage shelters, evacuations, and recovery—effects that can compound during large-scale or rapidly evolving events.

Communities across the Nation are also facing mounting threats as they prepare for major events such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympics. FEMA withholding preparedness funding is preventing State and local governments from implementing necessary security measures for these events. For example, the Commissioner of the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services recently stated that uncertainty about preparedness funds from FEMA could hamper State and local agencies' ability to secure large-scale events like the United Nations General Assembly and the World Cup.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing these concerns, on June 26, 2025, former FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell briefed members of the Committee on Homeland Security and warned that delays in grants guidance could “diminish” the ability of communities “to sustain their preparedness capability to terrorist attacks [and] natural disasters.”<sup>6</sup> Former Administrator Criswell also noted that it would be difficult for FEMA to meet the congressional deadline to obligate grant funding by the end of this fiscal year, even if the Agency had begun the application process in March.<sup>7</sup>

More than two months after FEMA was required to open applications, communities still have no information from the Department about how to apply for and access these critical grants. Every day of the delay deepens the risk, strips communities of critical tools, and sends a clear message that preparedness is not a priority for this administration. In short, withholding these

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Gov't Accountability Off., *Principles of Federal Appropriations Law*, vol. II, at 5-4 (Jan. 2004), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/2029-11/202437.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Benjamin Oreskes, *FEMA Is Holding Up \$2.4 Billion in Grants to Fight Terrorism, States Say* (July 10, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/10/nyregion/fema-funds-trump-noem.html>.

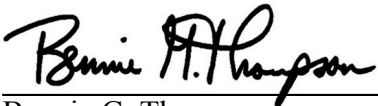
<sup>6</sup> *Facing Elimination: A Conversation on the Value of FEMA*, Disaster Equity & Bldg. Resilience Caucus & H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. Democrats (June 26, 2025), <https://democrats-homeland.house.gov/activities/other-events/facing-elimination-a-conversation-on-the-value-of-fema> (statement of Deanne Criswell, Former Admin., Fed. Emergency Mgmt. Agency (2021–2025)) (accessed July 2, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

congressionally appropriated funds undermines homeland security and puts American lives at risk.<sup>8</sup>

We urge you to immediately publish the notices of funding opportunities for the FY 2025 DHS preparedness grants and award the remaining Nonprofit Security Grant Program National Security Supplemental. Communities are, quite literally, depending on you. Thank you for your prompt attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security



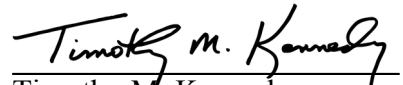
Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



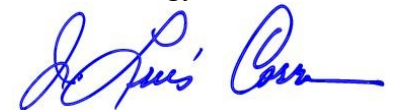
Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



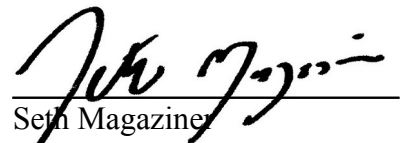
Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



Timothy M. Kennedy  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Emergency Management  
& Technology



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress

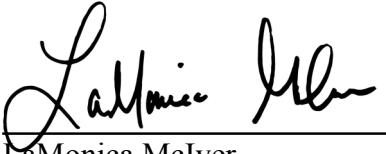


Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress

<sup>8</sup> Jennifer Berry Hawes, *States Fear Critical Funding from FEMA May Be Drying Up*, PROPUBLICA (Jun. 27, 2025), <https://www.govexec.com/federal-news/2025/06/states-fear-critical-funding-fema-may-be-drying/406374/>.



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LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



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Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



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Pablo José Hernández  
Member of Congress




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Nellie Pou  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress



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Troy A. Carter, Sr.  
Member of Congress