



# COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Hearing Statement of Oversight, Management, & Accountability Subcommittee Chairman Lou Correa (D-CA)

### *Reviewing DHS's Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program*

June 14, 2022

We're here to discuss a topic that has hit all too close to home for many of us in recent weeks. From the hostage situation at a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas earlier this year, to the racially motivated shooting at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York just last month, hate fueled attacks have devastated communities across the country. The increasingly frequent acts of domestic violent extremism in places we used to think of as safe, have us all asking what more we can do.

The Secretary of Homeland Security recently launched a new urgent review to assess the Department's capabilities to address this rising threat. We are here today to discuss one of those capabilities in depth. A key piece of the Department of Homeland Security's toolbox has been the Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) grant program.

Since 2011, the Department has identified the need to partner with local communities to address the growing domestic terrorism threat. In 2016, DHS launched the Countering Violent Extremism grant program, a predecessor to the current TVTP program. However, weak management of that early grant program undermined DHS's ability to determine the effectiveness of the funding and concerns about inherent anti-Muslim bias in some of the funded projects eroded trust with minority communities.

It is local community leaders who are in the best position to know when and how to engage with a vulnerable individual, and ensuring the Department maintains trust with local communities must be a top priority. In 2020, DHS relaunched the grant program under the new TVTP name and with a new public health focused approach.

Through the TVTP grant funding, DHS supports the efforts of local partners who seek to raise awareness about the domestic violent extremism threat and develop community-based networks to provide support to individuals who may be radicalizing to violence before a crime is committed.

Our witnesses today represent four of the organizations that have received TVTP grants in either the FY2020 or FY2021 grant cycles. Their projects, executed over a period of two years, represent the wide variety of violence prevention efforts that are funded by this program. DHS has sought to support projects that implement promising practices as well as those that propose to test new and innovative solutions to terrorism prevention.

These projects fall into a number of categories including: enhancing threat assessment capabilities, challenging online mobilization narratives, and establishing or enhancing local prevention frameworks. The TVTP program has demonstrated some promising early results but it's still relatively new and although DHS has started the process to ensure an independent review of the efficacy of projects funded in the FY 2020 grant cycle, that review is not yet complete. Continued oversight of this program will be necessary to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about how they have ensured the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties in their work with individuals and local communities, as well as how they plan to measure the impact of their projects. It is of the utmost importance that we get this right and do whatever we can to curb these horrifying attacks.

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