



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Confronting the Rise in Anti-Semitic Domestic Terrorism

January 15, 2020

This hearing is an opportunity for all Members of Congress to come together and condemn acts of domestic terrorism and targeted violence motivated by anti-Semitism. This issue has been a priority for this Committee. As many of you heard at our May 2019 Full Committee hearing entitled *Confronting the Rise of Domestic Terrorism in the Homeland*, we have seen a dramatic and disturbing rise in acts of right-wing domestic terrorism, including anti-Semitic violence, in recent years. Unfortunately, recent events have once again confirmed that anti-Semitic violence is an urgent and growing threat to the homeland.

Just last month, the Jewish communities in the New York and New Jersey areas were subject to multiple violent, hateful acts. These acts have once again reminded us why it is so important for the federal government to work with its state and local partners to combat anti-Semitic domestic terrorism. Across the country, we have seen that houses of worship and other religious institutions have increasingly been targeted for acts of violence. That is why I was proud to introduce H.R. 2476, the American Nonprofit Organizations Against Terrorism Act of 2019, which authorizes the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) for years to come. The program provides grants to nonprofits and faith-based organizations in both urban and rural areas to help secure their facilities against a potential terrorist attack.

I am pleased the bill passed both the House and Senate and I hope that the President will sign it into law shortly. While this is an important step, Congress must make sure that all precautions are taken to protect communities targeted by hate and violence. This includes reevaluating the Grant Program's funding levels and working with community groups and leaders to establish meaningful partnerships to tackle this issue. Separately, I am encouraged that DHS released their first-ever Strategic Framework for Combating Terrorism and Targeted Violence. Although I still have many questions as to its implementation, this strategy appears to be a step in the right direction for the Department.

I look forward to continuing oversight over the Department on this issue and working together with stakeholders to suggest further improvements to its efforts. I hope to hear today additional suggestions as to how this Committee can curb domestic terrorism while respecting and protecting the civil rights and civil liberties of all Americans. Congress must continue to advocate for policies that protect the Jewish community and all communities impacted by acts of domestic terror.

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