



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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January 14, 2022

The Honorable Chris Murphy
Chair
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Chair
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murphy, Ranking Member Capito, Chairwoman Roybal-Allard, and Ranking Member Fleischmann,

In a few days, on January 16th, we will observe National Religious Freedom Day, marking the passage in 1786 of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. It is a welcome reminder of our country's long tradition of protecting religious freedom, which at its most basic level entails the right to worship without fear of harm.

To that end, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has called, both [independently](#) and as part of an [interfaith coalition](#), for an increase in appropriations to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) from \$180 million to \$360 million. We are grateful for your support of this program and the additional funding that Congress has provided to NSGP in recent years. As you deliberate over the final FY22 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, we respectfully ask that you keep our request in mind.

There have been over [one hundred reported incidents](#) of vandalism, arson, and other destruction at Catholic sites in the United States since May of 2020. As bishop chairmen of the USCCB [noted](#), "These are not mere property crimes – this is the degradation of visible representations of our Catholic faith. These are acts of hate." The Federal Bureau of Investigation's recently released [hate crime statistics](#) for 2020 show 79 incidents of anti-Catholic bias, the most since 2008 and the second most since the FBI began publishing hate crime data in 1991. Of those 79 incidents, 36 involved destruction, damage, or vandalism of property, and 5 were arson. Anti-religious incidents overall were disturbingly high last year: the FBI reports 959 anti-Jewish hate

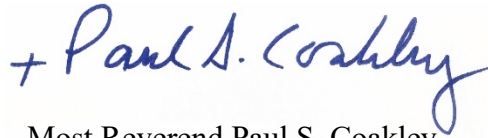
crimes, 141 anti-Muslim, and 94 anti-Sikh, with 3.4% of all hate crimes occurring at houses of worship.

The NSGP received over 3,300 applications for almost \$400 million in funding this past year. Please increase the appropriated funds to this program to help meet the needs of the faith community to worship in peace.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature in blue ink: + Tim. Card. Dolan

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York
Chair, Committee for Religious Liberty

Handwritten signature in blue ink: + Paul S. Coakley

Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Chair, Committee on Domestic Justice and
Human Development