



State and Local Homeland Security: DHS Preparedness Grants

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After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Congress expanded support for state and local homeland security efforts. This included creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and giving it the authority to manage federal homeland security grant programs. Over the years, various DHS entities have administered these grants, which have supported activities such as helping states and localities prepare for and respond to terrorist attacks and mass shootings, protecting critical infrastructure (such as rail systems and ports), and enhancing security for nonprofit organizations and high-risk areas.

Since their original release, homeland security and preparedness grants have evolved significantly, with a new emphasis on nonprofit and special event security—such as international sporting events, large music concerts, and presidential campaign rallies. New grant programs specifically targeting cybersecurity and soft target protection have been enacted. Funding levels and eligible activities, programs, and equipment for these grant programs have fluctuated—expanding and constricting—due to both executive branch and congressional action.

This report provides a brief summary of the development of DHS's role in providing homeland security assistance, a summary of the current homeland security programs managed by DHS, and a discussion of the following policy issues: (1) the purpose and number of programs; (2) preparedness grant funding amounts; (3) special event security; and (4) soft-target security.

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Introduction

Since 1996 Congress has increasingly debated, enacted legislation, and appropriated grant funding for what in 1996 was considered “domestic preparedness” and what in 2026 is considered “homeland security” purposes.¹ Arguably, this was the result of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City and the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City.

One of the first congressional actions related to domestic preparedness activities and programs was the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Program. Established by Congress in the 1996 Department of Defense Reauthorization Act, this program provided assistance to over 150 cities for biological, chemical, and nuclear security.² Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Congress increased its support for state and local homeland security assistance, including the enactment of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, establishing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and authorizing the new department to administer federal homeland security grant programs.³

This report focuses specifically on the recent programs and funding status, persistent policy questions, and ongoing evolution of the DHS’s homeland security grant programs for states and localities.

- Since FY2023, annual appropriations for DHS homeland security grants have ranged from approximately \$1 billion to \$2 billion. For example, the FY2023 funding for the Homeland Security Grant Program (which includes the State Homeland Security Grant Program, the Urban Area Security Initiative, and Operation Stonegarden) was about \$1.12 billion; in FY2025, it was approximately \$1.01 billion.⁴
- Policy questions about homeland security assistance programs persist, including who should be eligible for assistance, what types of assistance should be provided (e.g., financial, technical support), and what constitutes an eligible activity or expenditure.
- While the number, specific purposes, administration, and funding levels of homeland security grant programs have evolved, the primary goal of these programs has remained: enhancing and maintaining state, local, and nonfederal or nongovernmental organizations’⁵ homeland security and emergency management capabilities.⁶ These grants are generally referred to as “preparedness grants” because the grant programs are meant

¹ For the purpose of this report, homeland security assistance programs are defined as DHS programs, or programs that were transferred to DHS, that provide funding to states, localities, tribes, and other entities for security purposes; however, public safety and National Guard programs and funding are not included in this report. Additionally, the term “homeland security program” was not used until 2002. Prior to this, the term “domestic preparedness” was used to describe programs and activities that assisted states and localities to prepare for possible terrorist attacks.

² P.L. 104-106. For historical information on the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program, see <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/nunn-lugar-domenici-domestic-preparedness-program-program-overview>.

³ P.L. 107-296.

⁴ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Homeland Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security>.

⁵ Nonfederal and nongovernmental entities include grant recipients, such as privately owned ports and transit systems, and nonprofit organizations.

⁶ For a further example, here is a link to FEMA’s Authorized Equipment List that allows grant recipients to search for specific equipment it can purchase and maintain with preparedness grants: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/tools/authorized-equipment-list>.

to enhance state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) core homeland security/disaster capabilities.

- Eligible use of grant funds has also evolved or shifted with presidential administrations and Congresses. These shifts are reflected in the establishment of national homeland security priorities⁷ to counteract threats such as cybersecurity incursions, domestic violent extremism, election security risks, and other emerging threats. One notable expansion of grant use is the permitting of law enforcement overtime costs to be an eligible use of preparedness grants funding.⁸

List of Program Acronyms

1. Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Program (NLD)
2. Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP)
3. Grants Program Directorate (GPD)
4. Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG)
5. Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)
6. State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)
7. Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
8. Operation Stonegarden (OPSG)
9. Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSGP)
10. Intercity Passenger Rail Security—Amtrak Grant Program (IPR)
11. Port Security Grant Program (PSGP)
12. Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP)
13. Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP)
14. Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP)

Summary of Grants

DHS administered 12 grant programs—with a total appropriation in FY2025 of approximately \$1.7 billion. This report uses DHS documents to summarize the programs and does not provide in-depth information on these grants. For the most recent and more detailed information on individual grant programs, see the list below that draws from FEMA’s “Grants” webpage and cites to sources associated with each program.

1. The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) “provides state, local, tribal and territorial emergency management agencies with the resources required for implementation of the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation. The EMPG’s allowable costs support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities across the prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery mission areas.” This program was appropriated \$319.55 million in FY2025.⁹

⁷ DHS archived information concerning national priorities on August 27, 2025, and no new information has been provided. <https://www.dhs.gov/archive/priorities>.

⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Homeland Security Grants: DHS Implemented National Priority Areas*, GAO-24-106327, January 9, 2024, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-24-1066327.pdf>.

⁹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Emergency Preparedness Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/emergency-management-performance>.

2. The Homeland Security Grant (HSGP) “includes a suite of risk-based grants to assist state, local, tribal and territorial efforts in preventing, protecting against, mitigating, responding to and recovering from acts of terrorism and other threats. This grant provides grantees with the resources required for implementation of the National Preparedness System and working toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.”¹⁰
 - a. State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP) “provides funding to support the implementation of risk-driven, capabilities-based State Homeland Security Strategies to address capability targets.” This program was appropriated \$373.5 million in FY2025.¹¹
 - b. Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) “provides funding to enhance regional preparedness and capabilities in designated high-threat, high-density areas.” This program was appropriated \$553.5 million in FY2025.¹²
 - c. Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) “provides funding to enhance cooperation and coordination among state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal law enforcement agencies to jointly enhance security along the United States land and water borders.” This program was appropriated \$81 million in FY2025.¹³
3. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program “is intended to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities by supporting flexible, sustainable, secure, strategically located, and fully interoperable EOCs with a focus on addressing identified deficiencies and needs. Fully capable emergency operations facilities at the state and local levels are an essential element of a comprehensive national emergency management system and are necessary to ensure continuity of operations and continuity of government in major disasters or emergencies caused by any hazard.” This program was appropriated approximately \$103 million in FY2024.¹⁴
4. The Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBSG) “helps protect surface transportation infrastructure and the traveling public from acts of terrorism and increase the resilience of transit infrastructure. This funding provides owners and operators of intercity bus systems with resources for implementation of the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.” This program was appropriated \$1.8 million in FY2025.¹⁵
5. The Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) “provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack. The intent is to integrate nonprofit preparedness activities with broader state and local preparedness efforts. It is also designed to promote coordination and

¹⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Homeland Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Emergency Operations Center Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/emergency-operations-center>. According to FEMA, there is no funding for this grant program in FY2025.

¹⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Intercity Bus Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/intercity-bus-security>.

collaboration in emergency preparedness activities among public and private community representatives, as well as state and local government agencies.”¹⁶ For FY2025, the NSGP was appropriated \$137.25 million for UASI nonprofit recipients and \$137.25 million for state nonprofit recipients¹⁷

6. The Intercity Passenger Rail—Amtrak Program (IPR) “provides funds to protect critical surface transportation infrastructure and the traveling public from acts of terrorism and increase the resilience of the Amtrak rail system. This funding plays an important role in the implementation of the National Preparedness System by supporting the building, sustainment and delivery of core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.” This program was appropriated \$9 million in FY2025.¹⁸
7. The Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) “provides funding to state, local and private-sector partners to help protect critical port infrastructure from terrorism, enhance maritime domain awareness, improve port-wide maritime security risk management, and maintain or reestablish maritime security mitigation protocols that support port recovery and resiliency capabilities.” This program was appropriated \$90 million in FY2025.¹⁹
8. The Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) “supports the building of core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation by providing resources to close known capability gaps in Housing and Logistics and Supply Chain Management, encouraging innovative regional solutions to issues related to catastrophic incidents, and building on existing regional efforts.” This program was appropriated \$10.8 million in FY2025.²⁰
9. The State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) “provides funding to eligible entities to address cybersecurity risks and threats to information systems owned or operated by, or on behalf of, state, local, or tribal governments.” This program was appropriated \$91.8 million in FY2025.²¹
10. The Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP) “provides funding to eligible public transportation systems (which include intra-city bus, ferries and all forms of passenger rail) to protect critical transportation infrastructure and the travelling

¹⁶ FEMA published a funding notice on October 28, 2024 for the \$210 million remaining appropriated by the National Security Supplemental (Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024). This opportunity is called the Nonprofit Security Grant Program National Security Supplemental (NSGP-NSS) and is available at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security/nss/fy-24-nofo>. Key program enhancements include expanding eligibility to include consortia of nonprofit organizations as eligible subrecipients.

¹⁷ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Nonprofit Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security>.

¹⁸ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Intercity Passenger Rail Security,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/intercity-passenger-rail-amtrak>.

¹⁹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Port Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/port-security>.

²⁰ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/regional-catastrophic>.

²¹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-local-cybersecurity-grant-program>.

public from terrorism, and to increase transportation infrastructure resilience.” This program was appropriated \$83.7 million in FY2025.²²

11. The Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) “plays an important role in the implementation of the National Preparedness System by supporting the building, sustaining and delivery of core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.” This program was appropriated \$13.5 million in FY2025.²³
12. The Tribal Cyber Security Grant Program (TCGP) “provides funding to eligible entities to address cybersecurity risks and threats to information systems owned or operated by, or on behalf of tribal governments.” This program was appropriated \$12.16 million in FY2025.²⁴

Eligible Grant Recipients

Each of the grant programs summarized above has different eligible recipients and processes that determine allocations. The following table provides information on these 12 grant programs.²⁵

Table I. DHS Preparedness Grants Eligible Recipients and Allocation Process

Program	Eligible Recipients and State Administrative Agency ^a	Allocation Process
EMPG	States, DC, and US territories are eligible—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Allocation formula mandated by Congress
HSGP		
SHSP	States, DC, and US territories are eligible—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Allocation formula mandated by Congress
UASI	High-threat, high-risk urban areas—state governments are the administrative authority	Eligible cities and funding amounts determined by DHS through a risk assessment of US’ top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)
OPSG	International land and water border states, localities, and tribes—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Determined by US Customs and Border Protection sector-specific border methodology

²² Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Transit Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/transit-security>.

²³ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/tribal-homeland-security>.

²⁴ Federal Emergency Management Agency, “Tribal Cybersecurity Grant Program,” <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/tribal-cybersecurity-grant-program>.

²⁵ The Emergency Operations Center grant program is not included since it has yet to receive funding in FY2025.

Program	Eligible Recipients and State Administrative Agency ^a	Allocation Process
IBSG	Owners and operators of fixed-route inner-city and charter buses serving UASI jurisdictions—state governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS through a risk assessment
IPR	The National Passenger Railroad Corporation (Amtrak)—Amtrak is the administrative authority	Determined by DHS through a risk assessment of Amtrak routes/stations in UASI jurisdictions
NSGP	501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS Secretary through a risk assessment of nonprofits in states and UASI jurisdictions
PSGP	Owners and operators of port facilities and ferries, and state and local government entities responsible for port security—individual grant recipients are the administrative authority	Competitive DHS review process
THSGP	“Indian Tribe” as defined in 6 U.S.C. §601(4)—tribal governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS risk assessment and peer review process
TSGP	State, local, and privately owned transit agencies in UASI jurisdictions—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS risk assessment and competitive process
TCGP	“Indian Tribe” as defined in 6 U.S.C. §601(4)—tribal governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS risk assessment and peer review process
SLCGP	States, DC, and US territories—state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS risk assessment and competitive process
RCPG	States, DC, and US territories ^b —state and territorial governments are the administrative authority	Determined by DHS risk assessment and competitive process

Source: CRS' summary of FEMA's FY2025 Preparedness Manual, <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/manual>.

Notes:

- a. A State Administrative Agency (SAA) is the entity officially designated by a U.S. state or territory to apply for, receive, and manage FEMA's preparedness grants. SAs are a central pass-through entity for these grant funds to localities, tribes, non-profits, and other state and local partners. For a list of every state's and territory's SAA (including contact information), see <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/about/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

- b. A state or territory is eligible to apply if one or more of the 100 most populous MSAs per the Census Bureau's 2021 Population Estimates is located within that state or territory. Additionally, local governments must be located within one of the 100 most populous MSAs. DHS/FEMA will accept no more than one application per MSA.

Issues for Congress

More than 24 years after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and approximately 23 years since the establishment of DHS, debate continues on federal assistance for states and localities with regard to issues related to homeland security. Issues associated with DHS preparedness grants are similar to issues associated with grants, generally. Some of these recurring issues include:

- Complex management and administration process can hinder access to funding;
- Potential disparity in how grant funding is allocated, especially if there is a significant difference in how some grant recipients manage and administer their grants; and
- Challenges of evaluating real-world impact of preparedness funding in the absence of clear metrics and transparent reporting.

Some of these questions, arguably, have been addressed in legislation, such as the statute that modified the distribution of Homeland Security Grant Program funding to states and localities (P.L. 110-53),²⁶ and the establishment of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP).²⁷ Current proposed legislation continues the debate and discussion of these questions, including H.R. 4669, FEMA Act of 2025, and H.R. 6507, DHS Grants Accountability Act. Among other things, the FEMA Act would remove FEMA from DHS and provide DHS one year to determine how to manage the DHS preparedness grants that FEMA currently administers for the whole of DHS.²⁸ The DHS Grants Accountability Act is intended “to improve preparedness, transit, and port security grant programs through better oversight, transparency, and stakeholder engagement.”²⁹ The bill focuses on annual requirements for selected preparedness grants, establishing detailed funding allocation criteria, codifying key application and grants management dates/deadlines, and extending grant funding availability periods.³⁰

Purpose and Number of Assistance Programs

Generally, each grant program funds a range of eligible activities. When Congress authorizes a federal grant program, the eligible activities may be broad or specific depending on the statutory language in the grant authorization. When grant funds are distributed through a competitive process, the administering federal agency officials exercise discretion in the selection of grant projects to be awarded funding within the range of eligible activities set forth by Congress.

Some may argue the purpose and number of DHS grant programs have not been sufficiently addressed. Congress faces at least four questions: Should DHS provide more general, all-hazards assistance or more specific, threat-focused assistance (such as that for terrorism)? Does the

²⁶ P.L. 110-53, among other actions, permanently established the preparedness grants in law, and (most notably) it establishes the formula and method in which DHS is to base its annual allocation of these grants.

²⁷ 6 U.S.C. § 609a.

²⁸ H.R. 4669

²⁹ H.R. 6507

³⁰ H.R. 6507

number of individual grant programs result in coordination challenges and deficient preparedness at the state and local levels? Would program consolidation improve homeland security? Does the purpose and number of assistance programs affect the administration of the grants?

The potential for consolidation of DHS grants into a single block grant was considered when the Obama Administration first proposed the National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) in its FY2013 budget request to Congress, and again in FY2014. Congress denied the request both times, expressing concern that the proposed NPGP had not been authorized by Congress, lacked sufficient detail regarding the implementation of the program, and lacked sufficient stakeholder participation in the development of the proposal.³¹ Currently, there is ongoing debate between the President and Congress on whether and how to provide funding to SLTTs for homeland security activities. Early in 2025, President Donald Trump ordered a government-wide internal review of federal grants, including the DHS preparedness grants,³² in an effort to assist federal agencies in identifying and ending “wasteful spending.”³³ Later in 2025, some Members and states complained that funds for FY2025 homeland security grants were being delayed or withheld.³⁴ Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the majority of DHS’ preparedness grants were later issued in July 2025.³⁵

Funding Amounts

Annual appropriations for DHS preparedness grants remain a recurring issue for congressional consideration because these grants directly affect national preparedness and SLTTs’ ability to maintain essential security and emergency response capabilities. Preparedness grants, such as SHSP and UASI, are typically the federal assistance that help SLTTs build and sustain prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities. Funding levels for homeland security grants can fluctuate with changing budgetary environments, shifting congressional priorities, or broader federal fiscal debates. Arguably, Congress and policymakers must consider how funding reductions or short-term budget processes—such as continuing budget resolutions—may affect long-term national preparedness.

Congress may want to consider if annual appropriations provide enough funding to sustain capabilities that require consistent investment, such as cybersecurity, interoperable communications systems, and specialized first responder training. Many SLTT homeland security priorities and federally-funded activities, for example equipment maintenance, personnel training cycles, and intelligence-sharing systems, may require multi-year funding. Continuing budget resolutions may affect how SLTTs maintain and fund multi-year preparedness activities and programs.

Additionally, Congress may want to consider how appropriations, the budget process, and continuing appropriations influence national homeland security priorities. Preparedness grants were established to align federal priorities—counterterrorism, cybersecurity, soft-target security,

³¹ P.L. 113-76, Div. F, Sec. 557.

³² For more information on this, see CRS Legal Sidebar LSB11303, *Congressional and Executive Power Over Spending: Selected Recent Litigation*, by Matthew D. Trout and Sean Stiff.

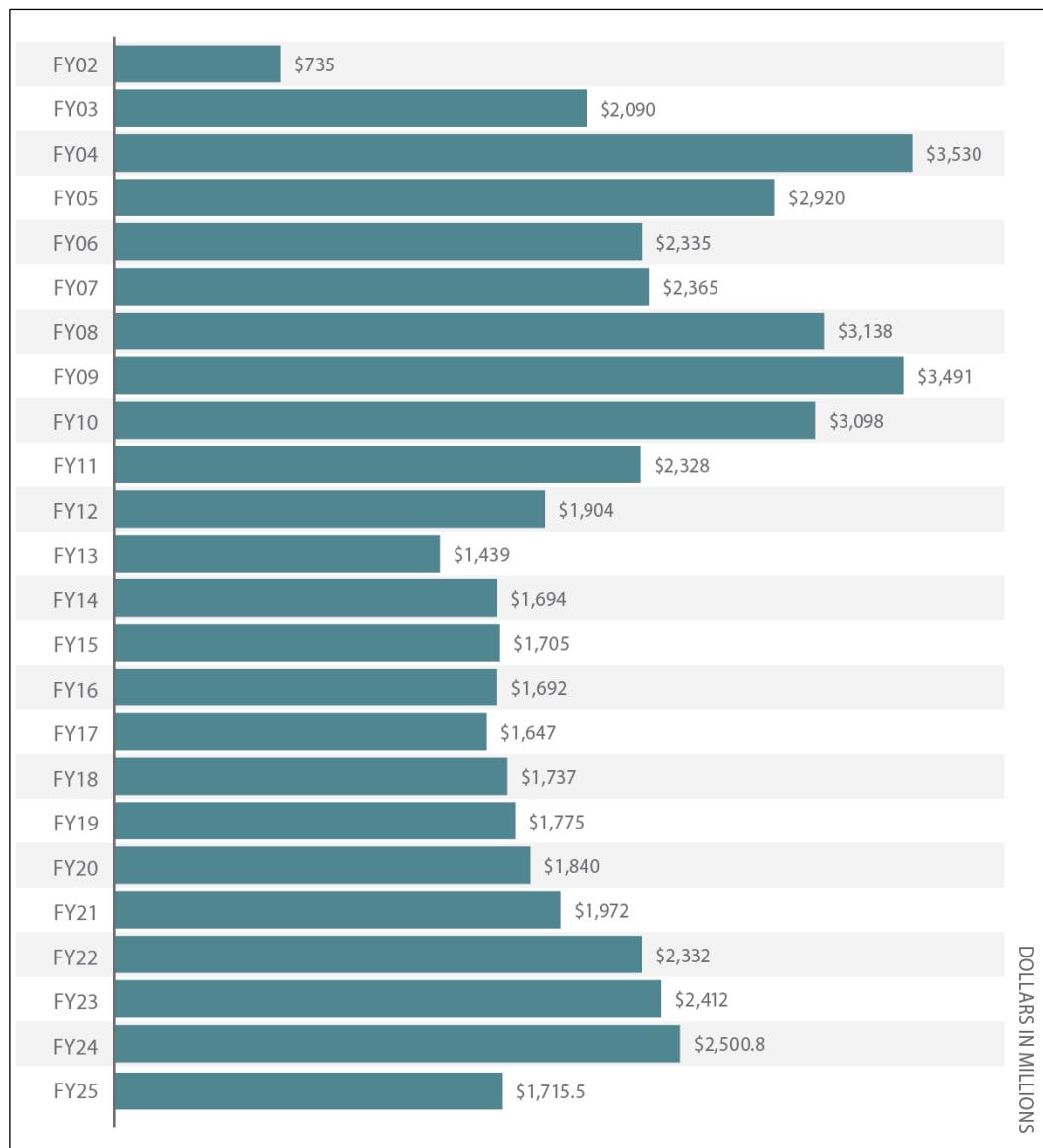
³³ President Donald J. Trump, Office of the White House, Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, “Radical Transparency About Wasteful Spending,” February 18, 2025, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/radical-transparency-about-wasteful-spending/>.

³⁴ Office of New York Governor, “Governor Hochul’s Letter to Secretary of Homeland Security: Release Emergency Management Funding for States and Local Governments,” press release, July 10, 2025, <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochuls-letter-secretary-homeland-security-release-emergency-management-funding-state>.

³⁵ For current preparedness grant NOFOs, see <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness>.

and emerging threats. However, SLTTs face unique and diverse hazards that may not match federal homeland security priorities. Historically, congressional debate has frequently focused on whether preparedness grant funding should be increased, maintained at current funding levels, or consolidated into homeland security block grants.

Figure 1. FY2002-FY2025 Total Grant Funding for DHS Preparedness Grants
(Amounts in millions)



Source: CRS analysis of annual U.S. Department of Homeland Security budget and appropriation data.

Special Event Security

Congressional interest in special event security is ongoing due to continued threats from both domestic and international terrorism. Additionally, during summer 2026, the United States is expected to host a significant number of national and international events that will require enhanced levels of security, likely supported by federal funds. Such events include the 250th

anniversary of the United States' founding; the summer Olympics in Los Angeles, CA; and the FIFA World Cup Championship in East Rutherford, NJ.

National Special Security Events (NSSEs) are nationally or internationally significant events that typically involve a large number of public, U.S. official, and foreign dignitary attendees. The U.S. Secret Service is in charge of coordinating security operations. Some NSSEs, such as nominating conventions, receive specific appropriations for security operations from the Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program³⁶—funding which can be used to offset costs related to overtime for SLTT law enforcement officers. Other NSSEs do not.

A soft target is a location that is easily accessible to large numbers of people and has limited security or protective measures in place, making it vulnerable to attack by terrorists or mass shooters. Soft targets typically attract crowds on a predictable or semipredictable basis.

States and local funding of security operations for NSSEs³⁷ is a continuing issue. Currently, the U.S. Secret Service does not have a process for reimbursing SLTT partners for their contributions to NSSE events, which can include significant expenses related to planning, operations, and law enforcement officer overtime. Some argue that states already receive funding for homeland security capabilities through the Homeland Security Grant Program. Others believe that security costs for these national events should not be borne by the local host, but by the federal government. While DHS preparedness grants direct SLTTs to build capabilities aligned with national priorities like intelligence sharing, cybersecurity, and counterterrorism, SLTT officials must also allocate resources to address their own specific risks that range from natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and public health emergencies. To meet the security demands of NSSEs, SLTTs may need to redirect personnel, equipment, or funding, thereby creating potential competition with ongoing preparedness goals and operations.

Congress may consider whether and if there needs to be a funding mechanism to assist state and local governments for participating in NSSE security operations, or if support through existing homeland security grants is sufficient.

Soft-Target Security

Soft-target security and DHS preparedness grants is a congressional issue due to the grants playing an integral role in SLTTs ability to secure soft targets. This role is shaped by annual homeland security priorities, and congressional support for that role is transmitted through such actions as appropriations funding for the grants and SLTTs, as well as congressional oversight. DHS and congressional attention to soft target security is important because soft targets are inherently difficult to secure due to their accessibility and high public density/attendance, making them attractive targets for domestic and international terrorists.

As attacks and attempted attacks against these soft targets increase, Congress has to consider whether or not preparedness grants like UASI and NSGP currently provide sufficient resources and funding for enhancing soft-target surveillance, access control, training, and community/nonprofit preparedness. Finally, Congress may want to prioritize preparedness grant oversight due to evolving and increasing threats to soft targets, and, in the course of this

³⁶ For more information on funding for presidential nominating conventions, see CRS In Focus IF11555, *Presidential Candidate and Nominating Convention Security*, by Shawn Reese.

³⁷ DHS predesignates certain recurring significant national events as NSSEs. These recurring significant national events include Republican and Democratic Party national nominating conventions, presidential State of the Union addresses, United Nations General Assemblies hosted in the United States, and presidential inaugurations.

oversight, attempt to understand how the use of this grant and these current threats affects SLTTs' soft-target security operations.

Appendix. Historical Development of Federal Preparedness Assistance

In 1996, Congress enacted the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act (known as the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act). This law, among other things, established the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Program (NLD) and provided financial assistance to major U.S. metropolitan statistical areas.³⁸ This assistance, catalyzed by the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, focused on assisting first responders in preparing for, preventing, and responding to terrorist attacks involving weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).³⁹ Initially, the Department of Defense (DOD) was responsible for administering NLD, but, in 1998, NLD was transferred to the Department of Justice (DOJ), which then established the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) to administer NLD and other activities that enhanced state and local emergency response capabilities.⁴⁰ By 1998, 40 cities had received funding, and by 2001, 120 cities had received assistance. The NLD ended in 2001 with a total of 157 cities receiving training and funding for personal protective equipment for WMDs.⁴¹

ODP was transferred to DHS with enactment of the Homeland Security Act of 2002.⁴² Initially, ODP and its terrorism preparedness programs were administered by the Border and Transportation Security Directorate, and all-hazard preparedness programs were in the purview of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). ODP and all preparedness assistance programs were transferred to the Office of the Secretary in DHS in 2004. After investigations into the problematic response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the programs were transferred to the National Preparedness Directorate following the enactment of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA).⁴³ Currently, all preparedness grant programs and activities are administered by the Grants Program Directorate (GPD) within FEMA. **Figure 1** provides a graphical representation of the historical development of the administration of federal homeland security assistance from 1996 to present.

P.L. 110-53, Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (9/11 Commission Act), authorized a number of the DHS grants and mandated some of their allocation methodologies. This legislation resulted from numerous years of debate on how DHS should allocate homeland security funding to states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories—Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.⁴⁴

Specifically, the 9/11 Commission Act permanently authorized homeland security grants that support SLTT preparedness. This preparedness focuses on preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to terrorist attacks and other incidents of significance. Additionally, the act required that grant funds be distributed based on risk mitigation and support for core homeland security priorities, and established minimum allocations for SLTTs to ensure that all

³⁸ For information concerning MSAs, see <https://www.bls.gov/sae/additional-resources/metropolitan-statistical-area-definitions.htm>.

³⁹ P.L. 104-201, Title XIV, Subtitle A, Sec. 1412, 110 Stat. 2718.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Domestic Preparedness, “Emergency Responder Guidelines,” Washington, DC, August 2002, p. 1, <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/198524.pdf>.

⁴¹ James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, *Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness and WMD Civil Support Teams*, Monterey, CA, October 2001 <https://nonproliferation.org/>.

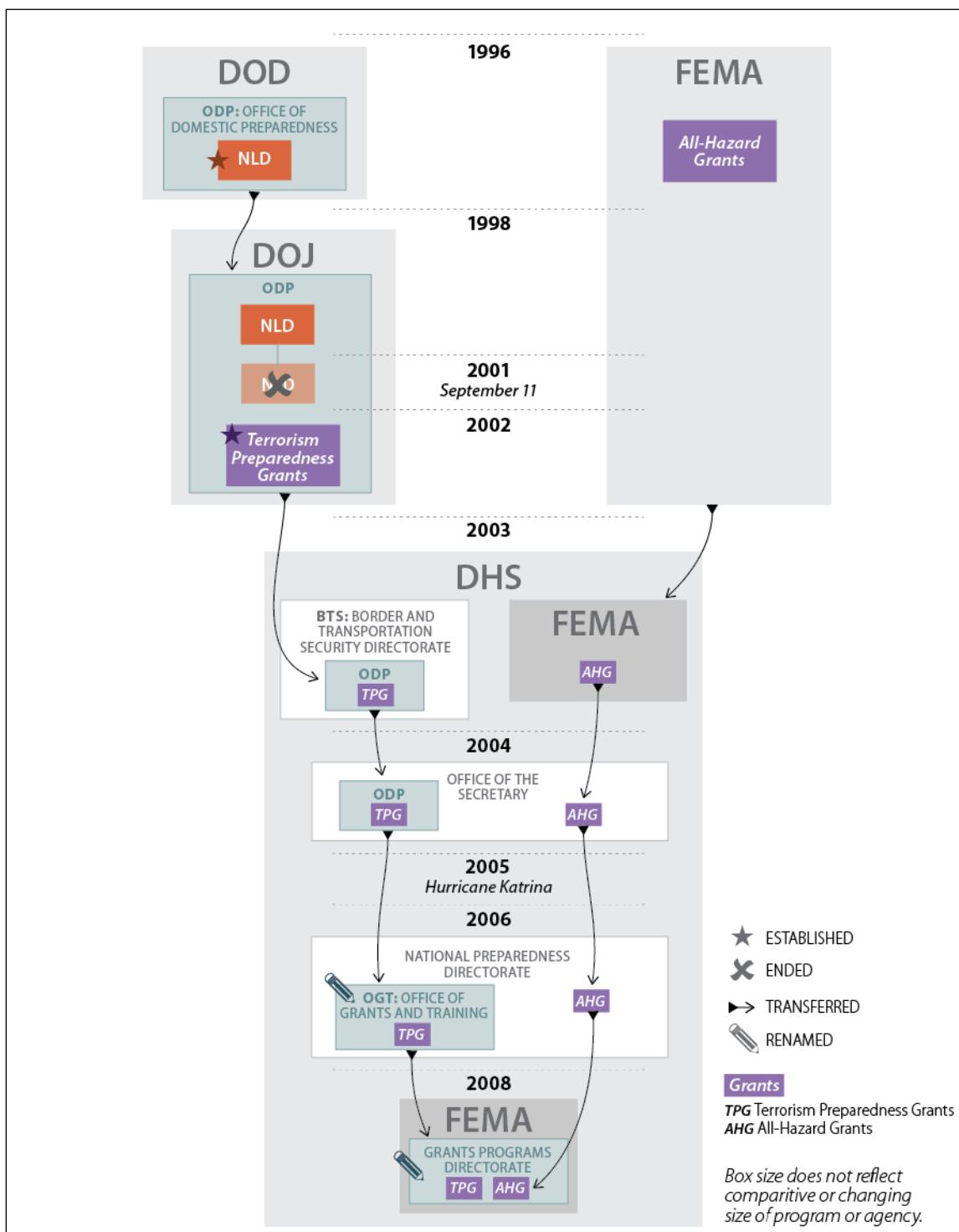
⁴² P.L. 107-296, Title IV, Sec. 403, 116 Stat. 2178.

⁴³ P.L. 109-295.

⁴⁴ U.S. territories include Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa.

grant recipients receive a baseline level of preparedness assistance. Finally, the act addresses permitted uses and oversight requirements such as reporting requirements, duplication of grant funding, preparedness planning, training, exercises, equipment acquisition, interoperable communications, employing and countering unmanned vehicles, and fusion center support.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ 6 U.S.C. §601-613.

Figure A-1. Historical Development of Homeland Security Assistance

Source: CRS analysis of the evolution of DHS grants administration

Note: This figure does not define “All-Hazards Grants.” An all-hazards assistance program allows recipients to obligate and fund activities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from almost any emergency regardless of type or reason, which includes man-made (accidental or intentional) and natural disasters.

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