

**NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION  
HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE  
POSITION PAPER**

DATE: January 10, 2022

SUBJECT: State Homeland Security Grant Program Policy Changes

DISCUSSION:

The basis of the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) pre-dates the terrorist attacks of September 11, and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) came about shortly after the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. These two programs form the cornerstone of preparedness funding for states and locals to address emerging and dynamic threats to the homeland. They support the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities in states, territories, urban areas, and local and tribal governments and to develop a more secure and resilient nation.

These programs represent a partnership between states and locals to aid the federal government in their mission to close nationwide preparedness gaps. In 2018, the National Homeland Security Consortium conducted a study to evaluate the past investment of funds on terrorism preparedness, the augmentation of that funding by federal assistance, and what capabilities states, and localities now have that were not available pre-2001. To collect this information, a survey was issued to all 50 states and to jurisdictions from 50 urban areas currently and formerly eligible for UASI funds to determine how much money has been invested by state and local governments.

A key finding from the survey is that for every SHSGP and UASI grant dollar invested, the median return was \$1.70 for responding state emergency management and homeland security agencies; for local emergency management and homeland security agencies, it was \$0.92. Furthermore, return on investment also generally increased when considering other jurisdictional agencies that were involved with, but not responsible for preparedness activities.

In recent years, administrations waited until the completion of the appropriations process and the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to roll-out proposed programmatic changes to the SHSGP and UASI programs. An example of these proposed changes includes a requirement for certain percentages of funding to meet core priorities. Furthermore, in 2020 the department “banded” states based on threat which fundamentally altered the funding formula for states. While the department ultimately sidelined these proposed changes primarily due to the continuing response to COVID, they reflect a repeated pattern of attempts to change the rules during the application process.

As emergency management and homeland security professionals, the membership of NEMA appreciate the need for these programs to remain dynamic and meet emerging threats. The department must develop a more collaborative process, however, to devise, evaluate, and implement proposed changes. The planning process for grant funding typically takes several years, so the 45-day window of a standard NOFO is wholly inadequate to affect smart and effective changes. Also, with a multi-year performance

period for the grant, changing the national priorities in the middle of the period means states and locals cannot achieve or sustain impactful progress.

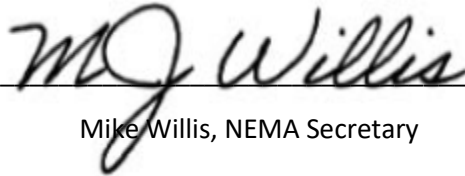
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. DHS should establish a codified review process for grant guidance that is properly vetted through the appropriate stakeholders. Organizations such as NEMA, the National Homeland Security Consortium, or National Advisory Council are natural partners in such an effort.
2. Completion of the review and concurrence should occur not less than 12 months from the end of the previous fiscal year to give grantees adequate time for planning adjustments.

Moved: Brian Hastings, Alabama  
Second: Chris Stallings, Georgia

DISPOSITION: Passed Unanimously

Authenticated: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Willis". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Mike Willis, NEMA Secretary