

**THE TARGETING OF BLACK INSTITUTIONS: FROM
CHURCH VIOLENCE TO UNIVERSITY BOMB
THREATS**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

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THE TARGETING OF BLACK INSTITUTIONS: FROM CHURCH VIOLENCE TO UNIVERSITY BOMB THREATS

Thursday, March 17, 2022

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m., via Webex, Hon. Bennie G. Thompson [Chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Thompson, Jackson Lee, Langevin, Payne, Correa, Slotkin, Cleaver, Green, Clarke, Watson Coleman, Rice, Demings, Barragan, Gottheimer, Malinowski, Katko, Higgins, Guest, Bishop, Van Drew, Miller-Meeks, Clyde, Cammack, and Pfluger.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Committee on Homeland Security will come to order. Without objection, there is some—oh. Oh, OK. So, the Committee on Homeland Security will come to order. Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare the committee in recess at any point.

Good morning. The committee is meeting to examine the targeting of Black institutions from church violence to university bomb threats. Exactly a year ago, Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas testified before this committee that domestic extremist violence represents the greatest threat to the homeland right now.

Today we are here to discuss how one form of extremism, White supremacist violence, threatens Black institutions, particularly Black churches and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Data from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, or CSIS, shows that right-wing extremism has surged to dangerous levels. Since 2015, right-wing extremists have been responsible for 267 plots and attacks and 91 deaths.

No one could forget the tragedy at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston in June 2015, when a radicalized White supremacist murdered 9 churchgoers while shouting racial epithets. According to the CSIS, Black churches were targeted in another 15 plots or attacks from 2016 to April 2021.

As a son of the South, I know all too well the horror that shakes a community when a house of worship is attacked. Today we find ourselves confronting an unprecedented rise in threats of violence against HBCUs. Between January 4 and February 4 of this year, the FBI identified a staggering 51 total bomb threats, 28 targeting

HBCUs and 12 targeting Black churches. There have been at least 8 more bomb threats in the last 6 weeks.

While the nature of violence toward Black institutions may have evolved over the years, the attacks are by no means new. When I was coming of age in Mississippi, White supremacists attacked Black churches with impunity. Many were firebombed, burned, or destroyed. I also recall with great sadness the tragedy that occurred at Jackson State University when I was a young man.

In May 1970, 75 police officers were sent to campus to break up a protest. In a use-of-force incident the President's Commission on Campus Unrest later called an unreasonable, unjustified over-reaction, police fired 140 shots toward a dormitory building, tragically killing 2 students and injuring another 12.

Shortly after I was elected to Congress, our Nation was again confronted with a resurgence in attacks on Black churches. In 1995 to '96 alone, there were as many as 35 burnings of Black churches. Here we are, yet again, today. These attacks sicken me.

These terrorists, and they are terrorists, whether they be engaged in physical violence or threats of such, seek to intimidate good people from exercising their religious beliefs and receiving an education. While these institutions have shown remarkable resilience under terrible circumstances, their academic or religious missions are too often hampered by having to divert resources to ensure safety and security. Congress has heard and answered the call for increasing funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. This program provides funding for physical security enhancements and other security-related activities to nonprofit organizations, such as houses of worship and universities, that are at high risk of a terrorist attack.

In fiscal year 2021, Congress doubled funding for the program to \$180 million, but significant needs remain. In response, Congress increased funding for the program to \$250 million in the fiscal year 2022 omnibus spending bill President Biden signed into law this week.

Additionally, I have introduced legislation cosponsored by Ranking Member Katko that would authorize \$500 million for the program. This legislation would also create an office tasked with conducting outreach, education, and technical assistance to eligible nonprofits, with a particular focus on underserved communities.

As someone with a long history with the NPSG program, I am pleased that we are holding this hearing today to get testimony on the record about its importance and how it might be further strengthened. I am also pleased to see that yesterday, the Biden administration announced that HBCUs will be able to access grant funds under the Project School Emergency Response to Violence program to restore a safe learning environment.

They are important steps, but much more remains to be done to help communities who have been hurt by this violence bring the perpetrators to justice and prevent future threats and attacks. It is unconscionable that Americans practicing their faith at houses of worship or obtaining an education to better themselves, their families, and future generations would have to fear for their lives. Indeed, racially-motivated threats and violence against Black churches and schools are attacks on these institutions, but also on

our American way of life. Our response must be swift and serious, commensurate with the persistent threat.

I am honored to have a distinguished panel of witnesses before the committee this morning and look forward to hearing their testimony on this important topic. Reverend Eric Manning joined Mother Emanuel AME Church, Charleston, South Carolina, as the senior pastor in June 2016, a year after the tragic shooting. He has lifted his church and community in the years since the terrorist attack and has continued to be a voice of social justice.

My friend Mr. Thomas Hudson, president of Jackson State University, is leading his university as it confronts this new wave of threats. President Hudson offers a unique perspective as HBCUs address this on-going crisis.

Finally, I look forward to hearing from Ms. Janai Nelson about the broader threat landscape facing Black institutions and what the Federal Government can do to help keep those communities safe. I also wish to congratulate her on her recent promotion, becoming the eighth president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Thank you again. I look forward to your testimony.
[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

MARCH 17, 2022

The committee is meeting to examine the “Targeting of Black Institutions: From Church Violence to University Bomb Threats.” Exactly a year ago, Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas testified before this committee that “domestic violent extremism” represents the “greatest threat in the homeland right now.”

Today, we are here to discuss how one form of that extremism—White supremacist violence—threatens Black institutions, particularly Black churches and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Data from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) shows that right-wing extremism has surged to dangerous levels. Since 2015, right-wing extremists have been responsible for 267 plots and attacks and 91 deaths.

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These are important steps, but much more remains to be done to help communities who have been hurt by this violence, bring the perpetrators to justice, and prevent future threats and attacks. It is unconscionable that Americans practicing their faith at houses of worship or obtaining an education to better themselves, their families, and future generations would have to fear for their lives. Indeed, racially-motivated threats and violence against Black churches and schools are attacks on these institutions, but also on our American way of life. Our response must be swift and serious, commensurate with this persistent threat.

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Chairman THOMPSON. I now recognize the Ranking Member of the full committee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Katko.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your insight and powerful statements. I appreciate them and I thank you for holding this important hearing today.

To our witnesses, thank you for joining us in person and virtually, I think one of them is virtually, to discuss a troubling issue that threatens the safety and security of Americans throughout the United States. Unfortunately, it is not confined to the Black community, the Jewish community, including my city suffered a bombing of a temple when I was a prosecutor. This type of conduct, it is just sickening in today's day.

Threats against African Americans are an ugly part of American history and an issue our country clearly still struggles with. Throughout the civil rights era, African Americans were subject to violent and often deadly assaults as they fought for the simple right of equality. Birmingham, Alabama, alone, which served as a focal point of the civil rights movement, experienced more than 40 deadly bombings between the late '40's and the mid-'60's, earning it the dubious nickname "Bombingham." While our Nation has thankfully made great progress, we still have much work to do to ensure that all our citizens feel safe within our borders.

Thank you, Reverend Manning, for being here today. It is devastating to recall the evening of June 17, 2015, when a mass shooter took the lives of 9 African-American congregants who were attending Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston. This race-fueled attack at an historic African American church shook our Nation to its core, causing all of us to reflect on the fact that inherently evil acts of violence continue to exist in many forms. That is why we are here and that is our main mission. I am grateful to have you here today to discuss how this horrific day shaped the church's external engagement to enhance security and any insights you may have into how Congress can better support the safety and security of religious institutions of all stripes.

Almost a decade later, we are now dealing with a series of threats, most of them targeted at the safety and well-being of predominantly Black academic communities. The FBI reported that 57 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, or HBCUs, and houses of worship were targeted with bomb threats from January 4 through February 16 of this year. The FBI has dedicated more than 20 field offices to investigating these threats which they have categorized as hate crimes.

While we are thankful that no bombs have been discovered, these threats have derailed education and religious operations while instilling fear in the hearts of students, faculty, administrations, administrators, and worshipers.

To digress for a moment, the next step is what has been happening in the Jewish community where people are losing their lives. That is something we just can't have.

I commend the Federal, State, and local law enforcement efforts to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice. While law enforcement officers work to apprehend those responsible, Congress has a sacred duty to ensure educational institutions and houses of worship have access to and knowledge of every safety and security tool in our Federal toolbox. The Department of Homeland Security offers a variety of grants, including the Nonprofit Security Grants and Targeted Violence and Terrorist Prevention Grants to nonprofits and institutions of higher education to establish or enhance security capabilities, mitigate targeted violence, and prevent terrorism.

At the same time, the FBI offers security training, including active-shooter training, to teach leaders at schools, houses of worship, and other at-risk settings how to respond to threats and save lives. It is vital that soft targets, such as our colleges and churches, are aware of these resources and that we bolster their relationship with law enforcement to prevent violence within our communities. Again, drawing on my experience with what is happening with the Jewish community across this country, most Jewish communities now have a very robust and active security apparatus, and that is something we should talk about today.

I am excited to hear from our witnesses today about how they are working to protect HBCUs and African American houses of worship. I am looking forward to learning more about the unique threats our institutions face, the partnerships they have fostered

with law enforcement, the capabilities they have to report and combat violence, and how Congress can strengthen all of these efforts.

Threats against historically Black institutions are attacks on the core freedoms promised to all Americans. Efforts to derail any person's ability to seek higher education or pursue their religious freedoms is an assault on their fundamental Constitutional rights and the justice system must address it swiftly and severely.

I want to thank you again to our witnesses for being here today. I look forward to our conversation and I yield back my time.

[The statement of Ranking Member Katko follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER JOHN KATKO

Thank you, Chairman Thompson, for holding this important hearing today, and thank you to our witnesses for joining us to discuss a troubling issue that threatens the safety and security of Americans throughout the United States.

Threats against African Americans are an ugly part of American history and an issue our country clearly still struggles with. Throughout the civil rights era, African Americans were subject to violent and often deadly assaults as they fought for their right for equality.

Birmingham, Alabama alone, which served as a focal point of the civil rights movement, experienced more than 40 deadly bombings between the late 1940's to mid-1960's, earning it the dubious nickname "Bombingham."¹ While our Nation has thankfully made great progress, we still have work to do to ensure that all of our citizens feel safe within our borders.

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The FBI has dedicated more than 20 field offices to investigating these threats, which they have categorized as hate crimes. While we are thankful that no bombs have been discovered, these threats have derailed educational and religious operations, while instilling fear in the hearts of students, faculty, administrators, and worshippers.

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¹ <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/07/06/197342590/remembering-birmingham-dynamite-hill-neighborhood>.

have fostered with law enforcement, the capabilities they have to report and combat violence, and how Congress can strengthen all these efforts.

Threats against historically Black institutions are attacks on the core freedoms promised to all American citizens. Efforts to derail any person's ability to seek higher education or pursue their religious freedoms is an assault on their fundamental Constitutional rights and the justice system must address it swiftly and severely. Thank you again to our witnesses for being here today, and I look forward to our conversation.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back. Other Members of the committee are reminded that under committee rules opening statements may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Hons. Jackson Lee and Norman follow:]

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE

MARCH 17, 2022

Thank you, Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Katko, for convening today's hearing entitled, "The Targeting of Black Institutions: From Church Violence to University Bomb Threats."

I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses:

- Rev. Eric S.C. Manning, senior pastor, Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church, Charleston, South Carolina;
 - Thomas K. Hudson, J.D., president, Jackson State University, Jackson, Mississippi; and
 - Janai S. Nelson, J.D., associate director-counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc., Washington, DC.
- There is no Minority witness.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony about the heightened threats and violence facing Black institutions, including churches and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

These threats are not new, but in recent months HBCUs and other Black institutions have faced a disturbing number of bomb threats.

This hearing will be an opportunity to highlight the importance of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), which plays a critical role in helping at-risk nonprofit organizations and religious communities bolster security.

Prior to September 11, 2001, the Federal Government had a wide range of law enforcement, National security, and crime investigative agencies that collected information, but jealously guarded this information from other agencies.

More than 20 years after the 9/11 attacks, the terrorism landscape is complex, diffused, and dynamic.

The 9/11 Commission Report allowed an in-depth assessment of the failures that led to the horrific terrorist attacks against the United States that cost the lives of nearly 3,000 people.

The House Committee on Homeland Security was created to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Report and ensure that resources were provided to support the mission of homeland security.

The most significant task of the committee was guiding the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and making sure that it had all that it would need to carry out its mission to keep all Americans safe from the threat of terrorism.

I, along with other Members who have served on this committee since its inception, made a commitment that a terrorist attack of the magnitude that occurred on September 11, 2001, would never happen again.

An essential component of our ability to keep this commitment was the establishment of stronger ties among local, State, and Federal law enforcement and building collaborations with private-sector partners.

Since the founding of DHS its mission remains the same—to defend the homeland from terrorist attacks and to help victims recover from disasters that are natural and man-made.

Although terrorist actors espousing violent Islamist ideologies continue to pose a threat, the greatest terrorism threat to the homeland today is posed by domestic violent extremists, particularly from those who promote a violent White supremacy ideology.

Further complicating counter-terrorism efforts is the convergence of violent ideologies where violent White supremacy (including anti-Semitism) often combines with other violent ideologies to drive an attack.

The face and threats posed by terrorism is now sourced from domestic threats that have been present within this Nation for a very long time but have found voice to reemerge in recent years.

This is the bind that connects the Civil Rights movement to the Jewish Faith, which includes joining in marches, sit-ins, voter registration drives in the deep south—none of which were safe things to do—but they were the right things to do for the Nation.

An embodiment of this joint struggle were the deaths of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney—names that will forever be linked.

In January 2022, the month prior to Black History month bomb threats targeting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) started.

Just a few weeks ago we visited the issue of violence targeting places of worship for persons of the Jewish faith and today we are looking at threats of violence targeting HBCUs and Black churches.

Many HBCUs welcomed Jewish intellectuals fleeing Europe during the rise of Nazism in the early 1930's.

During this period more than two-thirds of the faculty hired at many HBCUs from 1933 to 1945 had come to the United States to escape Nazi Germany.

HBCUs believed the Jewish professors were valuable faculty that would help strengthen their institutions' credibility.

HBCUs had a firm belief in diversity and giving opportunity no matter the race, religion, or country of origin.

HBCUs were open to Jews because of their ideas of equal learning spaces, which demonstrated that an environment where all people felt welcome to study, including women could prosper.

In this environment the leaders of the modern civil rights movement were educated.

The history of the civil rights movement and HBCUs is inextricably linked.

HBCUs are where early civil rights leaders and church leaders were forged.

The list of prominent leaders and the HBCUs they attended:

- Kamala Harris (Howard University)
- Martin Luther King (Morehouse)
- Rosa Parks (Alabama State)
- Medgar Evers (Alcorn State University)
- Thurgood Marshall (Lincoln University and Howard University)
- Jesse Jackson (North Carolina A&T)
- Ralph Abernathy (Alabama State University)
- Lonnie Johnson (Tuskegee State University)
- Langston Hughes (Lincoln University)
- Harry and Harriette Moore (Bethune Cookman College)
- Clementa Carlos Pinckney (Allen University)
- Toni Morrison (Howard University)
- Booker T. Washington (Hampton University)
- Alice Walker (Spelman)
- Kathern Johnson (West Virginia State University)
- John Lewis (Fisk University)
- W.E.B. Dubois (Fisk University)
- Ida B. Wells (Fisk University).

On December 25, 1951, the first martyrs of the civil rights movement Henry and Henrietta Moore, were murdered on the night of their anniversary, for the battles they won for voting rights and equal pay for Black residents in the State of Florida.

At the time of their murder Florida had the highest number of registered Black voters of any Southern State.

Targeting African Americans for working for all Americans to have equal access to housing, employment, and opportunities is best illustrated by the history of Birmingham Alabama, which earned the bloody name of "Bombingham" because of the number of bomb attacks in that city between 1947 and 1965, the year the voting rights act passed.

On September 15, 1963, a well-known attack in Birmingham occurred when the 16th Street Baptist Church was bombed before Sunday morning services, killing 4 girls:

- Addie Mae Collins (age 14, born April 18, 1949),
- Carol Denise McNair (age 11, born November 17, 1951),
- Carole Rosamond Robertson (age 14, born April 24, 1949), and
- Cynthia Dionne Wesley (age 14, born April 30, 1949).

Maxine McNair, was the last living parent of any of the 4 Black girls killed in the 16th Avenue Baptist Church bombing. She died on Sunday, January 2, 2022, at the age of 93.

Outrage over the incident and the violent clash between protesters and police that followed drew National attention to the hard-fought, often-dangerous struggle for civil rights for African Americans.

The bombing of the 16th Avenue Baptist Church was not an isolated incident it was part and parcel of the civil rights struggle in one of the most dangerous places in the United States to be African American and demanding equal rights.

The city of Birmingham, Alabama, was founded in 1871 and rapidly became the State's most important industrial and commercial center.

By the late 1960's, Birmingham was well-known as one of the most discriminatory and segregated cities in the United States.

Alabama Governor George Wallace was a leading foe of desegregation, and Birmingham had one of the strongest and most violent chapters of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).

The city's police commissioner, Eugene "Bull" Connor, was notorious for his brutality in combating radical demonstrators, union members, and any Black citizens.

Political labels during this period were not what they are today.

Democrats were the pro-segregationist—evidenced by Alabama Governor George Wallace and Police Chief Bull Connor and they are there also the lead anti-segregationist President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon Banes Johnson.

It was a case of the classic house divided parable and by the 1970's Democrats emerged as a unified party committed to moving the country forward as one Nation and not one divided against itself.

Today, Democrats and Republicans should be unified to make the United States in word and deed live up to the words of the Constitution, but we must be prepared to weather the storms caused by those who want to drag the Nation back into a dark place in its history.

Black people and institutions have continued to experience threats and violence over the decades since the 1960's.

In the mid-1990s President Bill Clinton committed to having a Federal Government that looked like the United States, which resulted in the first African Americans appointed to serve as Secretaries of the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture, as well as dozens of high-level appointments throughout the Federal Government.

Following these high-profile appointments along with policy statements regarding equity and his administration there was a surge in attacks on Black churches.

In 1995–96 alone, there were as many as 35 burnings of Black churches.

While these attacks were mostly spread throughout the South, there were also Black churches targeted in the Northeast, Midwest, and Southwest.

In response to these attacks, Congress passed the Church Arson Act of 1996, which created a Federal crime for damaging religious property or obstructing any person's free exercise of religious beliefs where the offense takes place.

Over the last 6 years, Black churches have been among the dozens of religious institutions, including mosques and synagogues, that have been threatened, burned, bombed, and hit with gunfire.

According to data from CSIS, Black churches were the targets of 15 attacks or plots from 2016 to April 2021.

Other forms of attacks have also targeted Black churches.

The attack at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church is well-known, as a recent act of terrorism on a Black house of worship. On June 17, 2015, Dylan Roof shot and killed 9 churchgoers while shouting racial epithets.

After the attack, officials discovered a manifesto with racist characterizations of Blacks, Jews, and others.

As prosecutors in his Federal murder trial noted, the perpetrator of this crime is an example of the lone-wolf actor becoming radicalized by a "self-learning process" on-line leading to the belief "that violent action is necessary to fight for White people and achieve White supremacy."

In the weeks following the attack at Mother Emanuel, several other Black churches were burned, including God's Power Church of Christ in Macon, Georgia and Battle Creek Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

God's Power Church was completely gutted, and Battle Creek Baptist incurred more than \$250,000 in damages, destroying the church's main building.

In 2018, with cold precision several bombs detonated in the city of Austin Texas plunged the city into fear.

The bombs were set by a 23-year-old Mark Anthony Conditt, a White resident of Pflugerville, Texas who killed 2 people that included Anthony House, the African American son of a local minister, and African American Draylen Mason, 17, both were members of the Wesley United Methodist Church.

The Wesley United Methodist Church in Austin, Texas, was founded in 1865, at the end of the American Civil War by newly-freed slaves from the Austin area and has remained a predominantly African-American congregation.

Anthony Conditt left an audio confession that has never been made public and it should be heard by the Members of this committee to properly put into context what his mindset was when he committed these awful acts of terrorism.

The city of Austin experienced terror, and the lives lost were those of African Americans.

Because of the real threat of violence faced by vulnerable groups the DHS security grants program is a necessary and important tool that must be available to assist places of worship in increasing security.

Members of this committee recognize that the terror landscape has changed: Violent extremists today pick and choose individual elements of violent ideologies that fit their world view.

Groups from ISIS to domestic White supremacist are united in their violent anti-Semitism—leaving the American Jewish community particularly vulnerable.

Nonprofits, including those within the American Jewish community, have no choice but to invest in protection against the threat from these violent ideologies, and rely on NSGP funding to do so.

Democrats recognize that we must support these at-risk nonprofits and ensure that houses of worship have the resources they need to bolster their security in the face of these terror threats.

I want to make it very clear—that this is not just a burden for African American places of worship or HBCU's to carry—but the responsibility of the United States to protect against terrorist attacks no matter the target or the place attacked—it is vitally important that all members of our Nation feel and know that they are not alone when they face a threat.

An attack against one place of worship or school is an attack against all places of worship and education settings.

Democrats have doubled funding for Nonprofit Security Grant Program from \$90 million in fiscal year 2020 to \$180 million in fiscal year 2021, but it is still not enough to meet the real and pressing need.

As a Member of the House Budget Committee, I join other Members of this committee in calling for significant increases to funding in fiscal year 2022 appropriations bill and the “Build Back Better Act” would have added \$100 million in additional funding.

In addition to more funding, the infrastructure of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program both within FEMA and among the States needs to mature to help ensure that eligible at-risk non-profits can easily apply and access the resources they desperately need to ensure community members can worship and congregate safely.

I look forward to today's testimony and the work of this committee to continue in its efforts to strengthen and improve the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE RALPH NORMAN

The only concern students and staff should have while on campus should be education. Safety and security should never be called into question and that has sadly been compromised by the recent threats of violence targeting HBCU campuses.

I am deeply disturbed by the recent events that have taken place since January 1 at HBCUs across the Nation, causing a disruption in learning and a heightened sense of fear. I am calling on our law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to continue to work diligently to identify those responsible and bring them to justice. They must face the heavy hand of the law.

I am thankful to my colleagues in Congress for bringing this issue forward and to the FBI for their on-going investigations. Perhaps most importantly, I am thankful to Clinton College in Rock Hill South Carolina for promoting a campus environment of faith, unity, and positive moral. Campus safety is an utmost priority to every educational institution, and should be second only to education itself.

Chairman THOMPSON. Members are also reminded that the committee will operate according to the guidelines laid out by the Chairman and Ranking Member in our February 3, 2021, colloquy regarding remote procedures.

I now welcome our panel of witnesses. Our first witness, Reverend Eric Manning, is a senior pastor at the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Prior to accepting his appointment to Mother Emanuel in June 2016, Reverend Manning led 4 other AME Churches in South Carolina over 12 years.

Our second witness, Mr. Thomas K. Hudson, JD, is president of Jackson State University, located in Jackson, Mississippi. He was named the university's president in November 2020, after serving as acting president and in several key leadership roles at the university, including chief operating officer and chief diversity and EEO officer.

Our final witness is Ms. Janai S. Nelson, the newly-appointed president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. Prior to the role, Ms. Nelson served as the associate director-counsel at the organization where she has worked for the past 8 years.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statement will be inserted in the record.

I now ask each witness to summarize their statement in 5 minutes, beginning with Reverend Manning.

**STATEMENT OF REV. ERIC S.C. MANNING, SENIOR PASTOR,
MOTHER EMANUEL AME CHURCH**

Rev. MANNING. Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Katko and the Committee on Homeland Security, I thank you for this opportunity to share some thoughts with you this morning. This is the first time that I have ever had the privilege to appear before a Congressional committee and please know how deeply humbled I am for this opportunity to share with you today some reflections on the pain that was experienced by a deliberate and sinful act that is rooted in hate.

While there have been many attacks levied against the Black church throughout history, for the purpose of this testimony today I will only highlight two, the first being the 16th Street Baptist Church, the site of one simple act that was rooted in hate where, on Sunday, September 15, 1963, at 10:22 a.m., while worshipers were gathering for worship service and church school was concluding, 4 church school attendees were murdered: Addie May Collins, 14; Cynthia Wesley, 14; Carole Robertson, 14; Carol Denise McNair, 11. While this sinful act of hate took place over 57 years ago, this community still is feeling the pain that was inflicted upon them.

The second sinful act of hate occurred here at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church where on June 17, 2015, at the conclusion of Bible Study, a lone White supremacist entered and came into our Bible Study and murdered 9 members: Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45; Cynthia May [sic] Graham Hurd, 54; Susie J. Jackson, 87; Ethel Lee Lance, 70; Reverend DePayne Middleton, 49; Honorable Reverend Clementa C. Pinckney, 41; Tywanza Sanders, 26; Reverend Daniel L. Simmons, Sr., 74; and Myra Thompson, 41—or 59, excuse me. There were also 5 survivors: Felicia Sanders, Polly Sheppard, Jennifer Pinckney, and 2 minor children.

The entire congregation was stunned and rendered speechless by an unbelievable act of horror. It left an undeniable stain on all of our hearts, our minds, and our memories. Our sacred sanctuary had become a crime scene.

It is important to understand that both crimes rooted in hate struck at the heart of the Black community, which is indeed the church. In many communities the church is the place where the community gathers for fellowship, comfort, discuss community concerns, and, most importantly, share in the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. When an act is levied against the Black church, it has a lingering effect. I am not sure how long it will truly take for these respective communities to heal, especially, of course, when they have been dealt such a major blow that is rooted in the sin of racism.

I have served as the pastor of Mother Emanuel now for almost 6 years and I can truly say that every member is in a different place when it comes to healing. Many continue to deal with the lingering impact, knowing that their sacred place or house of worship had been violated by the sin of racism. To this day, there are still many members who have not yet returned.

I would characterize the lingering effects of trauma as a long-term opportunity, meaning that we must still seek resources that will help the members to recover. In the short term, immediately following the tragedy of the church, the church was able to develop a security plan. This security plan was implemented by the church and continues to be updated on a regular basis.

To date the church has spent well over \$50,000 when it comes to church security. I would have hoped that by now that we would have been able to throttle back with budgetary item. However, it is still one that we utilize on a regular basis.

Tragically, we live in a world where sin and hate is so strong that many houses of worship will need to develop detailed security plans. I believe that we can all still come together to find sustainable solutions that would protect all houses of worship, understanding, though, that this would require all of us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. I want to believe that we could truly embrace what Abraham Lincoln said, "Let us discard all quibbling about this man or the other man, this race or that race or the other race being inferior. And let us discard these things and unite as one people throughout this land until we shall once more stand up declaring that all men are created equal."

But until that time comes, let us continue to look for ways to protect houses of worship as the Nonprofit Security Grant Act of 2022, H.R. 6825, prayerfully will do.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share with you all today.
[The prepared statement of Rev. Manning follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC S.C. MANNING

MARCH 17, 2022

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, thank you for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you this morning.

This is the first time that I have ever appeared before a Congressional committee. Please know how deeply humbled I am by this opportunity to share with you today, my reflections on the pain that was experienced by a deliberate and sinful act rooted in hate.

While there have been many attacks levied against the Black church throughout history, for the purpose of this testimony today I will discuss two. The first being the 16th Street Baptist Church, the site of one sinful act rooted in hate. On Sunday September 15, 1963, at 10:22 am, when worshippers were gathering for worship service and church school was concluding a bomb went off. Four young girls attending Sunday School were murdered: Addie Mae Collins (14), Cynthia Wesley (14), Carole Robertson (14), and Carol Denise McNair (11). While this sinful act of hate took place over 57 years ago, the community is still feeling the pain that was inflicted upon them.

The second sinful act rooted in hate occurred on Wednesday June 17, 2015, at the conclusion of Bible Study. This act occurred at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) while the Bible Study group closed the session in prayer. It was at that time a lone gunman, who was welcomed by the group opened fire killing 9 members of the church: Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton (45), Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd (54), Susie J. Jackson (87), Ethel Lee Lance (70), Rev. DePayne Middleton (49), Honorable Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney (41), Tywanza Sanders (26), Rev. Daniel L. Simmons, Sr. (74), and Myra Singleton Thompson (59). There were also 5 survivors: Felicia Sanders, Polly Sheppard, Jennifer Pinckney, and 2 minor children.

The tragedy of June 17, 2015 shook all the foundations of Mother Emanuel AMEC to their very core. Acts of Christian love were met by forces of hate, racism, bigotry, and violence. A welcomed visitor ended the weekly prayer meeting with actions the congregation had never experienced in more than two centuries of worship.

As the worshippers bowed their heads in a closing prayer 9 members—including the young and visionary pastor—were murdered. Three other members were terrorized—tortured by indescribable memories.

The entire congregation was shocked, stunned, and rendered speechless by an unbelievable horror. It left an indelible stain on their hearts, minds, and memories.

A sacred sanctuary became a crime scene.

The loving response of Charleston citizens, the protective response of city, State, and National officials, the outpouring of condolences and sympathy revealed that this tragedy of bigotry and hate no longer represented the forces that opposed Mother Emanuel AMEC in its earlier days.

Despite the welcomed support the indelible stain of tragedy was uniquely felt by Mother Emanuel AMEC. With joined hands and humble hearts the congregation had to look only to the Divine hills for help. There they found comfort in the arms of a loving God. While this sinful act of hate took place almost 7 years ago the community is still feeling the lingering effects of this trauma.

It is important to understand that both crimes rooted in hate struck at the heart of the Black community, which is the church. In many communities the church is the place where the community gathers to fellowship, comfort, discuss community concerns, and most importantly share in the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. When an attack is levied against the Black church it has lingering effects and I am not sure how long it takes to truly heal from these acts of hate that are rooted in the sin of racism.

I have served the congregation of Mother Emanuel AMEC as their senior pastor for almost 6 years and can truly say that every member is in a different place when it comes to healing. Many continue to deal with the lingering impact of having their sacred place of worship being violated by the sin of racism. To this day there are still many members who have not returned to the church.

I would characterize the lingering effects of trauma as a long-term opportunity (meaning that we still must seek resources that will help members recover). In the short term (immediately following the tragedy) the church developed a detailed security plan. This security plan was implemented by the church and continues to be updated on a regular basis.

To date the church has spent well over \$50,000 in updating the security cameras on-site, deploying biometric scanners, key fobs, and employing off-duty police officers. This new budgetary item is one that I thought would be reduced over time, unfortunately this has not become a reality for Mother Emanuel AMEC.

Tragically, we live in a world where the sin of hate is so strong that many houses of worship will need to develop detailed security plans. I believe that we can all still come together to find sustainable solutions that would protect all houses of worship, understanding though that this would require all of us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. I would want to believe that we could truly embrace what Abraham Lincoln said, “let us discard all this quibbling about this man and the other man—this race and that race and the other race being inferior . . . Let us discard all these things, and unite as one people throughout this land, until we shall once more stand up declaring that all men are created equal”.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share with you all today.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you for your testimony, Reverend Manning. I now recognize President Hudson to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS K. HUDSON, PRESIDENT, JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. HUDSON. Good morning, Chairman Thompson and Members of this committee. I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak with you today.

While I wish my presence before you was due to other circumstances, I do believe this is a conversation of necessity. The recent bomb threats against the institution I lead, my alma mater, Jackson State University, and the almost two dozen other HBCUs, make a mockery of how far we have come as a Nation.

There is always a group of individuals who will attempt to drag us back to a time when terrorizing our communities was frequent occurrences, often without admonishment. The threat we received on February 1, 2022, was an attempt once again to incite mass anxiety and fear reminiscent of yesteryear. The targeting of Black schools and sacred institutions has taken place in our country since their inception. Then and now, these threats are designed to intimidate and impede our sense of safety and freedom in an environment where our students deserve to feel protected at all times.

At JSU, we were fortunate that our local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies rallied behind us during this time. We appreciate the efforts of the Jackson Police Department, State of Mississippi Capitol Police, and the FBI, who responded not just in words, but in action, helping to provide the necessary resources to mitigate this threat. Of course, we thank the JSU Department of Public Safety, who on this day and every day work hard to protect our campus and our students.

Collectively, it is our responsibility to create safe environments for our campus community. They should be able to receive a nurturing learning experience in a protected environment free from distraction.

But what will it take for us to ensure the long-term protection of not only our students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders, but the historical assets that are HBCUs? It is with this context that I would like to address the areas in which this committee may assist us in this endeavor. We can do this by ensuring that HBCUs receive equitable resources, close the significant disparity between our security challenges and our funding, and also counter those disparities thus ensuring sustainability.

I think we all know the history of HBCUs, that our institutions were founded to educate newly-freed Black people who could not attend the already-established colleges and universities. Today there are over 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in this country. Together we have educated millions, helping them realize the American Dream that was elusive to their ancestors.

The intended disruption of HBCUs, like Jackson State University, is an intentional assault on the economic drivers of this country. It is a deliberate attempt to destroy these cultural spaces where intellect and diverse thought thrives. We cannot sit idly by

and wait for something to happen to these hallowed spaces. We cannot afford to be reactionary.

While we share similarities with other colleges and universities, the truth is, unlike our counterparts, we have been routinely underfunded for years, which has led to deferred maintenance and deficiencies within our infrastructure. This is a significant mismatch between our security challenges and adequate funding levels to address this incongruity, which often puts us in a reactionary position due to our historical and persistent under-resourcing.

But there is a way forward. At JSU, we aim to be a part of the solution by partnering with this body and others in addressing these deep-rooted issues. Our close collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security through their Office of Academic Engagement offers an exceptional opportunity to expand our capacity and access to these much-needed resources.

We seek the resources to develop and utilize data science technology, so that we may better understand and motivate resilience strategy while we build trust in the most vulnerable communities.

We anticipate long-term investments to expand and sustain our criminal justice and urban planning programs in order to elevate and develop local and State-wide solutions to serve as a National model and resources. Developing a tiered approach to resolving HBCU security issues and concerns is a must. We must also develop partnerships with our local school districts to jointly pursue those initiatives for early intervention.

I would like to close by saying that we shall not be moved or paralyzed by malevolent threats. I am calling on you to help us bolster our arsenals because we all have the responsibility of ensuring our students can develop in environments free of violence, racism, and intolerance. We must protect our HBCUs, so that transformational education can and will always prevail.

Thank you so much for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hudson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS K. HUDSON

Good morning.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak with you today. I am Thomas Hudson, 12th president of Jackson State University.

While I wish my presence before you were due to other circumstances, I believe this is a conversation or testimony of necessity. The recent bomb threats against the institution I lead, my alma mater, Jackson State University, and the almost 2 dozen other HBCUs, make a mockery of how far we have come as a Nation.

There is always a group of individuals who will attempt to drag us back to the time when terrorizing our communities were frequent occurrences—often without admonishment.

The threat we received on Feb. 1, 2022, was an attempt once again to incite mass anxiety and fear reminiscent of yesteryear. The targeting of Black schools and sacred institutions has taken place in this country since their inception. Then and now, these threats are designed to intimidate and impede our sense of safety and freedom in an environment where our students deserve to feel protected at all times by all costs.

At JSU, we were fortunate that our local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies rallied behind us during this time. We appreciate the efforts of the Jackson Police Department, State of Mississippi Capitol Police and the FBI, who responded not just in words but in action, helping to provide the necessary resources to mitigate this threat. And of course, we thank the JSU Department of Public Safety, who on this day and every day work hard to protect our campus and students.

Collectively, it is our responsibility to create safe environments for our campus community. They should be able to receive a nurturing learning experience in a protected environment free from distraction.

But what will it take for us to ensure the long-term protection of not only our students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders but the historical assets that are HBCUs? And, it is with this context that I would like to address the 3 key areas in which this committee may assist us in meeting the moment. And we meet this moment by helping HBCUs:

- Receive equitable resources;
- Close the significant disparity between security challenges and funding; and
- Counter those disparities thus ensuring sustainability.

I think we all know the history of HBCUs in America. That our institutions were founded to educate newly-freed Black people who could not attend the already-established colleges and universities. Today, there are over 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in this country, and together we have educated millions—helping them realize the American Dream that was elusive to their ancestors.

Over the past 75 years, HBCUs have provided undergraduate training for 75 percent of all Black Americans holding a doctorate degree, 75 percent of all Black officers in the armed forces; and 80 percent of all Black Federal judges, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

The intended disruption of HBCUs, like Jackson State University, is an intentional assault on the economic drivers of this country. It is also a deliberate attempt to destroy these cultural spaces where intellect and diverse thought thrives. And now, in 2022, we cannot sit idly by and simply wait for something to happen to these hallowed places. We cannot afford to be reactionary.

While we share similarities with other colleges and universities—indeed threats of violence may occur at any number of colleges—the truth is, unlike our counterparts, we have been routinely underfunded for years, which has led to deferred maintenance and deficiencies in our infrastructure.

This long-term under-funding has consequences it limits our ability to pivot in an emergency.

There is a significant mismatch between our security challenges and adequate funding levels to address this incongruity. This frequently puts HBCUs in a reactionary position due to our historical and persistent under-resourcing.

While we do our best to manage risks, preparedness has to be the priority in order to deal with relative threats and close security gaps routinely experienced in HBCU environments.

In short, our institutions need capacity-building resources for preparedness, mitigation, and prevention. Because it is true that many of us sit in Urban locations with open campuses; JSU is located in the heart of the capital city. While these settings contribute to the vibrant culture found at HBCUs, they also make us especially vulnerable to the very threats being discussed today.

In addition, the lack of resources, unfortunately, finds many of our institutions with minimal staffing and sometimes limited on-the-ground expertise, especially in cybersecurity. The long-term infrastructure issues—some of which are finally being addressed thanks to Members of this body—and the resulting years of deferred maintenance further compromises the physical security on our campus.

But there is a way forward.

At JSU, we aim to be a part of the solution by partnering with this body and others in addressing these deep-rooted issues. Our close collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security through the Office of Academic Engagement offers an exceptional opportunity to expand our capacity and access to much-needed resources.

We seek the resources to develop and utilize Data Science technologies. . . .so that we may better understand and motivate resilience strategies while we build trust in the most vulnerable communities. We do this as we search for meaningful solutions in collaboration with local and regional partners.

We also anticipate long-term investments to expand and sustain our criminal justice and urban planning programs in order to elevate and develop local and State-wide solutions and to serve as a National model and resource. These include:

- Building our capacity to on-board and graduate talented students—thus allowing us to deploy skilled criminal justice talent and human capital Nation-wide through the establishment of a Center for Excellence.
- Collaborating with State, local, and Federal law enforcement to identify emerging crime and security vulnerability trends.
- Improve the translational value of relevant data for those with decision-making authority.

We also need to acquire advanced security monitoring systems. Most HBCUs possess security data capture systems (often with limited distribution). However, these institutions often have low bandwidth and limited human resources for continuous monitoring. Further, enough server space may likely not be available for long-term data storage. These constitute major security challenges.

Developing a tiered approach to resolving HBCU security issues and concerns is a must. We must also develop partnerships with our public-school districts to jointly pursue initiatives for early interventions, conflict resolution training, and de-escalation protocols.

Last, we must ensure sustainability so we do not find ourselves once again repeating the past. This means access to the critical expertise necessary to conduct comprehensive security vulnerability assessments. . . assessments that will help to identify gaps and challenges and ensure we appropriately address physical, logistical, and digital resilience campus-wide.

As HBCUs are major employers and economic drivers in our respective communities, it is vital that our institutions develop a community of practice principally focused on securing and strengthening the HBCU ecosystem for continued training, education, research, and economic development.

I would like to close by saying we shall not be moved or paralyzed by malevolent threats. I am calling on you to help us bolster our arsenals because we all have the responsibility of ensuring our students can develop in environments free of violence, racism, and intolerance. We must protect our HBCUs, so that transformational education can and will always prevail.

Thank you so much for your time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you, Dr. Hudson, for your testimony. I now recognize Attorney Nelson to summarize her statement for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF JANAI NELSON, PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR-COUNSEL, NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

Ms. NELSON. Thank you and good morning, Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, and Member of the committee. My name is Janai Nelson and I am the president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the escalating threat of violence against Black institutions and for your example of bipartisan partnership and leadership in introducing H.R. 6825.

The Legal Defense Fund is a Black legacy institution founded in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, a graduate of two Historically Black Universities, Lincoln University and Howard University School of Law. LDF was launched at a time of widespread, State-sponsored violence and inequality. As the organization that litigated *Brown v. Board of Education*, which ended legal apartheid in the United States, LDF has long led the struggle for education equity and that struggle is on-going.

On January 4, 2022, at least 8 HBCUs received what would be the first of an escalating number of bomb threats in just the first 3 months of this year. Following this initial rash of bomb threats, the FBI released a statement that they were being “investigated” as racially- or ethnically-motivated violence extremism and hate crimes.

As Chairman Thompson mentioned, this is a National security threat. The attacks did not stop. During the month of February, Black History Month, there was not a single week in which the safety and security of an HBCU and its predominantly Black student populations were not threatened with terrorist violence. An estimated 57 HBCUs and churches have received bomb threats this year alone.

To understand why HBCUs are the target of such vitriol, we must understand their history. HBCUs were established in the early 19th century in direct resistance to State-sponsored denial of education for Black people. HBCUs were created to be safe havens for people for whom education was previously illegal or out of reach. They provided and continue to provide to this day the opportunity for predominantly Black student populations to receive equality, post-secondary education in a nurturing environment that lays bare the myths of White supremacy and Black inferiority.

Although HBCUs make up only 3 percent of the country's colleges and universities, they enroll 10 percent of all Black students and product almost 20 percent of all Black graduates, including Howard University alumna Kamala Harris, the first Black woman Vice President of the United States.

There is a long and ignominious history of bomb threats made and realized upon other Black institutions in the United States. As Reverend Manning mentioned, in 1963, the KKK infamously bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church, killing 4 young girls and terrorizing more than 400 congregants. Black churches have remained a target of White extremist hate and violence as evidenced by the horrific mass killing at Mother Emanuel in 2015.

This Nation also has a shameful history of using the powers of the State and private acts of violence to prevent Black people from receiving an education. HBCUs sit at the intersection of these painful histories of violence against Black people, Black legacy institutions, Black advancement, and Black education.

Although White extremist activity and violence are not new, there has been a disturbing increase in recruitment, propaganda, and visibility of such groups in recent years. In 2021, the FBI warned this very committee that the top threat we face from domestic violent extremists stems from those we identify as racially, ethnically motivated violent extremists.

Indeed, racism is our greatest threat to National security. The bomb threats made to HBCUs are evidence of increased violence across the country.

To reverse this harmful trend, in addition to the on-going investigation by the FBI, this committee must conduct a parallel investigation to ascertain the specific animus of these attacks, to determine how future occurrences can be prevented, and to issue findings and solutions to prevent this on-going threat. Congress must also ensure that HBCUs and other legacy institutions have the necessary funding to protect themselves from future attacks.

To that end, Congress should pass H.R. 6825, the Nonprofit Security Grant Program Improvement Act, which would expand and strengthen the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Despite these threats of terrors, HBCUs have remained resilient in their mission and Black religious organizations continue to serve as a central institution in Black communities across the Nation.

But the continuing threat of racialized violence and the targeting of Black institutions is a scenario that no student, faculty, or staff member, religious leader, devotee, or institution should have to endure in 2022. We call on Congress to bring the full power and resources of the Federal Government to protect these hallowed institutions that strengthen and enrich our society, and to ensure the

safety and security of every resident of this country regardless of race or ethnicity, especially those who are targets of domestic racial terror. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Nelson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANAI NELSON

MARCH 17, 2022

Good morning Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, and Members of the committee. My name is Janai Nelson, and I am the president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc (“LDF”). Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the targeting of Black institutions.

LDF is the country’s first and foremost civil rights law organization.¹ Founded in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall—a graduate of a Historically Black College and University (“HBCU”)—LDF was launched at a time when the Nation’s aspirations for equality and due process of law were stifled by wide-spread State-sponsored racial inequality. From that era to the present, LDF’s mission has been transformative—to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society, using the power of law, narrative, research, and people to defend and advance the full dignity and citizenship of Black people in America.

LDF’s litigation, policy advocacy, organizing, and public education programs seek to ensure the fundamental rights of all people to quality education, economic opportunity, the right to vote and fully participate in democracy, and the right to a fair and just judicial system. As the organization that litigated *Brown v. Board of Education*,² the landmark Supreme Court case that struck down segregation in public schools, LDF has long led the struggle for equal education in the United States. That struggle continues today, in our commitment to building K–12 and higher education learning institutions that foster diversity and advance racial justice.

OVERVIEW AND SEVERITY OF THE ATTACKS ON HBCU S

On January 4, 2022, at least eight HBCUs received bomb threats: Howard University, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Prairie View A&M University, North Carolina Central University, Florida Memorial University, Norfolk State University, Spelman College, and Xavier University of Louisiana.³ The threats generally arrived during the afternoon or evening via an anonymous caller. In response, schools were forced to order evacuations or lockdowns, and to work with local law enforcement to secure their campuses. Although no bombs were found on any campus, students reported feeling distressed after the anonymous threats were called in. One Spelman student noted the similarities between these threats and past violence on HBCU campuses, stating “Black people are still facing discrimination and acts of violence . . . [t]he same way our ancestors faced during the civil rights movement and prior.”⁴ Another student remarked, “I’ve never felt completely safe in this country as a Black woman and as a queer person. But this? This was a very tangible threat to not only my safety but the safety of my community, not just at Howard but across the country. HBCUs are very visible Black spaces. And that makes them very visible targets for White supremacists.”⁵

On January 31, 2022, we saw another series of bomb threats targeting at least 6 HBCUs: Southern University and A&M College, Howard University, Bethune-Cookman University, Albany State University, Bowie State University, and Delaware State University.⁶ After these attacks the Federal Bureau of Investigation

¹ LDF has been an entirely separate organization from the NAACP since 1957.

² 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

³ Andrew Jeong and Susan Svrluga, *Howard University and at least 7 other HBCUs receive bomb threats, triggering evacuations and lockdowns*, *Washington Post* (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/01/05/hbcu-bomb-threats-howard-university/>.

⁴ Petula Dvorak, *Bomb threats damage us, even when nothing explodes*, *Washington Post* (Feb. 10, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/02/10/hbcu-bomb-threats-racial-violence/>.

⁵ Esther Schrader, *HBCU students and leaders ‘lean into history’ amid bomb threats*, *Southern Poverty Law Center* (Feb. 9, 2022), <https://www.splcenter.org/news/2022/02/09/hbcu-presidents-students-react-bomb-threats>.

⁶ Paulina Firozi, *At least six historically Black colleges and universities receive bomb threats*, *Washington Post* (Jan. 31, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/01/31/university-bomb-threats-hbcu/>.

“FBI” stated it was “aware of the series of bomb threats around the country” and was “working with our law enforcement partners to address any potential threats.”⁷

The next day, on February 1, 2022, the first day of Black History Month, another round of bomb threats were received at 16 HBCUs: Rust College, Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, Alcorn State University, Mississippi Valley State University, Fort Valley State University, Spelman College, Morgan State University, Coppin State University, Harris-Stowe State University, Kentucky State University, Xavier University of Louisiana, Philander Smith College, Edward Waters University, Howard University, and the University of the District of Columbia.⁸ Immediately following the February 1 attacks, the FBI released a statement that the threats were being “investigated as racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism and hate crimes.”⁹ However, the attacks did not stop. During the month of February, Black History month, there was not a week without a bomb threat made to HBCUs.¹⁰

IMPORTANCE OF HBCUS AND THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENT THREATS

HBCU’s were established in the early 19th Century to provide undergraduate- and graduate-level educational opportunities for people of African descent. Many of the 101-accredited HBCUs were founded toward the end of the Civil War when it was still dangerous to educate freed slaves or their progeny. HBCUs were created in direct resistance to the limitations placed on education for Black people.¹¹ They were created to be safe havens, primarily for people for whom education was previously illegal or out of reach but provided the opportunity to receive an education to everyone who applied—regardless of race or ethnicity.

Today, HBCUs continue that legacy. They provide students with a safe space to earn a quality education. Though HBCUs make up only 3% of the country’s colleges and universities, they enroll 10% of all African American students and produce almost 20% of all African American graduates.¹² In science, technology, engineering, and mathematics or “STEM” fields, HBCUs produce 24% of all bachelor’s degrees received by African Americans.¹³ Concentrated in 19 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, HBCUs enroll nearly 300,000 students, approximately 80% of whom are African American.¹⁴ HBCUs have historically produced some of the most accomplished and trailblazing individuals in this country.¹⁵

⁷ Id.

⁸ Lauren Lumpkin and Susan Svrluga, *Fear, anxiety follow third wave of bomb threats targeting HBCUs*, *Washington Post* (Feb. 1, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/02/01/hbcu-bomb-threats-campus-reactions/>.

⁹ *FBI Statement on Investigation into Bomb Threats to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Houses of Worship*, (Feb. 2, 2022), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/pressrel/press-releases/fbi-statement-on-investigation-into-bomb-threats-to-historically-black-colleges-and-universities-and-houses-of-worship>.

¹⁰ On February 8, 2022, Spelman College received a bomb threat. On February 14, 2022, both Howard University and Fisk University received bomb threats. On February 16, 2022, 3 institutions received bomb threats: Fayetteville State University, Claflin University, and Winston-Salem State University. On February 23, 2022, Hampton University received a bomb threat.¹⁰[sic] On February 25, 2022, at least 3 institutions received a bomb threat: Norfolk State University, Elizabeth City State University, and Dillard University. Testimony of Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough President, Dillard University Chairman, Council of Presidents, United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary (March 8, 2022), <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Kimbrough%20testimony1.pdf>.

¹¹ *Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, National Center for Education Statistics (last visited Mar. 12, 2022), <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=667>.

¹² *HBCUs Make America Strong: The Positive Economic Impact of Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, United Negro College Fund; Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute (last visited Mar. 15, 2022), https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.249529666.474259404.1647352517585719881.164-6852182.

¹³ K.M. Saunders and B.T. Nagle, *HBCUs Punching Above Their Weight: A State-Level Analysis of Historically Black College and University Enrollment Graduation*, UNCF Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute (2018). Available at https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/PATW_Report_FINAL0919.pdf?_ga=2.87072989.474259404.1647352517585719881.164-6852182.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). Digest of education statistics 2019 [Table 313.20]. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19313.20.asp>.

¹⁵ Thurgood Marshall, a civil rights lawyer, the first Black Supreme Court Justice, and the founder of LDF, graduated Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. *Who Was Thurgood Marshall*, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://www.naacpldf.org/about-us/history/thurgood-marshall/>; Scholar and civil rights activist, W.E.B. Dubois, attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee before becoming the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard College. *W.E.B. Du Bois*, Hutchins Center

These bomb threats disrupt college routines for students, interrupt teaching for faculty, and disrupt the work of administrative staff of HBCUs. The threats have prompted colleges and universities to temporarily cancel in-person classes, lock down buildings and ask people to shelter in place in order to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. Most notably, these attacks terrorize students, professors, and staff. The constant threat of violence reminds everyone on these campuses that they are not safe at school. Indeed, the FBI's investigation of these threats of violence indicate they are intended to intimidate students and to stoke fear among campuses specifically because HBCUs are known to predominately serve Black students.¹⁶ Recently, the FBI reported that the people calling in these bomb threats claim to be affiliated with Neo-Nazi group the Atomwaffen Division ("AWD").¹⁷ The Southern Poverty Law Center has designated AWD as a hate group.¹⁸ AWD believes that its mission—a fascist political order—can only be achieved through acts of violence aimed at the state, Jewish people, Black people, and people of color, liberals, and those who stand in solidarity with such communities. Indeed, members of AWD call themselves "accelerationists" because they embrace violence as an essential part of their political revolution.¹⁹

The visibility of HBCUs has increased in recent years, particularly following the election of Howard University alumna Kamala Harris as the first Black woman Vice President of the United States. As HBCUs have become more visible, they have also become more apparent targets for those who would sow hate. HBCUs are targeted specifically because they represent the independence, resilience, and unbounded intellectual capacity of Black Americans, which is a threat to White supremacist ideology.

Additionally, these threats create significant, unexpected financial costs for institutions that have been systematically underfunded by State legislatures and the Federal Government for decades.²⁰ Many HBCUs are land-grant institutions, or schools founded by State legislatures to foster agricultural research and instruction and receive much of their funding through State legislatures. Compared to their White counterparts, Black land-grant universities have been underfunded by at least \$12.8 billion over the last 3 decades.²¹ Funding for land-grant institutions is distributed at the discretion of the State legislature and in many cases, State legislatures choose to overfund White land-grant institutions while barely meeting the required funding for Black land-grant institutions. For example, in 2020, the Tennessee General Assembly provided \$69.4 million in land-grant dollars, or \$2,460 per student, to the University of Tennessee. That is more than 4 times its required

for African & African American Research, Harvard University (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/web-dubois>; Toni Morrison graduated from Howard University, in Washington, DC before going on to become the first African American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. *Toni Morrison*, National Women's History Museum (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/toni-morrison>; George Edward Alcorn, pioneering physicist and engineer noted for his aerospace and semiconductor inventions, graduated from Howard University. *George Edward Alcorn X-Ray Spectrometer*, National Inventors Hall of Fame (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://www.invent.org/inductees/george-edward-alcorn>; Former chair of Microsoft Corporation and lead independent director of the Microsoft Board of Directors, John W. Thompson, is a graduate of Florida A&M University. Executive Officers, Microsoft (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://news.microsoft.com/exec/john-w-thompson/>. Media mogul, journalist, celebrity, philanthropist, and entrepreneur, Oprah Winfrey graduated from Tennessee State University. *Oprah Winfrey*, Britannica (last visited Mar. 14, 2022), <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Oprah-Winfrey>; See generally, DeNeen L. Brown, *How crucial are historically black colleges? Just look at who's graduated from them*, *Washington Post* (May 10, 2017), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2017/05/08/from-mlk-to-oprah-winfrey-historically-black-colleges-educate-african-american-pioneers/>.

¹⁶ *FBI Statement on Investigation into Bomb Threats to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Houses of Worship*, (Feb. 2, 2022), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/pressrel/press-releases/fbi-statement-on-investigation-into-bomb-threats-to-historically-black-colleges-and-universities-and-houses-of-worship>; Michael Levenson, Katie Benner and Giulia Heyward, *Six Juveniles Are Persons of Interest in Threats to Historically Black Colleges*, *New York Times* (Feb. 2, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/us/hbcu-bomb-threats.html>.

¹⁷ Jeff Martin and Michael Balsamo, *HBCU bomb threat caller described elaborate plot: police*, *Associated Press* (Feb. 2, 2022), <https://apnews.com/article/education-florida-race-and-ethnicity-bomb-threats-daytona-beach-1643a14133f9a395502ea336892ec8f3>.

¹⁸ *Atomwaffen Division*, Southern Poverty Law Center (last visited Mar. 12, 2022), <https://www.spicenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/atomwaffen-division>.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Susan Adams and Hank Tucker, *For HBCUs Cheated Out Of Billions, Bomb Threats Are The Latest Indignity*, *Forbes* (February/March 2022), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2022/02/01/for-hbcus-cheated-out-of-billions-bomb-threats-are-latest-indignity/?sh=7cf01fd3640c>.

²¹ *Id.*

match of funding.²² Notably, 77% of the University of Tennessee’s student population is White. By contrast, the Tennessee General Assembly provided Tennessee State University, an HBCU, \$8.7 million or \$1,318 per student—12% above its required match. Moreover, reports suggest that the Tennessee General Assembly only started meeting its matching requirement for Tennessee State University in 2017.

At least in part because of funding disparities, HBCUs are more tuition-dependent than other colleges and universities. Without redress, these bomb threats could serve to reduce enrollment at HBCUs and therefore have a long-term impact on revenue and viability. The bomb threats also impose immediate costs for security measures and other actions that HBCUs may be forced to undertake in order to maintain the safety of their campuses and the mental health and physical safety of their students. In a letter to all students, Howard University Chief of Police Marcus Lyles noted that, although the bomb threats against the university had not been credible, they were “a drain on institutional and municipal resources.”²³ To increase security personnel, augment surveillance equipment, install physical barriers, or integrate safety procedures more closely with local police departments could prove to be a significant financial burden for HBCUs.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BOMB THREATS TO BLACK INSTITUTIONS

There is a long and horrific history of bomb threats made and realized upon Black institutions in the United States. Infamously, in 1963 members of the Ku Klux Klan (“KKK”) planted bombs in the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, terrorizing the more than 400 congregants, injuring more than 20 people, and killing 4 young girls.²⁴ African American churches such as the 16th Street Baptist Church were fundamental in the organization of protest activity throughout the Civil Rights Movement. As hubs of power, imagination, and community, Black churches were often targeted with violence and terror.²⁵ Indeed, in an effort to intimidate demonstrators, members of the KKK would routinely telephone churches with bomb threats intended to disrupt meetings of organizers and protestors as well as regular church services.²⁶ The attack on the 16th Street Baptist Church exemplifies the tragic outcomes when threats become reality.

Black churches remained a target of White supremacist hate and violence through the 1990’s and to the present. From 1994 to 1996 Black churches across the southeast were fire-bombed, prompting Congressional hearings to address the violence.²⁷ In 2015, a White supremacist walked into Bible study at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina—often referred to as Mother Emanuel—and opened fire. The perpetrator murdered 9 people who welcomed him into their sacred space to discuss scripture, specifically because they were Black.²⁸ Mother Emanuel had long been a target of racialized violence. In 1822, it was burned as a result of its association with Denmark Vesey, a formerly enslaved Black man who tried to organize a slave revolt.²⁹

This Nation also has a shameful history of using the powers of the State and private acts of violence to prevent Black people from receiving an education. Before and during the Civil War, States instituted laws forbidding enslaved people from learning to read or write.³⁰ Between 1740 and 1834, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana,

²² *Id.*

²³ *A Message from Chief Lyles on Bomb Threat Safety*, Howard University (Jan. 31, 2022), <https://howard.edu/node/841>.

²⁴ *Four Black Girls Killed in Church Bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, Equal Justice Initiative* (last visited March 11, 2022), <https://calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/sep/15>.

²⁵ Sarah Kaplan and Justin Wm. Moyer, *Why racists target black churches*, *Washington Post* (Jul. 1, 2015), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/07/01/why-racists-burn-black-churches/>; Matthew Cressler, *Why White Terrorists Attack Black Churches*, *Slate* (June 19, 2015), <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2015/06/charleston-ame-church-shooting-dylann-roof-is-the-latest-in-a-long-line-of-white-terrorists-terrified-by-the-political-power-of-black-churches.html>; Michael Eric Dyson, *Love and Terror in the Black Church*, *New York Times* (June 20, 2015), <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/opinion/michael-eric-dyson-love-and-terror-in-the-black-church.html>.

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Conor Friedersdorf, *Thugs and Terrorists Have Attacked Black Churches for Generations*, *The Atlantic* (June 18, 2015), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/thugs-and-terrorists-have-plagued-black-churches-for-generations/396212/>.

²⁸ Yamiche Alcindor and Doug Stanglin, *Affidavits spell out chilling case against Dylann Roof*, *USA Today* (June 19, 2015), <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/06/19/dylann-roof-charleston-police-charged-murder-black-church/28975573/>.

²⁹ Kat Chow, *Denmark Vesey And The History Of Charleston’s ‘Mother Emanuel’ Church*, *National Public Radio* (June 18, 2015), <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2015/06/18/415465656/denmark-vesey-and-the-history-of-charleston-s-mother-emanuel-church>.

³⁰ See South Carolina Act of 1740; Virginia Revised Code of 1819.

Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Virginia all passed anti-literacy laws.³¹ Many of these laws made teaching enslaved people to read or write punishable by fines, imprisonment, and physical punishments.

Efforts to prevent Black people from earning an education continued even after the end of the Civil War. In 1865, an arsonist set fire to Wilberforce University, in Ohio, the first college owned and operated by Black people.³² In 1866, LeMoyne-Owen College, a private HBCU in Tennessee, was destroyed in a fire during a race massacre that summoned Federal troops to the area.³³ In 1876, a suspicious fire destroyed an administrative building at Claflin University, a private HBCU in South Carolina and in 1905 a fire destroyed Roger Williams University, an HBCU in Nashville, Tennessee.³⁴

Educational institutions, houses of worship, and other community institutions have historically been regarded as safe spaces for all people—sanctuaries for communities to gather, share, learn, fellowship, and build relationships. This is particularly true for communities of color.

The bomb threats against more than one-third of all HBCUs have shaken this sense of safety and security. Though White supremacist activity and violence is not new, there has been a disturbing increase in recruitment, propaganda, and visibility of such groups in recent years. According to data from the Anti-Defamation League, White supremacist propaganda distribution on college campuses steadily increased from 2016 to 2019.³⁵ On college and university campuses, propaganda messages have both subtly and explicitly attacked minority groups, including Jews, Blacks, Muslims, non-White immigrants and the LGBTQ community.³⁶ In addition to increased recruitment on college campuses, the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University identified on-line video-games and streaming platforms as another space that is ripe with White supremacist recruitment efforts.³⁷ Internet-based platforms, websites, and social spaces have also been levied by such groups to increase fundraising, communicate and organize members between different countries, and to amplify messages of hate. Notably, the FBI reported more than 8,000 hate crimes in 2020, the highest total in more than a decade.³⁸

The bomb threats made to HBCUs must be considered as part of the evidenced increase in activity of White supremacist violence across the country. Congress cannot avoid confronting this particular scourge of violence as a form of domestic terrorism and addressing it as a matter of National security. Indeed, just last year, the FBI testified before this committee that “the top threat we face from domestic violent extremists stems from those we identify as racially/ethnically motivated violent extremists.”³⁹ As instances of White supremacist violence continue to increase

³¹Peri Stone-Palmquist, *Still Not Free: Connecting The Dots Of Education Injustice, Dignity in Schools* (Feb. 13, 2020), <https://dignityinschools.org/still-not-free-connecting-the-dots-of-education-injustice/#:~:text=Between%201740%20and%201834%2C%20Alabama,fines%2C%20imprisonment%20and%20physical%20punishments>.

³²Charlie Tyson, *For Storied Institution, a Historic Low, Inside Higher Ed* (June 30, 2020), <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/06/30/wilberforce-university-countrys-oldest-private-historically-black-institution-could#:~:text=In%201865%2C%20on%20the%20night,the%20latter%20seems%20more%20likely>.

³³LeMoyne-Owen College, *Our History*, (last visited Mar. 3, 2022), <https://www.loc.edu/about-us/our-history/>.

³⁴Testimony of Dr. Walter M. Kimbrough President, Dillard University Chairman, Council of Presidents, United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary (March 8, 2022), <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Kimbrough%20testimony1.pdf>.

³⁵*White Supremacists Continue to Spread Hate on American Campuses*, Anti-Defamation League (June 27, 2019), <https://www.adl.org/blog/white-supremacists-continue-to-spread-hate-on-american-campuses>.

³⁶Mallory Simon and Sara Sidner, *White supremacists increase recruiting efforts at colleges*, *ADL says*, CNN (June 28, 2019), <https://www.cnn.com/2019/06/27/us/white-supremacist-recruiting-efforts-at-colleges-soh/index.html>.

³⁷*A National Policy Blueprint To End White Supremacist Violence*, Center for American Progress (Apr. 21, 2021), <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/national-policy-blueprint-end-white-supremacist-violence/>; David Gambacorta, *Hate crimes are soaring. White supremacists have a new recruitment tool: Video games*, *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Jan. 3, 2022), <https://www.inquirer.com/news/pennsylvania-researchers-combat-white-supremacists-extremism-philadelphia-20220103.html>.

³⁸*FBI Releases Updated 2020 Hate Crime Statistics*, Federal Bureau of Investigations (Oct. 25, 2021), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/pressrel/press-releases/fbi-releases-updated-2020-hate-crime-statistics>.

³⁹Christopher Wray, *Worldwide Threats to the Homeland*, Statement Before the House Homeland Security Committee, Federal Bureau of Investigations (Sep. 17, 2020), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/testimony/worldwide-threats-to-the-homeland-091720>.

throughout the country, and as White supremacist groups continue to increase recruitment efforts on-line and on college campuses, Congress must take seriously the threat of violence in Black and minority communities especially as it relates to National security.

THE URGENT NEED FOR CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

Recently, both chambers of Congress passed Resolutions condemning the string of bomb threats made to HBCUs.⁴⁰ However, more must be done to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and administrators at HBCUs. The egregious nature of these crimes, their scope and scale, and the racist motivations behind them deserve specific and immediate attention. The bomb threats, like increased violence and defacement against synagogues,⁴¹ demonstrate an increased and brazen willingness to attack institutions of minority communities. Such communities have faced discrimination and attack for years and deserve the support and protection of the Federal Government.

Congress must act to ensure everyone can pursue the education of their choice, free from threat, terror, or hate. In addition to ensuring that the FBI completes a thorough investigation of these attacks, this committee must conduct a parallel investigation to ascertain the specific underlying animus, determine how to prevent future occurrences, and issue findings and solutions to prevent this on-going threat.

Congress must also ensure HBCUs have the funding necessary to protect themselves from these attacks. HBCUs should be encouraged—and given the financial support—to preemptively work with local law enforcement to assess campus readiness and communicate to students and faculty the appropriate steps to take if the university comes under threat. Ensuring that HBCUs and other Black institutions have the necessary resources for safety, including the implementation of preventative protocols or systems, must be a priority of this committee and Congress. The American Rescue Plan provided a record-breaking \$2.7 billion in HBCUs to be used as direct financial relief to students and to assist in the maintenance of quality education throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴² This investment should expand to include emerging safety concerns at HBCUs which, if left unaddressed, could undermine the commitment Congress and this administration has made to the vitality of these institutions. Additionally, Congress should look to the White House’s Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Black Americans (“Initiative”) for policy recommendations from those most impacted by these threats of violence. The Initiative provides youth and other impacted people with the opportunity to share effective programs, best practices, and policy recommendations designed to ensure all students feel and are safe and supported throughout their education.

Finally, Congress should pass H.R. 6825 the Nonprofit Security Grant Program Improvement Act which would expand and strengthen the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (“NSGP”). Although the NSGP was appropriated at \$180 million during fiscal year 2021—doubling funding from the previous year—the rate of applications to NSGP and the recent threats made to HBCUs warrants additional expansion of the grant program.⁴³ The Nonprofit Security Grant Program Improvement Act would address this increased need by increasing funding to \$500,000,000 for each fiscal year 2023 through 2028.⁴⁴ It would also establish an office within the Federal Emergency Management Agency to exclusively handle grant requests, process appli-

⁴⁰H.Con. Res. 70: Condemning threats of violence against historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and reaffirming support for HBCUs and their students, 117th Congress (2021–2022). Available at <https://www.Congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/70>; S.Res. 534—A resolution condemning threats of violence against historically Black colleges and universities and reaffirming support for the students of historically Black colleges and universities, 117th Congress (2021–2022). Available at <https://www.Congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-resolution/534>.

⁴¹*Six Facts About Threats to The Jewish Community*, Anti-Defamation League (Jan. 16, 2022), <https://www.adl.org/blog/six-facts-about-threats-to-the-jewish-community>.

⁴²FACT SHEET: State-by-State Analysis of Record \$2.7 Billion American Rescue Plan Investment in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, White House Statements and Releases (March 7, 2022), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/07/fact-sheet-state-by-state-analysis-of-record-2-7-billion-american-rescue-plan-investment-in-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/>.

⁴³In fiscal year 2021, there were a total of 3,361 NSGP applicants requesting approximately \$400 million reflecting more than a \$200 million delta between requests and funding. Fiscal Year 2021 Nonprofit Security Grant Program Fact Sheet, DEPT. OF HOMELAND SECURITY, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_fy2021-nsgp-nofo_3-2-2021.pdf (accessed Jan. 25, 2022).

⁴⁴H.R. 6825 Nonprofit Security Grant Program Improvement Act of 2022, 117th Cong. Available at <https://www.Congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/6825/all-info>.

cations, and provide outreach, engagement, and public education support. Funding for public awareness campaigns and community outreach is critical in this moment as White supremacists target HBCUs, Black churches, synagogues, mosques and other institutions with increased frequency and random selection. The bill been endorsed by the Jewish Federations of North America, the Anti-Defamation League, the Sikh Coalition, the Secure Community Network, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. and has broad bipartisan support.⁴⁵ It's passage is critical in ensuring that HBCUs and other institutions have the funding necessary to continue to operate and ensure the security of their members.

CONCLUSION

HBCUs continue to provide high-quality education to their students, and safe work environments to their faculty and staff in the face of alarming and disruptive threats of violence. The perpetrators of the most recent racist threats to HBCUs has yet to be found, and the specter of violence continues to loom. Though the sense of terror on campuses has not dissipated, HBCUs have remained resilient in their mission and HBCU students, faculty, and administrators have not been silenced, nor have they been deterred from their goals. Nevertheless, the continuing threat of racialized violence and targeting of HBCs is a scenario no student, faculty, or staff member, or institution should have to endure. We call on Congress provide the necessary resources to protect HBCUs, which continue to strengthen our society as a whole and to ensure the safety and security of students, faculty, and administrators on HBCU campuses.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. I appreciate the witnesses for their excellent testimony.

At this point, I will ask some questions and then refer to the Ranking Member for his.

President Hudson, normally when people send their children to a college or university, there are some assumptions about safety and security. Can you share with the committee what impact those threats have with both student, faculty, and the parents of those young people attending Jackson State University?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, Mr. Chairman. First of all, it brings a sense of anxiety and fear, introduces that to the learning process, which should never be a part of the learning process. The hardest part about being a student should come in the classroom and not outside the classroom. What this does, it has introduced a level of anxiety.

It also, with respect to our parents, who, again, want to ensure their student's safety, it causes them to look at the university and look to us for what additional steps we may be able to take to ensure that these things don't happen again. As you are aware, most HBCUs, like JSU, sit in urban centers. While these add to the culture of the university, they do make us more vulnerable.

For JSU, we are having to take steps around the infrastructure of the campus to really work toward ensuring and give those ensures to the parents that we do have the ability to make their children safe. It is an on-going effort. It does impact learning, but we are determined to mitigate that as much as possible.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. I assume with that comes a price tag.

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, sir, it does. It does. Also, I might add, you know, security data systems, which is a primary weakness for a lot

⁴⁵Thompson, Katko Introduce Legislation to Expand Grant Program to Protect Nonprofits and Houses of Worship, Committee on Homeland Security (Feb. 28, 2022), <https://homeland.house.gov/news/legislation/thompson-katko-introduce-legislation-to-expand-grant-program-to-protect-nonprofits-and-houses-of-worship>.

of HBCUs, just the ability to store that level of data that allows us to better monitor the campus and the areas around campus, all of those things come with a price tag. Again, the underfunding that I discussed earlier does play a role in kind-of keeping up behind in that effort.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. Reverend Manning, again, the assumption is that when people come to church there is an expectation that as a house of worship you are safe. The experience at Mother Emanuel is quite the opposite. Can you tell us in the wake of what occurred what you as a church have put together to secure the safety and security of those persons worshipping there?

Rev. MANNING. Well, Chairman Thompson, I would say, initially, of course, what we did and part of my testimony was the short-term, which was developing a security plan, then, of course, rolling out multiple cameras across the entire campus. Now, of course, pre-COVID, when we would gather for worship or even Bible Study or meetings of the church we would have off-duty police officers to continue to provide at least a form of comfort for all the parishioners that are coming in.

We also have a security detail within Mother Emanuel, as well, who are premilitary and also have experience in the law enforcement area. So, we have done our very best to ensure that the members are safe when they come into the worship service.

One of the things that we have been kind-of slow to do is to work through an active-shooter scenario, just by virtue of the fact that this is still a crime scene. Many members are still traumatized even when they see yellow signs that are on the outside of the church.

So, we have tried to gently as we possibly could, being trauma-informed, to do our very best to ensure that all the members are safe when they do come in, as I said before, by hiring off-duty police officers, deploying cameras, having key fobs, and also various other security measures.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. Given what you have heard, Ms. Nelson, and your experience with your organization, do you see the value of a Nonprofit Security Grant in helping these institutions in order to secure themselves? If you have some recommendations as to other things we could do as a Congress, I would love to hear from you at this point.

Ms. NELSON. Yes. Thank you, Chairman. I absolutely think that the expansion of funding for HBCUs for other nonprofit institutions and places of worship is essential as a preventive measure for additional violence. The threat against Black institutions continues to loom large. It continues to impact the psyches of students and parishioners who attend religious institutions. It also has a significant financial impact.

These institutions are now required to provide security in a way that many other institutions don't have to worry about simply because of the racial or religious make-up of their constituencies. This requires not just additional physical infrastructure, but technological support. It also, for HBCUs in particular, may require additional resources around mental health services. Students have been traumatized by these threats of violence that disrupt their learning environment and that subject them to a constant threat

of potential violence in a space that is meant to be a safe haven for their education.

So those resources can serve to improve the campus environment and improve the safety and protect those populations both on campuses and at religious institutions across the country.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Reverend Manning, when I was listening to your testimony, I was recalling the carnage that your congregation experienced and it is just—it is unfathomable to me as a father and as a husband and a former prosecutor. It really—I remember that day and my only regret is that I wasn't able to leave this job and prosecute that individual myself.

But going forward, I heard from you, you mentioned the security plan and the Chairman asked about it, and I want to talk to you a little bit more about that. But I wanted to know what President Hudson said, as well, is that you said words to the effect that we shouldn't be intimidated by these threats, and I couldn't agree more. But you also mentioned the anxiety and fear that students—and I think the Reverend talked about the anxiety and the fear that people are experiencing because of these threats and because of these horrific acts.

To some extent, based on my experience with some of the other religious institutions that have been subject to attacks like these, that fear can be ameliorated by a really good security plan. That is really what I want to talk about.

Reverend, when I heard you talk about the security plan and it cost you more than \$50,000, I started doing the math in my head. Even though I stink at math, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that before too long the numbers get real as to the numbers we need to help you with these grants.

So, Reverend Manning, when you talk about—I think you said the security plan you had cost more than \$50,000. What time period are you talking about for that?

Rev. MANNING. Thank you, Ranking Member Katko. Well, I think—not I think, that plan actually—or that cost has been since 2015 up to present day.

Mr. KATKO. OK, thank you very much.

Rev. MANNING. So—

Mr. KATKO. That is helpful. You know, there are a lot of churches, right? Now we have this threat to universities. President Hudson, have you ever tried to put a dollar figure on what it would cost to make your campus more secure and what would that entail?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes. Before I cite the specific number, I must add that holistically you are looking at more training for your campus security, campus police. You are looking at better data science capabilities, increasing your bandwidth, increasing your ability to store the type of data you need so you can do your threat assessments and go back and provide that historical analysis.

You are talking about the overall infrastructure of campus. As I mentioned before, most of our HBCUs and a lot of universities in general sit in those urban areas with open access. It does make us more vulnerable to attack. So, how do you fix the infrastructure around campus to make your campus—while you still want to be

accessible to the community, it does provide a few more checkpoints and does help with that overall safety?

From a price tag standpoint, the infrastructural improvements alone, the physical improvements cost around \$10 million is our price tag. When you get into data—

Mr. KATKO. One university?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, one university, correct. When you get into data access, data security, access to data, increasing your bandwidth, you can tack on a couple of more million just for that. But, again, that is going to be an on-going cost. Those are monthly things that you have to continue to monitor. So, those are just some of them.

Certainly, the grants, the \$50,000 grant, will help in some of the training efforts that you need to really help get you started and also in helping you develop those holistic plans, which themselves have a price tag before you even get to the real work.

So, it is going to be an on-going effort. This is something we will forever deal with. Threats can come at any time. You always have to take those steps to mitigate those risks and those threats. Again, appreciate this committee for working with us and really being partners with us in how do we become—provide solutions not only for JSU, but other HBCUs and universities across the Nation.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you very much. You know, I think about the very first bill I had passed in Congress was to honor Gerardo Hernandez, a TSA officer who was shot and killed at an airport just by doing his job in an airport in Los Angeles. That bill mandated training, like active-shooter training situations and trying to get people to think actively about what to do if the situation arises. That is something I think we need to think about going forward. I would strongly encourage however many dollars we can get you that that be a high priority because active-shooter training really does work and really does help save lives. So, I would just respectfully offer that, as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. You are absolutely correct.

The other thing we are trying to put together is a packet of resources that we can offer colleges, universities, houses of worship from the training and coordination standpoint. Because when these things happen, it is not just the security apparatus of that institution involved, it is all the other people who come, so.

Mr. KATKO. Yes, it is clearly a holistic effort and that is the essence of what homeland security is about, so I agree with you totally.

Chairman THOMPSON. That is right. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. Langevin, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Chairman. Can you hear me OK?

Chairman THOMPSON. Yes, we can.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Very good. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to say good morning to our witnesses. Thank you for your very poignant, very insightful, and important testimony today.

It really seems reasonable to me that we should expect HBCUs to handle addressing these increasing threats of violence alone. I am glad that we're having this hearing today. The same goes for

other Black institutions, like houses of worship, as illustrated by Reverend Manning's poignant testimony this morning.

I just want to begin by commending my friend Chairman Thompson for his efforts to invigorate the Nonprofit Security Grant Program to address this issue. Increasing the funding for this program, as this Congress did last week, and as the Nonprofit Security Grant Improvement Act will do even further, I believe is a critical step. I also think it is critical to raise awareness of the security resources that are available for Black institutions at this time of increased racially-motivated violence.

If I could start with President Hudson and Ms. Nelson, in your testimony you spoke of the funding challenges that face HBCUs, like Jackson State University, but also of how the increase in bomb threats at HBCUs is creating new costs for these universities as they move to invest not only in the security of the campuses, but also in the physical and mental health of their students. So, I wondered can you speak in more detail of how these new costs could impact the resources that HBCUs are able to put toward academics or toward other programs that are essential to student life?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, and thank you so much for that question. What this does and what these threats do is really expose some of the underlying issues that have been caused by the historical underfunding. So when you look at these issues, they expose the gaps that we have had in our security. They expose gaps we have had in our infrastructure, which does, you know, again, make our campuses more vulnerable. Even gaps we might have in our ability to offer those mental health services to our students.

There is only a finite pool of resources that are available to us. We obviously are going to prioritize our core mission, which is the education, the teaching, and learning of our students. But those things that affect teaching and learning, when you have a bomb threat, the ability to offer extra security, the ability to upgrade your data systems, those cost additional resources that are just often not available.

So, for HBCUs, what you are really looking at is the result of that historical underfunding showing some of the vulnerabilities that come about when you have such a public issue, such as HBCU bomb threats and other potential acts of violence.

So, again, you know, we have to remain vigilant. We are going to do what is necessary to make sure we always protect our students. But those funding sources have to come from somewhere and often they will be at the expense of our educational endeavors.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you.

Ms. NELSON. Thank you for the question. I will add that HBCUs have been systematically underfunded, not only not only by State legislatures, but also by the Federal Government. Many HBCUs are land grant institutions. These are schools that were founded by State—that are funded by State legislatures to foster agricultural research and instruction. Often that funding that they receive from State legislatures is inadequate.

Compared to their White counterparts, Black land grant universities have been underfunded by at least \$12.8 billion over the last 3 decades. Funding for land grant institutions is distributed at the discretion of the State legislature. In many cases, these State legis-

latures choose to overfund White land grant institutions while barely meeting the required funding for Black land grant institutions.

There are specific examples that we cite in our written testimony about the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee General Assembly awarding land grant dollars in a way that is quite disparate, more than 4 times the required match of funding that the university should have received.

So, if you think about the underfunding compounded by the fact that there are unexpected costs imposed by these threats of domestic terror, the financial hit to HBCUs is quite significant.

I will add that many HBCUs, because of the underfunding, are more tuition-dependent than other institutions. The threat of violence on these campuses has the potential to reduce enrollment, has the potential to cast a chilling effect on the desire of students to attend these institutions that are targeted by violence. That has the potential to impact not only immediate revenue, but also long-term viability.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. I know my time is expired. Thank you for your answers. We are determined that you are not going to have to go it alone and we are going to do everything we can to provide the right resources to back you up. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentleman's time has expired. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin by saying that Pastor Manning's message is worthy of an audience in this Congress every day. The rash of bomb threats against the HBCUs is of great concern. They occurred—it started on January 31 and continued through February and into March.

I would certainly love to see, I don't know what the law permits, but I understand that there are 6 persons of interest identified by the FBI who are perhaps juveniles. I think the Nation needs for those persons' identities to be disclosed. So, I take note of all that.

I take note that the gist of the testimony is a plea for resources. I wanted to address a related issue.

Ms. Nelson, I have a tweet here from your Twitter account from March 8, 2021, that retweets an article from *The Guardian* titled "These U.S. Cities Defunded Police: 'We're transferring money to the community.'" Your tweet text was, "The reimagination of public safety includes the reallocation of funds to agencies, services, and community-based nonprofits that are better equipped to protect and serve."

Do you continue today to support defunding police as expressed in that tweet?

Ms. NELSON. I continue to wholeheartedly support the reimagination of public safety, which means a rethinking of how we allocate resources in ways that better serve all of our communities. We have been talking about a number of mental health issues that pervades society following—not following, we are still in the midst of a pandemic. We also know that police are often stretched and required to respond to matters that are well beyond their professional capacity.

Crime solving, investigation of threats of domestic terror like the ones we are discussing today are an appropriate use of funding for law enforcement.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, ma'am. I would ask for unanimous consent to submit for the record the tweet and the *Guardian* article I just referenced.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection.
[The information follows:]

Bishop FTP2



Janai Nelson
@JNelsonLDF

The reimagining of public safety includes the reallocation of funds to agencies, services and community-based non-profits that are better equipped to protect and serve.

These US cities defunded police: 'We're transferring money to the community'



theguardian.com

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More than 20 major cities have reduced police budgets in some form, and activists are fighting to ensure that is only the start

10:40 AM · Mar 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App

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More than 20 major cities have reduced police budgets in some form, and activists are fighting to ensure that is only the start
by [Sam Levin](#) in Los Angeles

In 2020 budget votes, advocacy groups won over \$840m in direct cuts from US police departments.
Illustration: Adeshola Makinde/The Guardian

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Thu 11 Mar 2021 11.03 EST

After “defund the police” became the **rallying cry** of protests last summer, Democratic leaders spent months criticizing the slogan and **worrying** about its impact on elections. While party infighting was **dominating headlines**, local activists were **campaigning** to make the catchphrase a reality in cities across the US.

Since the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor prompted unprecedented uprisings, some racial justice groups have successfully pressured municipal lawmakers to cut police funds and reinvest the money in services. And with reformed 2021 budgets coming into effect, cities are slowly beginning to redistribute law enforcement money to housing, mental health programs, food access and other programs.

“We are showing the country how reinvestments from the police budget can actually make many people’s lives so much better and safer,” said Gregorio Casar, a councilmember in Austin, Texas, who helped pass a major **cut** to the city’s law enforcement budget and is now reallocating those dollars to **housing programs**. “This will build momentum for changes to police budgets across the country.”

More than 20 major cities have **reduced their police budgets** in some form, an unprecedented trend, though the scale and circumstances vary

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/07/us-cities-defund-police-transferring-money-community>

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dramatically. The activists who have long campaigned to take money from US police are now fighting to ensure that the initial cuts are only the start - and that a growing backlash from law enforcement, elected officials and some community groups does not derail their progress.

A 'paradigm shift': \$870m cut from police

For years, local advocacy groups have packed city hall meetings, demanding “**jobs not jails**”, “**care not cops**” and “**books not bars**” - urging officials to stop expanding budgets for police and jails. They have argued that cities should instead prioritize the programs that have been defunded over the years that would address root causes of crime and poverty, like education, healthcare and homeless services.

Local lawmakers largely ignored activists' pleas, and police spending has tripled **over the last 40 years**, helping to make the US a world leader in incarceration and police killings. Even as cities have faced financial shortfalls, local governments consistently spent an increasing **share of their general funds** on police (despite repeated **research** showing that **increasing police funding** does not correlate to reduced crime).

The dynamics suddenly changed last summer during massive Black Lives Matter demonstrations after video emerged of a **Minneapolis officer** pressing his knee on George Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes.



<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/07/us-cities-defund-police-transferring-money-community>

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Protesters gather in front of the State Capitol on 7 June 2020, in Austin, Texas, during a protest over the death of George Floyd. Photograph: Ricardo B Brazziell/AP

“Everyone on the street provided a new window into understanding and defining the problem of police brutality,” said Nikki Jones, a professor of African American studies at the University of California, Berkeley, who described a “paradigm shift” in conversations about police and systemic racism.

Previously, she explained, political debates focused on “bad apples” and “implicit bias” - the ideas that brutality cases were isolated incidents and that law enforcement could be reformed with better training. But the uprisings brought mainstream attention to abolitionist arguments that the problems are institutional, and that the only way to reduce harm is to take power and funding away from police.

With public pressure on them, mayors and city councils responded. In 2020 budget votes, advocacy groups won over \$840m in direct cuts from US police departments and at least \$160m investments in community services, according to an analysis by [Interrupting Criminalization](#), an initiative at the Barnard Center for Research on Women. In 25 cities, such as [Denver](#) and [Oakland](#), officials moved to remove police from schools, saving an additional \$34m.

“Folks might look at \$840m as a drop in the bucket of the \$100bn we spend on police each year, but it definitely reverses the trend of constantly increasing police budgets over the past many decades,” said Andrea J Ritchie, one of the Barnard researchers, “and it did so in a way that also secured the transfer of funds from policing to community-based safety strategies.”

In some cases, the cuts came from leaving vacant positions unfilled or moving the accounting of certain police functions to other agencies - changes that would probably have minimal immediate impact. Other city leaders said their cuts were due to the Covid-19 economic crisis and not the protests, and in [26 major cities](#), lawmakers continued to increase police budgets.

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A demonstrator raises their fist at a protest over the death of George Floyd near the White House. Photograph: Evan Vucci/AP

But for cities that did intentionally pass cuts, some of the changes were significant. Portland, Oregon, cut \$15m from its budget and **disbanded** a gun violence reduction unit and transit team that had both long been accused of over-policing Black communities. San Francisco officials pledged to **divest \$120m** from police over two years with plans to invest in health programs and workforce training. Minneapolis is **using police cuts** to launch a mental health team to respond to certain 911 calls.

New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, **Seattle**, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Baltimore and a dozen other cities have all also reduced police spending. And some of these cities are now demonstrating the impacts of their new budgets.

How Austin is spending police funds

Austin, Texas, has made some of the most dramatic changes in the country, directly cutting roughly \$20m from the police department, and moving \$80m from the agency by shifting certain services out of law enforcement. The city has gone from spending 40% of its \$1.1bn general fund on police to now allocating about 26% to law enforcement.

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“Public health and public safety are at the heart of this,” said Chris Harris, the criminal justice director at Texas Appleseed, a local not-for-profit. “When we take policing away, we are actually filling that void with alternatives that we know are going to help.”

The Austin police funds were **reallocated** to emergency medical services for Covid-19, community medics, mental health first responders, services for homeless people, substance abuse programs, food access, workforce development, abortion services, victim support, parks and more. The city council is using money saved from the police budget to buy two hotels to **provide supportive housing for homeless residents**.

“For decades, Austin has spent so many dollars policing homelessness, jailing the homeless, and paying for emergency rooms and 911 calls instead of reinvesting those same dollars to finally start reducing homelessness,” said Casar, the local councilmember. “By adjusting the police budget even just a little bit, we are going to be able to house and help hundreds of people with these two hotels ... and I hope we’ll be able to buy more.”

Austin has started redirecting certain 911 calls to mental health professionals - a move meant to provide help to those crises instead of a potentially deadly response by police, Casar said: “We know that we can solve the mental health crisis with treatment and care, not with handcuffs and jail.”

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The redirected funds are also meant to benefit the crime victims who have been traditionally neglected and mistreated by law enforcement, advocates said.

Marina Garrett, a 25-year-old Austin resident and supporter of the defund efforts, has **spoken out** about how police mishandled her rape case. After she reported that she was sexually assaulted in 2015 at age 19, she submitted to a forensic exam, but detectives didn't move forward while awaiting results for her rape kit, which was affected by a huge backlog.

/// We can't just keep throwing money at police and expect them to change their ways and culture **Marina Garrett**

During that time, the **police forensic lab** shut down amid claims of misconduct and incompetence, and Garrett's case dragged on: "It was completely devastating. You wake up every day, and it's all you can think about. My whole life was on pause for two years."

It took two years for the results to come back, and ultimately police and prosecutors did not move forward with a case: "I started to realize that police were no help ... and that police were making survivors wish they had not come forward," said Garrett, who is part of a class-action lawsuit against Austin police.

With reinvested police funds, Austin is now moving forward with a **new independent forensic science department**. Garrett and other survivors have long pushed for the change. She said it was a small step to reduce some of police's jurisdiction over sexual assault survivors, but that law enforcement remained largely ill-equipped to support victims.

"We can't just keep throwing money at police and expect them to change their ways and culture, which is sexist and racist," she said. "There are groups that are trained to provide support to survivors and help them find healing and justice, separate and apart from police."

Alicia Dean, a city spokesperson, declined to comment on Garrett's case, but said the police department supported the change in forensics, adding in a statement, "the city is committed to improving best practices and outcomes of sexual assault reporting, processing, investigations and prosecutions. We want all victims to feel safe, heard and have confidence in every step of the process."

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Fighting the backlash and 'fear mongering'

One of the greatest obstacles to defunding law enforcement agencies are powerful police unions, which have long opposed reforms and negotiated strong protections in their contracts that typically make it impossible for cities to terminate or lay off officers.

Unions have launched aggressive PR campaigns to counter the movement. In Austin, the Texas Municipal Police Association (TMPA) created **highway billboards** saying "Warning! Austin Police Defunded, Enter at Your Own Risk" and "Limited Support Next 20 Miles" - and put up the signs in September, before the new budget had gone into effect.

The Republican governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, has also repeatedly **threatened** to try to force Austin to restore its police budget through legislation, and other state Republicans have **spread misinformation** about crime rates in the city.



Greg Abbott speaks at a news conference before signing a 'Texas backs the blue pledge' at the Austin Police Association, 10 September 2020. Photograph: Jay Janner/AP

"There are attempts to play up perceived dangers and to associate it with changes in the budget, without evidence," said Harris. "A lot of the fearmongering that comes out of law enforcement is designed to play up racial tensions and racist myths."

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Cities across the US that have made modest progress on defunding are facing similar resistance. In Seattle, councilmembers initially pledged to meet activists' demands and cut the police budget by 50%, but ultimately backtracked amid intense police opposition, passing a **reduction** of about 18% (by leaving vacancies unfilled and moving certain functions, like parking enforcement, out of the police budget).

Councilmember Kshama Sawant, a socialist who supported the 50% defunding, said it was particularly disappointing for the city to maintain high rates of police spending in a budget that made cuts to affordable housing, parks, libraries and transportation. Communities of color hurt by those cuts are the same people most targeted by police violence, she added.

“A lot of the fearmongering that comes out of law enforcement is designed to play up racial tensions and racist myths”
Chris Harris

“Tens of thousands of people in our city are reeling from the Covid crisis and the recession,” she told the Guardian, “but we have no hiring freeze for police.”

Sadé A Smith, a Seattle civil rights attorney, said it was hard to see the budget changes get watered down: “While they are playing these bureaucratic games, people are suffering. That’s what’s so frustrating. It took so many days of marching and an unprecedented uprising to even get this little bit.”

While there has been aggressive resistance to defunding from law enforcement associations and elected allies, there are also community organizations and local residents who have expressed doubts or concerns.

The Rev Harriet Walden, a Seattle advocate who has long **fought** for police accountability, said she was worried about rising crime rates and feared defunding efforts could leave some Black communities and victims of violence vulnerable: “Crime is escalating ... and people aren’t going to get arrested or charged.”

Walden said she supported reforms that made it easier to fire officers who violate policies or brutalize people, but that she didn’t want fewer police overall.

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A defund the police march from King county youth jail to city hall in Seattle, Washington, on 5 August 2020. Photograph: Jason Redmond/AFP/Getty Images

Sybrina Fulton, the mother of Trayvon Martin, the teenager killed by a neighborhood watch volunteer, also said she would rather see **more police officers with better standards**, instead of defunded departments. Merchants and business groups, too, have **organized** against defunding in some cities.

Ritchie, the Barnard researcher, noted that the activists leading the local defunding efforts were survivors of violence themselves and that they have made significant progress doing outreach and education, explaining to residents that “cities have for years been defunding housing, healthcare, job programs, libraries, arts and culture and violence prevention programs”.

People are often supportive once they understand that defunding police is about re-funding those services and making proactive investments in public safety and health. Activists across different cities were also learning from each other and recently **launched a national website** to pool together resources and put them in a better position to push for changes in the upcoming budget cycle, she said.

“Organizers are better prepared and armed with shared strategies and much bolder and more detailed visions.”

“Folks are getting ready and coming back for much, much more.”

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Mr. BISHOP. You know, it is interesting how we end up prioritizing things here in Congress and our time and our resources. I have an article here from *The Washington Post*, actually written—originated with Bloomberg on February 23, 2022, that notes that in 2020, we saw a 30 percent increase in homicides across the country, an additional 5,000 deaths across the country, going from 16,425 to 21,570. If we examine that data with an examination from the perspective of race, it is perhaps even worse. African Americans, it says, make up 13.5 percent of the U.S. population, but they make up 55.6 percent of homicide victims and 65.6 percent of the increase in homicides relative to 2019.

I wonder if perhaps we are not missing a bigger issue than even this disturbing information about a state of bomb threats against HBCUs. I mean, we are talking about, as the article goes on to say, Black Americans in 2020 represented 13,654 of those homicides across the country, an increase of 3,300.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent to submit this article for the record.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

Bishop 1

Homicide Is Pandemic's Biggest Killer of Young Black Men

By Justin Fox | Bloomberg
February 23, 2022 at 4:07 p.m. EST



The Covid-19 pandemic has brought a big increase in murder and manslaughter (aka homicide) in the U.S. By the accounting of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the homicide rate went from 5.8 per 100,000 Americans in 2019 to 7.5 in 2020.(1)It appears to have continued to rise, albeit at a much slower rate, in 2021.

Who suffers when the homicide rate goes up like that? Black Americans, mainly.

In 2020 those identifying or identified as Black or African American made up 13.5% of the U.S. population, according to CDC estimates (that for definitional and other reasons don't quite match the results of the 2020 U.S. Census). They also made up 55.6% of the homicide victims, and 65.6% of the increase in homicides relative to 2019. To put it another way, the homicide rate for Black Americans rose from 22.9 per 100,000 in 2019 to 30.7 in 2020. For all other Americans, the rate went from 3.2 to 3.8.

Homicides have also gone up faster during the pandemic for those of Hispanic or Latino origin than for non-Black non-Hispanics but (1) the increase hasn't been as steep as for Black Americans and (2) the starting point was much lower, even though Hispanics make up a larger share of the population (18.7% in these CDC statistics).

Among Black Americans, homicide deaths were concentrated among one group in particular, younger men. Homicide deaths during the pandemic have been highest for Black men ages 18 through 30, but there have also been substantial increases over pre-pandemic levels among those a couple of years younger and several years older, so I've gone here with an age range of 15 through 44.

It isn't exactly news that young Black men run a much higher risk of being murdered than the rest of us. It also isn't exactly a mystery who's killing them. Data on who commits homicides is for obvious reasons less complete than data on victims, and "clearance rates" — the percentage of crimes that are solved — were especially low for homicides in 2020. But the information that is available indicates that young Black men are the main killers of young Black men. This is neighborhood gun violence, for the most part.

The CDC statistics, based on death certificates filed by doctors and medical examiners, do offer a starker and timelier view of the effects of the pandemic murder wave than I've seen elsewhere, and also make it easier to put into epidemiological context. Covid-19 was twice as deadly for younger Black men as it was for all Americans in the 15-through-44 age group, for example, but it was far less of a threat to them than homicides (and also less deadly than drug overdoses, traffic accidents and suicides).

In 2021 Covid killed many more under-65 Americans than it did in 2020, so these rate comparisons will look a bit different — although probably not enough to really change the picture for younger Black men. Homicides were the leading cause of death for Black men ages 15 through 44 in 2020 and are running just behind accidents of all kinds (including drug overdoses, which the CDC lumps together with traffic fatalities and the like in its leading-causes-of-death rankings) in the 2021 data available so far. For Americans overall, heart disease remained the No. 1 cause of death in 2020 and 2021 as it has been for decades, and homicides don't make it into the top 15.

This does not exactly square with media coverage of the pandemic murder wave, which tends to underplay the ongoing carnage among young Black men as it focuses on other, presumably more shocking, killings. It also doesn't neatly slot into the debate since mid-2020 over crime and the role of police. According to the Mapping Police Violence project, police killed 249 Black Americans in 2020, which amounts to just 1.8% of the year's 13,654 Black homicide victims. Excessive use of force by police is a real problem, and one that weighs heavily on younger Black men. But if police presence reduces violent crime, and the evidence that it does is reasonably strong, then the lack of police poses far greater risks to Black men in their teens through early 40s than the police do.

Most of all, looking at the pandemic murder wave through this lens reinforces what an emergency it is. Its victims are disproportionately young men who ought to have long lives ahead of them. This has got to stop.

(1) The Federal Bureau of Investigation's more frequently cited estimates are lower but show a similar increase.

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Mr. BISHOP. In the Judiciary Committee yesterday we had a hearing that focused on domestic terrorism with an emphasis on White supremacy. These matters here are certainly animus race—animus-based crimes. The HBCU attacks, there is a hearing in the OGR today on the same thing.

But I looked back, there has not been a hearing in Congress, in this Congress, about that increase in homicides and the share of those homicides that are borne by Black Americans.

Ms. Nelson, do you believe that the emphasis on reimagining the police as you put it, or defunding police as others put it, has been responsible for any share of the increase in homicides that Black Americans have suffered?

Ms. NELSON. No, I don't believe that there is any data, any credible research that links any of the calls to reform our public safety system and any increase in crime. We all know that we are living in the midst of a pandemic that has not only increased economic burdens across society, mental health burdens across society, but there are other ways in which our law enforcement resources are not operating as efficiently as possible.

If we look at the crime-solving success of law enforcement, it pales in comparison to the resources that are invested in law enforcement. I think that is an area worthy of interrogation.

Mr. BISHOP. Would you say that issue deserves careful examination by Congress, the increase in homicides across the country and particularly that share borne by Black Americans?

Ms. NELSON. I think that we should be examining crime and what the underlying causes are and looking at the social ills that produce those crimes and addressing those with social policy.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, ma'am. My time has expired, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired. The Chair recognizes the gentelady from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, thank you so very much for this most crucial and timely hearing. I am glad and I am so glad Mr. Bishop is here, thank him for his concern along with our colleagues. I am enormously gratified that with the leadership of Joseph Biden, the President, and Vice President Kamala Harris and the Congress, we have Chairman Thompson, Chairman Nadler, Chairwoman Jackson Lee over the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Committee that had a similar hearing just a few weeks ago, now in Oversight.

What a difference, finally, the death or the potential death of Black people have risen to a level of respect that it should be. For too long, of course, in the sag of the civil rights movement, bodies were strewn across the South and no one cared. We found the remnants of people who had been killed on dark nights and dark streets because they were Black.

We saw the civil rights soldiers, including Viola Liuzzo and others who were of the majority community, killed violently. The 3 boys in Mississippi whose families still mourn.

So, this is a preventative hearing, a recognition hearing. I would offer to say to my friends justice and holding police accountable is not mutually exclusive. Giving police more resources to, in essence, shed those resources to mental health needs and to training needs and to understanding de-escalation, and to understand issues dealing with excessive force, there is no crime in that.

I would also commend my good friend to work with me on H.R. 40, a commission to study slavery and develop Reparation proposals as it determines the impact on the lives of African Americans today.

I wonder whether or not—whether it is a youth or whoever it might be, all of that falls into where we are as people of color in the United States today. Are we the most easily attackable? Are we the most easily vulnerable? Are we the greatest target? This hearing today, in the short time that I have, says that.

I would like to ask the Chairman to submit into the record a letter from Texas Southern University that wrote and said the impact of those attacks, those threats on them. I ask unanimous consent. Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection.
[The information follows:]

LETTER FROM TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
United State Congress, 2079 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE: We write you in your capacity as a Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security to share the perspective and experience of Texas Southern University faculty and students during the domestic bombing threat that occurred in January 2022. At Texas Southern University, the health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff is always top priority. TSU condemns any threats or acts of violence, especially those that are targeted to specific groups of people based on race or ethnicity.

TSU, which was born in the midst of segregation, has worked tirelessly to build bridges and help its students overcome all odds in the face of discrimination and bigotry. As we continue to do this work in the face of increased threats, we believe a threat to one HBCU is a threat to all HBCUs.

Since the threat happened on campus, the chief of our campus department of public safety has represented all HBCUs as a liaison between the HBCU community and the FBI. We were fortunate that the threat here was during a time when the University was not in session. That has not been the case for our peer institutions.

We are thankful for the progress the FBI has made in identifying persons of interest. We also remain concerned that there may be other people who would act nefariously toward our institutions. We also acknowledge that these threats have heightened the urgency of the message that HBCUs need more resources to handle these types of investigations, and the need for a coordinated response. Thank you to our elected representatives for their care and concern for our campus during these challenging days, as demonstrated by their tireless effort to ensure a proper Federal response.

Parents, students, staff, and alumni were concerned for our campus. We assure our campus is strong. It is united. And it is safe. We stand with all HBCUs demanding an end to these cowardly acts of terror. We have come too far to look the other way.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. They indicate they were born in the midst of segregation, worked tirelessly to build bridges, but they write to indicate that at Texas Southern “the health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff is a top priority.”

They indicated that since the threat happened on the campus, “The chief of our campus Department of Public Safety has represented all HBCUs,” but they realize that this has been a devastating impact on their campus. The last sentence says, “We have come too far to look the other way.”

May I ask the president of Jackson State and if you can state for me, Mr. President, the deep emotional impact on your students and faculty based upon their connection to the movement of civil rights, but the history of their families, and how a bomb threat even is deeper in those students.

Then I would appreciate if Pastor Manning, I came to Charleston. We have been fighting for the Charleston loophole through our great leader, Mr. Clyburn. If you would tell me the impact on your parishioners ever today. President Hudson.

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, thank you so much, Congresswoman Jackson Lee. You are correct in terms of that impact, the emotional impact on our students, our faculty, and staff, and really the entire JSU family. You know, those threats, as I remind people, you know, I live on the campus, and those threats affect me and my family, as

well. What it does is it is meant to disrupt that learning process. It is meant to disrupt the progress HBCUs have made over the years.

You know, it is no secret that these threats coincided not only with the start of Black History Month, but they also coincided with the fact that HBCUs have had somewhat of a reawakening in the eyes of many in terms of our importance, in terms of the value that we bring to this great Nation. These threats were meant to deter that. They were meant to diminish those accomplishments.

At Jackson State University we are always going to be mindful of that direct lineage between some of the incidents of the past, Congressman Thompson referenced the 1970 shootings, which we still acknowledge on a yearly basis, all the way up to today with these current persistent threats. It shows us why we must always remain vigilant, we must always be prepared, we must be proactive in addressing these issues so that we are ready when these inevitable situations come about.

So, our goal at Jackson State is to always be ready on-call to deal with these issues while also making sure that our students, their mental health, and the overall emotional impact is accounted for, as well.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Pastor. Pastor.

Rev. MANNING. Can you hear me?

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Yes, can hear you now.

Rev. MANNING. OK, thank you. So, the attacks, of course, that we still see even today impact the congregation in many ways. It takes us right back to the horrific act that we suffered here on June 17, 2015, and it continues to rob the members of the congregation with the safety that is needed when they come to worship. So, from that particular perspective, as I believe I did say in testimony, that there are still several members who still have not been able to return even to this day. That continues to rob many members of their right to just worship God in spirit and in truth and in freedom.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentlelady's time has expired. The Chair recognized the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for holding this hearing today.

Mr. Chairman, as a police officer, I have personally responded to many bomb threats. I say many, probably 8 or 10 during the course of my career. It is always, you know, a mischievous, young, disturbed man or girl that is calling these threats in. You know, you generally get past the clearing of the building and order is restored and the institution's business continues. It is usually a school. But the lingering fear and the impact of that criminal action is a particular concern.

I appreciate the hearing held today. I just left a Oversight hearing that focused on the same issue. Same issue. Because it deserves attention and must put this in perspective as a Nation historically, especially regarding our Historically Black Universities and churches because there is just no place for fear to exist as a common factor for our citizenry. It should not be a consideration that

any American has to deal with on a regular basis. It should be rare and then it should be aggressively investigated.

In south Louisiana very recently, a couple of years ago, we had 3 historically Black churches burned to the ground in a very short period of time. Many of you maybe recall that. It was a tremendous amount of media about it. Because any reasonable man looking at those burnings would presume this is likely a hate crime racially motivated.

Well, the investigation moved forward very effectively by local and State law enforcement. They were closing in on identifying a subject. When the father of the suspect figured out it was his son, the father was professional law enforcement and he turned his son in, brought his son in. The investigation revealed that it was not a racially motivated hate crime. It was a religiously motivated hate crime. This young man had been indoctrinated into some kind of a bizarre satanic belief system and wanted to videotape the falling of its steeple into flame.

So, of course, the media went away because it didn't quite fit the narrative. But the impact has been long-lasting. Our law enforcement agencies have a specific duty to respond aggressively to these threats and actions.

Reverend Manning, if you are with us, sir, I would like to ask you specifically your church and your congregation of Children of God have been impacted specifically. I would like to know as a result of the attack recently can you share with this committee, and I will give you the balance of my time, best practices and security measures that your congregation has to now deal with? What would you recommend to your fellow churches across the Nation reflective of your own experienced, Reverend?

Rev. MANNING. Well, again, thank you. So, the best practices that I would say is plan. We did talk about that briefly in our testimony, to develop detailed security plans. Unfortunately, this is the world that we are in right now, always being aware of your surroundings, making sure that you have enough cameras on the place that would be able to record the various activities that are coming around your places and your houses of worship. It is a sad state.

Unfortunately, as I said before, it is something that we deal with here on a daily basis. When mail comes, sometimes as I look over my left side of my desk, there is what I call love mail. Of course, that is not really love, it is hate mail that I get from various people throughout the country. That we are never really prepared for, so we just have to continue to do what we—to do the best thing that we possibly can, which is to be mindful of our surroundings, have the wherewithal to make sure that we have a security plan, and as well, as we have already articulated, making sure that there are enough financial resources that are able to undergird those churches in the rural community.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Reverend. My time has expired. Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Nelson, as you have been made aware, threats the Black institutions face today are not

new. Black churches, for example, have been terrorized long before we were ever using the term “domestic violent extremists.”

You discussed this in your testimony, but can you elaborate on how threats to Black institutions have evolved over time?

Ms. NELSON. Certainly. Thank you for the question. Black institutions have been threatened since their inception. If we think about Black institutions in a very broad sense we can go as far back as thinking about the burning of Tulsa, we can think about the burning of Greenwood, we can think about the deconstruction of any signs of Black progress, any establishments that reject the notion of White supremacy and Black inferiority.

Our Black churches are an exemplar of Black resilience and stand at the center of Black communities throughout our Nation. Our Black HBCUs are also an exemplar of Black excellence and the ability of Black people to learn together in a safe and nurturing environment, independent and resilient.

It is those institutions that are the targets and have been the targets over time of White extremist violence. We are seeing an uptick in hate crimes, an uptick in the creation of White extremist groups, and these institutions are a ready-made target for those individuals and entities. It is essential, therefore, that these entities have the ability to protect themselves and to build the necessary infrastructure to secure the populations that attend these institutions. But it is also not only for those individuals, this is an investment that this country should make because these institutions are essential to its historical identity and to its present diversity.

So, that is why we are calling upon Congress to invest as many resources as possible to ensure that these institutions are viable, that they are safe, and that they continue to contribute to the fabric of our broader American society.

Mr. PAYNE. In what ways would you connect the attacks on Black institutions to the larger universe of threats posed by White supremacy and extreme right-wing ideology?

Ms. NELSON. Well, I connect them directly because right now we are in the midst of an assault on truth, we are in the midst of an attempt to erase the lived experiences of Black Americans and people of color. It is not only Black people who are under severe attack. As we see, there have been many instances of violence against Asian American and Pacific Islander persons in this country, against people from various religious backgrounds, synagogues, mosques, places of learning and worship have been targeted.

But we do know that Black institutions have endured this unfortunate legacy of violence for their entire existence and it is now escalating at a time when we should have evolved as a society toward a more peaceful and respectful coexistence. That is the reason that we demand that Congress address this issue before we find ourselves in a more retrogressive state.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, we have to continue to explore these incidents and continue to bolster the support that this committee gives to the homeland and institutions here in this country, and try to understand why since their inception these Black institutions have not been given the opportunity to ever thrive as other groups have in this Nation.

With that, I will yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Iowa, Mrs. Miller-Meeks, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ranking Member Katko and our witnesses who are here.

I like many others were horrified at what began to transpire at the beginning of this year, but, as has been indicated, is not the first time. None of us want our children, our young adults to, you know, attend college and fear for their safety, or a synagogue or a church or even walking to their elementary school. So, we were horrified at that and we are pleased that you are here to offer your testimony to us.

Secretary Mayorkas, along with Education Secretary Cardona, met with HBCUs on January 24, 2022, to discuss grant programs, training resources, research opportunities, and other tools available to increase campus safety and security. In fact, they heavily prioritized campus safety and they offer a cadre of tools that are available.

Were you or a representative, Mr. Hudson—Dr. Hudson, of Jackson State present at that meeting? If so, what DHS grants, programs, and trainings did Secretary Mayorkas discuss with you that may be helpful?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, we were. We did have a representative present at that meeting. There were a multitude of opportunities, the Non-profit Grant Program that, you know, allows for us to make those security enhancements, those campus upgrades, particularly with respect to data sciences I mentioned. Being able to upgrade our ability to monitor, to store the type of historical data we need to make those continuous assessments on our campus is necessary.

You know, as I said from the outset, we are thankful to law enforcement for their response, but it was just that, it was response. Being proactive means doing those types of things, doing the type of infrastructural improvements, cybersecurity data science improvements necessary to be proactive and necessary to help us mitigate those risks before they happen. That is the space that we want to move in. That is where historical underfunding really makes an impact, on your ability to be proactive.

So, those programs mentioned by Secretary Mayorkas and Secretary Cardona were necessary. We at Jackson State are in the process of applying for several of those in order to enhance our ability to, again, proactively mitigate some of those issues before we get into a response mode.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. So, I was unclear if you had developed or utilized the on-line trainings that were offered.

Mr. HUDSON. Yes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. But in one of your comments Tougaloo College, one of the victims of this year's slew of bomb threats, is a recipient of FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program funds, having received \$150,000 for safety and security in fiscal year 2021. Are you aware of the 501(c)(3) Jackson State and other nonprofit HBCUs that are eligible for this type of funding and did you apply?

Mr. HUDSON. We are aware of that type of funding and we are applying for those funds. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Great. Then how can Congress support HBCUs applying for security grant funding to ensure applications are successful?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, and that is the most important part because there are a multitude of programs out there, grant opportunities out there. But in terms of capacity, you know, there is a human capital that is needed in order to make a successful application. So, workshops such as the ones you mentioned are very important. Us participating in those on-going efforts, the program support that those funding agencies offer, are very critical in helping guide our institutions in terms of making a successful application.

So, I am glad you brought that up because that is the next step. Once those funding opportunities are out there, how can we work with HBCUs and other institutions to improve their ability to successfully navigate the actual process in order to successfully obtain those funds that are so very needed?

At Jackson State we try to take advantage of every opportunity, you know, whether it is any type of learning opportunity, any type of webinar, that helps us successfully navigate those processes, and we will continue to do so.

So, to the extent they do offer those, we do take advantage of those.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Yes. As a former director of public health, we certainly offer them when it comes to health-related programs, so that there is training to increase your capacity to apply for grant programs. So, thank you for that, I appreciate it.

Mr. Chair, I yield back my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California for 5 minutes, Mr. Correa.

Mr. CORREA. I want to thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for this most important hearing. I want to thank our witnesses here today for your testimony.

Mr. Chairman, you talked a little bit about sanctuaries. It is interesting today to think about a safe place in our society. It is not our home anymore, not a church. It is not a school or a university.

Just last Friday, I was at home and got alerted to a bomb threat, Santa Ana High School, 3,300 students, a bomb threat. The school locked down. For those moments, I can tell you everybody in my community was praying for a good outcome. We did have a good outcome, but to think of those moments that it took for the police to get to the school, even though we have police at the school, it wasn't enough. In those sheer moments, we realized we had holes in the system. Those few precious minutes make a difference between saving lives and not.

I do believe, I agree with both of our witnesses, that this investment is an investment well-made. The tragedy of something horrible happening, the toll, the human cost, and, of course, the psychological cost of knowing that you always got to look behind you and you always got to try to figure out if you are safe, that is not American. But we have to change it back to what America was.

This funding goes a long way. My specific question to our witnesses here today is how well do you work with the local public agencies? We have these things called fusion centers with local

public police, FBI, other groups work together. Do you feel like you have communication with these groups? Do you feel like there is a two-way conversation here to make sure that we prevent the unspeakable from happening? Thank you.

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, we do. We have developed wonderful relationships with our local, our State, and our Federal law enforcement agencies.

You know, in terms of response, as I said before, they were very much involved in helping us get through what was a pretty scary time when you have a bomb threat at that time. You know, 4 in the morning is when it happened to us. But, again, the need to be proactive, the need to continue those conversations, the need to engage in those opportunities to build our capacity and utilizing their expertise and helping us do so is the next step that we do have to take in terms of those relationships.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Hudson, I believe you don't leave any stone unturned when it comes to being proactive, would have, could have, should have, no second chances to look back. What is it that you need? What is it that you think we need to do to make sure that we cover the most obvious bases when it comes to the safety of our children and our community?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, the first thing we need when we talk about funding it has to start with a plan. We are working with our local law enforcement and with the Federal agencies, with the State agencies. What is the plan for Jackson State if and when a situation such as this occurs?

Obviously, we have safety protocols and measures in place, but the plan has to be inclusive of that tiered approach that I discussed earlier. Campus infrastructure, how do we make our campus as a whole, the actual property more secure? How do we work in terms of training, making sure that our officers are trained in such a way that their response, you know, is appropriate for the actual situation? Again, how do we work on the after effects? You know, what are some of the steps we take to mitigate the damage that is done as it relates to our students?

Mr. CORREA. Ms. Nelson, I will let you take your drink.

Ms. NELSON. Go ahead. Thank you.

Mr. CORREA. Any thoughts?

Ms. NELSON. Yes. I am glad that you mentioned the need to protect schools, as you suggested. One of the things that I don't think we have emphasized enough in this conversation is the need to prosecute these crimes as hate crimes and to recognize them as the vehicles for racial animus that they are. That is also a potential deterrent. We certainly don't want these crimes to occur, but it is important that we send a message immediately when they do or even when they are simply threatened because that is a form of domestic terror and that is an opportunity to send a broader message that these types of crimes and these threats of violence will not be tolerated.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, out of time. Thank you very much.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi for 5 minutes, Mr. Guest.

Mr. GUEST. Good afternoon. I want to thank you all for visiting with us and thank you for some of the things that you all are doing along with some of the other universities in Mississippi. You make myself and Congressman Thompson extremely proud to represent our great State.

Congratulations on a great football season. I wish you would have brought Coach Prime with you, but maybe next time that you are here he can join you.

I just want to ask you a little bit. Tell us a little bit, and just let me know, these recent threats that you all received, the impact, No. 1, that it had on the university, the faculty, the students; and then also, talk to me a little bit about the law enforcement response and the things that they did after this was reported. So if you could just share those with me for a few minutes, I would greatly appreciate that.

Mr. HUDSON. OK. Thank you so much and I certainly thank you for your well wishes.

You know, in terms of the impact, I think it is important to remember that once, you know, when you do the sweep, you determine that the immediate threat is not there as it relates to the bomb, the impact remains, the impact of the thought that this can happen to your campus, this can happen on your campus. There are enough examples in history of these things having been executed successfully. Acts of terrorism have been executed successfully for us to always remain vigilant no matter what was the outcome of that specific situation on that day.

For Jackson State University, February 1 was a day that reminded us that we are always under threat. There is always a threat of attack and we always have to remain vigilant for what could happen.

With respect to our Federal, State, and local law enforcement, I couldn't be happier and more thankful to them for the way they responded, again, not only in words, but in action. Specifically, the FBI Special Agent in Charge Jermicha Fomby, I was able to call him and talk to him personally and get his personal assurances that the FBI was on top of it, they were aware of everything that was happening, and really get his personal assurance that we had his full support.

With the State of Mississippi Capitol Police, you know, I was able to talk to the associate commissioner, Keith Davis, who actually sent a couple of units to campus to help assist our patrols and to supplement our police efforts. The city of Jackson did the actual sweep and was able to do so in a way that allowed us to reopen that same day. Obviously, there was some disruption, there was some lingering anxiety and concern, but they did their jobs in such a professional way that we were able to somewhat mitigate the disruption to the learning process. Of course, again, our own, you know, campus police, as they do every day, made sure that they swept the campus and made sure that we are safe.

Moving forward, when we look at solutions, I can't talk enough about infrastructure. You will hear me say that often, but the campus itself has to be designed in a way that encourages safety and encourages the security of our students. That means because we sit in an urban area, which, again, adds to the culture of the campus

and we are very proud to sit in the heart of Jackson, Mississippi, but because we sit in that area, we do have to take additional steps to decrease the vulnerability that that brings with it: The open access; some of the various ways, the thoroughfares through campus. That is really the next step for Jackson State to take.

Again, I also can't emphasize enough the ability to provide training for our officers, the ability to provide the type of training for our faculty, staff, and students, what do you do when these situations occur?

I will end where I started, that there have been enough successful examples of these type of threats being executed for us to always remain vigilant of the threat, even though, again, these individuals were apprehended and we are thankful for that. But the threat remains and we have to remain forever vigilant.

I will be sure to send Coach Prime your well wishes.

Mr. GUEST. Yes, sir. You talk a little bit about infrastructure, training for campus police, and then as far as technology, things that would be beneficial there for the security of the campus. Can you just talk very briefly? I have only got about 30 seconds. The Chairman may allow me to go over very briefly, but can you talk about maybe some technology needs that you have there at Jackson State where the Federal Government can partner with your campus to make sure that you have those needs met?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes. One of the things, you know, when we talk about those advanced security monitoring systems, you know, one of the effects of underfunding is that we possess those security data capture systems, but we do so with limited bandwidth, sometimes older technology. What that does is it doesn't allow us that continuous monitoring, doesn't allow us that long-term storage that allows us to do the type of threat assessments that you can do when you have the historical data. That is one specific area where we really need to upgrade, and that is an expense that most institutions just cannot cover in their normal operating budget.

Also, you look at things like the increase of insurance costs. You know, it costs a lot more oftentimes to be in the areas that we are, especially when you have a threat such as this. Institutions have to cover those things. So, again, these things that fall outside your normal operating budget, which are already pretty stretched thin, these things that are outside of the normal expertise of an institution of higher learning, how do we work with the Department of Homeland Security, how do we work with the Department of Justice, law enforcement agencies to ensure that we have the funding we need to expand our capacity in those specific areas?

Mr. GUEST. Thank you again, President Hudson, and thank you for being with us today.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you so much.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes the gentelady from Michigan, Ms. Slotkin, for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to our witnesses. Thanks for being here on this topic.

I am from Michigan and this topic is very relevant for a whole bunch of reasons. One, because we just announced that we are restarting an HBCU in Detroit and so we will join the legions of States who are proud to have those institutions, but also because

we have had a real problem with racially-motivated attacks and incidents in our State. In one of my counties, Ingham County, we had 26 incidents against churches in the last 2 years.

We have had repeated problems with Zoom bombing, where literally White supremacists jump onto a Zoom during COVID, show pictures of people giving the Nazi salute, and start basically attacking via Chat the pastors, the leaders. In addition to our African American institutions, we have had mosques—you know, violent incidents at mosques. We have had our Hillel at Michigan State attacked. We have had a lot of these incidents. It really struck me that a lot of the leaders of these institutions have had to become security professionals in addition to the spiritual leader or the, you know, senior educational leader at these institutions.

So, can you talk about, you know, Mr. Hudson, in your role, just kind-of how you have to do your job differently because you have to think about security all the time?

Mr. HUDSON. That is a great point. You do have to think about those things one would consider outside of the normal purview, if you will, of a higher ed leader. But when you think about it, when you house students on your campus, when you have students who are there 24/7, that is where they live, security becomes a heightened priority for your institutions. For Jackson State University, it has to be first and foremost. How can we create the proper environment where our students can learn, where they can be nurtured, where they—whether they can thrive. These types of threats disrupt that effort, our effort to provide those things. So, again, we have to become security personnel, so we do that by making sure, first of all, we have people around us who have the expertise, you know, in terms of campus public safety.

We also make sure we do that by partnering with our local, our State, our Federal law enforcement agencies to ensure that we have the proper connections and the proper partnerships that help us expand our capacity and our ability to secure the campus. Again, we work with the Department of Homeland Security, you know, our efforts with the Department, with the Office of Academic Engagement, allows us, again, to expand our capacity, expand our expertise through training, through academic programming that helps us become a part of that solution needed to deal with those various issues.

The other part we have to make sure we talk about is the mental health aspect. How do we expand our services on the mental health side to make sure that our students, the anxiety that comes with being under the potential of attack, if you will, how do we help our students deal with that while they are still doing the normal things: Going to class, you know, participating in campus activities? How do we make sure that is a part of the process, as well?

So, it is a holistic multi-tiered approach that you do have to take as a campus administrator in order to deal with these types of issues.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Yes. It just strikes me that for institutions, universities, colleges, and religious institutions that have to—they sort-of have to build in and price out the additional costs associated with security, physical security, but then also all the work that goes into making people feel, as you say, sort-of mentally safe. You

know, this committee, I think, has been a strong supporter of the Nonprofit Security Grants, you know, these grants for institutions. But it is just sad that we have to have those grants and that there is just this added tax on being a targeted institution in this day and age. I appreciate your work on that.

I will also say I think one of—sadly, in Michigan, one of the ways that this security threat has played out is that different religious and ethnic groups have been helping each other as new groups become victims of new security threats. We had a number of incidents at one of my large mosques, and we brought in the Jewish community who knows, you know, very well on how to secure their institutions. It is sad, but I do think that it is an area where, unfortunately, we have to help each other across lines. I just appreciate you coming here and speaking to your experience because it is something that, unfortunately, many, many institutions have to be thinking about.

So, with that, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. Maybe the Methodists and Baptists can get together in Mississippi.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Cleaver, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Am I audible?

Chairman THOMPSON. Yes, you are on. We hear you.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you. I want to thank you for this hearing. One of the things I want to make sure that the university presidents of HBCUs understand is that last year, due in no small part to Congressman Bobby Scott of Virginia, we were able to get record amounts of funding for HBCUs. He did an amazing job and I think all of you have probably been informed about the tremendous increases that he was able to get through his committee as the Chair of Education. We are all, Members, proud of it.

I want to go back to an issue earlier, and I hate we are getting off the subject, but sometimes, you know, we just have to respond. You know, I think this whole issue of talking about defunding the police has given some people a license to misrepresent, maybe even misunderstand. But to the panel, do you see as a synonym defund the police and reengineering, redesign, reimagine as either words that are synonyms or they are interchangeable?

Chairman THOMPSON. Ms. Nelson, we are going to let you take that.

Mr. CLEAVER. Yes, I am sorry. The counselor, yes.

Ms. NELSON. So, if the question is whether those concepts are interchangeable, I don't think I can answer that. I think they mean different things to different people and there may be some common themes.

I think the one theme and thread among all of those phrases and intentions is that something is broken in our public safety system. Something is broken and it needs to be fixed, and there are many different ways in which people are suggesting we go about it. But we saw that millions of Americans in 2020 agreed with the notion that our public safety system is broken. They did so in powerful protests, peaceful protests throughout this country that reverberated on a global scale. So, I do think that there is something reso-

nant in all of those slogans that just indicates that we have a significant problem to address.

This gives me an opportunity to share some research that the Legal Defense Fund did recently in response to this notion about an increase in crime and the idea that that is somehow linked to a decrease in law enforcement or cries for reform of law enforcement. Our Thurgood Marshall Institute conducted research analyzing homicide trends in 61 major U.S. cities and we drew samples from the 100 most popular cities in the United States, as well. According to our research, cities with higher levels of economic inequality experienced the higher increases in homicides.

So, when we talk about crime, it is very important that we look in the direction of what the underlying social conditions are that produce a rise in crime or produce crimes more generally. The focus is not an idea of thinking differently about law enforcement and public safety. The focus should be thinking about the economic inequality, the health disparities, and the other social conditions that lead to crime and violence.

Mr. CLEAVER. I appreciate that and I hate that we have to go in that direction, but I am not in linguistics or a lexicologist, but I do know that you can't just—somebody can't take a word or a phrase and then attach some other meaning to it. I think that is unfortunate that it is happening. So, you know, this is a serious problem. I get hit on both sides. I am a graduate of an HBCU and I am going to into my 42nd year as a seminary-trained ordained United Methodist pastor. I know the money that we have to spend now at our church for security and I also understand the trauma that many of the students and faculty at HBCUs have experienced.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, not just for the hearing, but I think making sure that this issue does not melt away as so many do. Thank you very kindly. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you. The gentleman yields back. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Ranking Member, as well. I thank the witnesses for appearing. I think the hearing has been most informative and quite beneficial.

I would like to address just a few comments to the representative from the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Just for edification purposes, many people may not know and I think it is worthy of mentioning at this hearing, this institution was founded by the Honorable Thurgood Marshall, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. I want to thank you, Ms. Nelson, for your position with the organization. I was an NAACP branch president for about a decade and have some sense of the difficulties that we encounter when we attempt to use these grant applications. Sometimes they can be very difficult to negotiate.

So, I thought I would ask you a couple of questions related to the grant application process. I am concerned about the difficulties you may be having. Is there any difficulty that you would call to my attention that I might be able to help you with or we might be able to help you with in terms of making it easier to negotiate the grant application process?

Ms. NELSON. Well, thank you very much, Representative Green for acknowledging the Legal Defense Fund and its founder, Thurgood Marshall. I will defer to Mr. Hudson to talk about the grant application process as the Legal Defense Fund is not presently applying for a grant application. But we do note that there are institutions, other institutions, other nonprofits, that want to take advantage of this program. We support the increase in funding and the act that is on the floor today that would increase funding to the NPSG to \$500 million for each fiscal year from 2023 to 2028, which we believe is a very necessary intervention as Black institutions continue to be subject to hateful attacks across the country.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you so much.

Mr. GREEN. I am going to yield to you in just a second, but let me ask something. I, too, support H.R. 6825 and would like to acknowledge the Chairman, Chairman Thompson, and the Ranking Member Katko for putting this before us. I am a cosponsor of it and I appreciate your being more specific as it relates to this legislation.

Yes, sir, I now yield to you.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you so much. I must say that one welcome development of the increase in funding is that it allows more institutions to be served by these funding opportunities. It becomes less of a competition and more of a need-based system where, you know, if your application is successful, if you demonstrate the need, you have a really good chance of receiving that funding. So, that is definitely a plus.

The other part is the funding agencies, especially I would say over the last couple of years, have been really good and they have really, you know, increased their efforts to help our institutions navigate that application process, navigate the bureaucracy, if you will, that comes along with applying these funds, applying for these funds, and actually receiving these funds. So we have been excited by that development.

We have taken advantage of as many of those that are possible. It has helped our institutions receive more funding than we have in the past. We would just like to see that continue. We would like to see the availability, the pool of funds continue to increase. We would like to see those outreach efforts continue that allow us to better access those funds, better navigate the application process, and continue to work to build our capacity. Because, in the end, this is about capacity building, building our capacity in terms of today's subject matter to better protect our campuses and to be more proactive in assessing and determining these threats before they actually happen.

Mr. GREEN. Well, one of the aspects of this legislation that I am excited about is that it provides feedback to nonprofits that do not receive grants. Can you comment on the importance of that feedback, please, sir?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, because, obviously, you know, if you don't receive funding, at least on your initial application, you do want to come back. You do want to reapply for those funds because the need still exists. So, that feedback is important because it tells you the strengths and weaknesses of your application and allows you

to go back and sort-of recalibrate your efforts and really put forth a better effort in terms of application process.

Also, it provides just that one-to-one connectivity between your institution and that funding agency that allows you to look at other programs, that allows you to have access to other opportunities that may be different than the one that you apply for and were maybe rejected from.

So, those are definitely welcome efforts. Again, it is part of that outreach, which I talked about, that we have seen an increase in recently. Our goal is to make sure that continues and to make sure the availability of those resources, the pool of resources, continue to increase, also, so more institutions can be assisted by these funds.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you. My time has expired. Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Thank you for making it clear that Black lives do matter by having this hearing.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New Jersey, Mrs. Watson Coleman.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for convening us today. I want to thank you and the Ranking Member for the legislation that we were considering that will increase the resources to these institutions to ensure that they are safer and have access to healthier environments, whether or not it is your worship environment or your educational environment.

I want to appreciate the fact that the Members of this committee have asked very diverse questions and they basically have covered the kind of areas that I was concerned about. What sticks out for me is very much is this, though. I think Mr. Hudson kind-of put this in my head. When we asked him about needs for his campus, he said something about the traditional and historic underfunding, that there is at least a \$10 million need to sort-of harden his campus or make it safer for his students to learn. So, I am interested in ensuring that there are buckets or pots of money, resources that are available to our institutions to make their campuses safer from an infrastructure perspective.

Another thing was the sort of systems, technology training, things of that nature. We need to make sure that those buckets of money exist or the money—or the programs that are created under the legislation we already have allows for this.

Last, I am very concerned about the whole mental health issues, both on the campuses and, you know, Reverend Manning raising those issues with regard to his church and members who haven't even come back to church since that horrible experience 9 years ago. I need to know if there are sufficient resources for mental health services to both parishioners from our church perspectives and from our colleges.

Last, I just want to say just sort-of generally that hate crimes in this country really target Blacks, Asians, Latinos, LGBTQ, and anybody else that the White supremacists think are just not worthy of our respect and our protection. I want to make sure that we have the resources available, that we are not having to compete against one another for inadequate resources in total.

So, I just would like to ask if Reverend Manning, Pastor Manning, would just comment on the sort of emotional and mental im-

pact, this mental health impact, the incident had on his congregation and what it means to his congregation.

Rev. MANNING. Thank you for the question. The impact, of course, you have initially the struggle with what happened, trauma, impacting a favorite place of worship. Then we did have a grant from USC that only lasted for 3 years. The problem with the grant in that particular perspective, it was kind-of short-term, did not necessarily give people just enough time to realistically come to grips with how they are feeling. It has only been recently that several members have started to open up the door and allow me to even share with them in regard of how they can continuously heal.

As I said before in my testimony, this should be long-term. I do not know how long it will ever take members to heal from a mental health perspective and a trauma perspective, especially as we are now living in an age where there are other attacks coming up against houses of worship.

So, the mental health component actually is very important. It is one that we realized from a spiritual formation perspective and it is one that we have to continue to be there to help as time goes on.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you. Thank you, Pastor. Another thought is that the trauma that is associated with active-shooter training, while necessary, I understand the reluctance that you all had in engaging in it, but it certainly is part of our readiness, our preparation. So, I just sort-of raise that for both you and for Mr. Hudson and commit to you that I will work very hard to ensure that you have the resources that you need in order to ensure that we can worship safely and that we can educate our children, and that our faculty and our administration in both the churches and our colleges are sufficiently prepared and protected, as well.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Pfluger, for 5 minutes.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank everyone, all the witnesses and participants today on this important hearing. I will focus on my role on this committee, which is as the Ranking Member of Intelligence and Counterterrorism and trying to, you know, be in the business of making sure that our communications between the Federal, local, and State law enforcement entities continue to be strong and that we have, you know, good information. I hope that as a result, as well, as a byproduct of this hearing that all of us will stand united in condemning acts of violence throughout the United States, regardless of where they occur. Obviously, it is unacceptable for any of those to happen. So, again, thank you for being here.

You know, recently, the Intel and Counterterrorism and the Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery subcommittees held a joint hearing that was based on securing the American houses of worship with a specific interest in the Jewish community. In that hearing our Members really learned that through the Jewish Secure Communities Network, that those facilities are able to share information on threats with each other and with law enforcement. I am very interested to know, you know, if there is anything

similar, if there is any sort of communications mechanism and how the colleges and universities are able to communicate with each other and with local, State, and Federal entities to make sure that we are staying vigilant.

So, anybody can answer that. President Hudson, if you are able to answer that, I will yield to anybody that wants to take a shot at that.

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, and thank you so much for your question. You are absolutely right that coordination between the universities that were affected and really all universities and those law enforcement entities is vital.

At Jackson State, we have been fortunate to have great communication with all levels of law enforcement and great support from those entities.

The next step, and we have hosted several summits on our campus related to, you know, the local issues as it related to crime, criminal justice. But really the next step is making sure we do have those convenings, those regular convenings, in which we review where we are, review our planning, review those threat assessments, make sure that we are always vigilant.

As I said, as wonderful as the response was from our local law enforcement agencies, it was response by its very nature. We want to be proactive. We want to make sure that before there is a threat, we are always in communication, we are always in that constant planning mode, and we are always on the same page, so we can mitigate even the possibility of the threat and certainly the potential fallout.

I will say again that enough of these threats have become real and have become real acts of violence for us to not ever take them lightly. We always have to take them seriously. Part of taking them seriously is making sure that we are always in constant communication and coordination with our local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies to really ensure that we are doing the things and taking the steps needed to protect our campuses.

Mr. PFLUGER. Yes. Thank you, President Hudson. Does anybody else have a different opinion as far as any of the witnesses?

Rev. MANNING. No, the only thing, and thank you for that question, I think the only thing that we have to continuously do is to build those lines of communication even within all of our churches. The work that we have done already, as well, with the Tree of Life after their horrific act back in October 2019, it was immensely beneficial to be able to come and to share with them. I think realistically when we can share all of the communications together, then that helps in aiding all the house of worship, knowing first and foremost that they are not alone. Then second, that there are folks out there who have trailblazed the way, as well.

Mr. PFLUGER. Well, thank you, Reverend. Thank you, President Hudson. I think your words and your testimony are salient to us, that we should always be vigilant of threats. It is really sad that we have to even talk about this, to be honest. It is very sad to me.

But, Mr. Chairman, I hope that as a result of this, what this committee will do is take these words, take these witnesses' testimony today, and take this situation and apply it to not only this particular specific situation, but also to the greater security needs

of our country. That the information sharing, whether it is our Southern Border or whether it is terrorism abroad, that we will do everything we possibly can to secure this country and use the words that we just heard from the reverend and the president.

With that, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. As you know, that is part of the charge of this committee, to do just that. I look forward to a cooperative effort to make sure we accomplish it.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida, Mrs. Demings, for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Well, thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for reminding us of our charge. Certainly, our primary responsibility is the safety and security of our Nation. I have not forgotten that. But today, we are here to talk about domestic terrorist threats against Black institutions, houses of worship, and HBCUs. I think our children being threatened and worshippers is worth staying very focused and giving the—just amount of time and attention to that matter. I want to thank our witnesses for being here with us today, as well.

Reverend Manning, you described the violence against Mother Emanuel—and it is good to see you, I wish it was under different circumstances—as a deliberate and sinful act rooted in hate. I just want to repeat those words because I want this committee to stay very focused on why we are here.

President Hudson, you stated that the threats against HBCUs are a deliberate attempt to destroy these cultural spaces where intellect and diverse thought thrives.

Reverend Manning, following up on the \$50,000 that you indicated that Mother Emanuel had to spend on security in recent years, I am just curious, have you received any outreach at all from any Federal offices about programs that might assist your church in provided security at your church?

Rev. MANNING. Thank you for the question. I already articulated that we did receive a partial grant with MUSC, but that was from a trauma perspective.

From a security perspective, we have not. A lot of times within the church situation, there may be some delay in receiving information regarding if those grants are indeed available. I think that is something that we definitely have to work through.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Yes, I think it is just almost unbelievable. I mean, the Nation watched and, quite frankly, probably the world watched a vicious attack against the pastor and the worshipers there. I find it almost unbelievable that no Federal agency reached out with regard to security at the church.

President Hudson, I know you have indicated that you were aware and certainly of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Certainly, we know that bomb threats against HBCUs is nothing new. We are certainly here today to talk about the recent series of threats, but could you just share a little bit? When did you become aware or how did you become aware of Nonprofit Security Grant Program?

Mr. HUDSON. Well, we became aware of the program quite some time ago and we became aware, as we do a lot of the different programs. It was through the efforts of our Congressman, my Con-

gressman, Congressman Thompson, and his office that really does a great job of keeping us abreast of opportunities that are available to our colleges, our universities, even outside of the very issue we are talking about today.

Also, our engagement with DHS Office of Academic Engagement and that is a more recent effort, we signed an MOU with them this past fall, has helped increase the awareness of these various programs that you may not otherwise be aware of. You know, we put opportunities out in a way where we assume that everyone knows. So, when funding agencies, when our Congressman, when they are intentional about letting you know, and sometimes it is as simple as sending an email, hey, just want to make you aware of this opportunity, when those efforts happen, it really helps our ability to not only know the importance of the issues that these grants may address, but also gives you some comfort, if you will, that your applications will be reviewed seriously and this is an opportunity that they want you to have.

That is so important. Grant writing oftentimes is competitive amongst universities. So, as I said before when you upped the pool of resources and make it more available to more schools, that helps. When you provide that outreach for the opportunities that are available, you are going to get more people writing and you are going to open that opportunity up to more institutions.

Mrs. DEMINGS. You know, I think about how critical information sharing is and the unbelievable number of houses of worship. Thank God for those and the HBCUs, too. But disseminating information to all might be quite challenging.

Are your institutions part of organizations that could help disseminate information and coordinate technical assistance if needed? We are just trying to find better ways to get information out to larger numbers of institutions.

Mr. HUDSON. Absolutely.

Mrs. DEMINGS. For either one.

Mr. HUDSON. Absolutely for certain colleges and universities, HBCUs. For us, we are members of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, and they are a great organization in terms of disseminating information to member institutions and following up with those, facilitating webinars, facilitating Zoom chats in which we can get additional information and actually speak with the funding agencies and those officials who are responsible for administering those grants.

So, I would always say that those organizations, you also have UNCF, as well, are really key and vital. To the extent that those funding agencies work with those organizations, that information does filter out better to the individual institutions.

Mrs. DEMINGS. I am out of time. Mr. Chairman, thank you so much. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from California, Ms. Barragán, for 5 minutes.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing today. It calls attention to the disturbing trend of increased bomb threats at Black colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Let us be clear, these acts of intimidation are rooted in racism and bigotry, and they should outrage all of us.

In my district, Charles R. Drew University, an historically Black graduate institute, received 2 bomb threats in January. In their 55-year history, nothing like this has happened before. These threats cause terror for their students and staff alike.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for immediately raising the seriousness of these threats with the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. I am here to work alongside you and this committee to address domestic violent extremism, acts that promote dangerous, violent, White supremacist ideologies.

President Hudson, you spoke about this a little bit in your last answer. In my district, Charles R. Drew University is still unsure if the bomb threat perpetrator was caught and if they were targeted by the same individual or groups as other HBCUs across the Nation.

In your testimony you emphasized the importance of close collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security. Do you know if the Department is working alongside HBCUs to coordinate information about these bomb threats? Do you have any recommendations for information sharing?

Mr. HUDSON. Yes, they have been very helpful in terms of disseminating information and coordinating with the member institutions. I can personally attest that I have heard from several individuals through the Department of Homeland Security, including my Congressman, through local law enforcement, State law enforcement, Federal law enforcement, just that personal recognition that we know this is out there, we are doing everything we can to assist, that has been very helpful.

Again, I would recommend continuing to work not only directly with those institutions, which that personal touch is so important, you know, once you have received a threat, but also working through those member organizations, those umbrella organizations, as I mentioned Thurgood Marshall and there are several others. They are very good at getting us all together and making sure we are all receiving the same information and making sure we are all receiving the same opportunities to learn more about resources, to speak with those administrators, those high-ranking administrators, that have the ability to move the needle as it relates to these issues.

So, I would just ask—

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you.

Mr. HUDSON [continuing]. That they continue that effort along those lines.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you. Reverend Manning, as our society has become more digital and users can post anonymously on-line with greater ease, how has Mother Emanuel addressed 21st Century on-line threats? Are you aware of the actions that other faith-based institutions are taking to make sure their congregation members feel safe during this time of increased threats?

Rev. MANNING. Yes. Thank you for the question. Let me answer the first question—or the last question first.

So, our work, of course, with the Jewish community, Tree of Life has actually borne a lot of fruit in that regard where we do talk on a regular basis. Rabbi Jeff Myers and I have a personal connection, so we do do that in that regard, as well as part of some of

the other platforms that we do, that are able to plug into. We're able to hear about some of the threats locally here within the city of Charleston.

As far as on-line, when we have those type of attacks that may come on our Facebook page, the only thing we can do is, of course, go in and remove them and then report them to Facebook in that regard. But the on-line presence is indeed something that we had to spend some time in because there is so much anonymity that is out there, where people can just post and then whatever they are going to say, they can say, and then we just have to make sure that we are doing our level best to remove all of those type of comments that come up.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you for that. Ms. Nelson, in the wake of the recent HBCU bomb threats, the NAACP called for the full accountability, arrest, prosecution, and conviction for those responsible for these threats. Charles R. Drew University in my district still doesn't know if the perpetrator was caught.

Can you talk about the importance of accountability and how Congress can help address the unequal and selective criminal justice enforcement measures you have seen over the years?

Ms. NELSON. Yes, thank you. I want to emphasize how important it is for Congress and for Federal law enforcement to aggressively investigate and prosecute hate crimes. They are a scourge on our society. They represent our very worst inclinations. They have the ability to spread to invite copycat instances of violence and often involve mass efforts at extracting violence against particular communities.

So, it is something that we are deeply concerned about. We have talked about some of the historical instances and events that are known to many of us. But there are many, also, that fall under the radar and your reference to the threats of the schools in your districts are a great example of ones that we don't hear about every day in the news, but still wreak the havoc that we have been discussing in terms of the terror that they produce in individuals and in whole communities.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you. Thank you all for—all our witnesses. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Malinowski, for 5 minutes.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing today. Thank you to our witnesses. I am sure we all wish we weren't having to talk about this, but it is important that we are.

We are seeing a staggering increase in the number of domestic bombings in the United States. In 2020, the number skyrocketed by 71 percent. In the first few months of this year alone we have seen an unprecedented wave of 57 improvised explosive device threats, or IED threats, against institutions like our Historically Black Colleges and Universities and places of worship more generally.

We can talk about the root causes, and I think we have done that in this committee and elsewhere, of the rise of domestic extremism and generally the role that social media companies play in ampli-

fyng and recommending violent extremist content. But we are here today to ensure that as we deal with those root causes, we are also acting to protect the potential targets of these attacks.

We have to do more to help our State and local communities and governments and others that serve on the front lines with the resources that they need to identify and protect institutions most likely to be targeted. That is why I recently introduced and the committee unanimously supported the Bipartisan Bombing Prevention Act, a bill that formally authorizes the Office of Bombing Prevention, or OBP, to provide counter IED training and guidance to targeted organizations, and working with Federal partners like FEMA to administer grants to those institutions that would be most likely to be attacked.

I know since January, OBP has been in contact with over 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as FBI and local law enforcement, offering their expertise and support.

So, I wanted to ask Reverend Manning and Mr. Hudson, a part of OBP's mission is coordinating a comprehensive National counter-IED strategy. I wonder if you could speak to the importance of having that kind of holistic and strategic approach to bomb prevention.

Rev. MANNING. Well, I would think that it would definitely be advantageous. From a conventional AME Church perspective, it would help in making sure that all the churches across the United States, and dare I say the world, have the most recent information, and I think that would help immensely.

Mr. HUDSON. I echo Reverend Manning's sentiments from the colleges and universities side, definitely having access, full access, to all the information at the same time would be very beneficial. It also aligns with the multi-tiered approach that is necessary to combat this issue. You have to look at it from all levels. Having that type of coordination and that dissemination of information amongst colleges and universities so we can review best practices, for instance, would be most beneficial.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you. Say a little bit about the support and outreach that you have received from the Federal Government along those lines and whether you think there is room to grow and strengthen that collaboration.

Mr. HUDSON. Well, we are excited about the collaboration and the assistance we have received from the Federal Government, just from, again, the opportunities that are being provided for funding and the ability to increase the pool of those funds, the availability of those funds, and, again, the interaction with the funding agencies. So, those things are very important. We would just like for that to not only continue to be enhanced, but to be enhanced and, again, allow for more universities to really improve and increase their capacity.

I will say, you know, for Jackson State, and this is true for most HBCUs, without that Federal support it will be difficult for us to meet the moment, if you will, and for us to build our capacity to properly respond to these ever-increasing threats. This is not the last time this will happen. These things will continue to happen. History often repeats itself. The assistance of the Federal Government is going to be necessary to allow us to meet those threats and really build our capacity in doing so.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Well, I am afraid you are right and we will do whatever we can to help. Thank you so much and I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman yields back. The gentlelady from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. If you would just allow me a moment to put something on the record. I didn't know if you were closing at this time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you so very much.

Thank you all so very much. This has been powerful and instructive to all of who represent HBCUs.

I do want to just reassert the Nonprofit Security Grant Program for the nonprofits, but also the recent Vice President's announcement that may have been already mentioned by the Chairman, but I just wanted to say it again. For our HBCU schools, there is a project, School Emergency Response to Violence, Project SERV, that you can now immediately get in the queue application for \$50,000 to \$100,000.

I am certain that this will not happen again. I encourage—first of all, the Chairman should be thanked because we were the first committee, I think, that had the Classified briefing. But I encourage the FBI and DHS and others because of the overhanging threat to move as expeditiously and thoroughly as possible in their ability to give you answers in many instances.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to indicate that we are collaborating with the administration, we are collaborating with Members of Congress in our districts. We hope that you all will call upon us so that we can ensure the safety of all of you and to use these grants that have now been evidenced.

Thank you so very much. With that, I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady yields back. Let me thank the witnesses for their testimony and the Members for their questions.

Reverend Manning, your maiden voyage as a witness to Congress will be duly noted and let me say you passed with flying colors, by the way. We thank you for it.

However, we will have staff reach out to you directly on making sure that you and anyone you suggest would have any and all information relative to the nonprofit programs that Mother Emanuel can benefit from. You should not have had to spend \$50,000 of your own money when we have monies available right here to help.

Let me say to Ms. Nelson, your organization has a tremendous job to do. You need to help keep the conscience of this country on track and make sure we do the right thing. We are a Nation of laws and sometimes those laws have been bent to the negative impact of others. So, I applaud you for that.

President Hudson, your institution is a great institution, not because I have a degree from there, but I also represent it. So, I appreciate you coming in. I know you have a tremendous challenge ahead of you.

The one thing that I want to talk about on our historical Black colleges, when threats occur, then all of us who had children to go to college, the first thing that comes to our mind is it safe? So part of what we have to do is mitigate the issue to the extent practical, so that parents don't have to wonder when I send my child to college, is it a death sentence or is it there so that they can get the

expectation of a wholesome education? Our committee is committed to doing that.

That is why the Ranking Member and others have joined me in trying to increase this pool of money for institutions and other non-profits to take advantage of it. It is not enough, it is a start. But coupled with that is some training and coordination that can be equally as helpful as an investment in dollars. So, we look forward to that going forward.

The Members of the committee may have additional questions for the witnesses and we ask that you respond expeditiously in writing. The Chair reminds Members that the committee's record will remain open for 10 business days.

Without objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:19 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN DINA TITUS FOR ERIC S.C. MANNING

Question 1. You testified about the history of White supremacist attacks on Black churches and how the church is the heart of the Black community.

In the years following the racially-motivated attack at Mother Emmanuel Church, what have been the long-term effects on the community's confidence in gathering safely and how can communities like yours be supported after immense trauma?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2. How have the threats to Black churches evolved over the years and what resources do churches need to keep their communities safe?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN DINA TITUS FOR THOMAS K. HUDSON

Question 1a. Since January 4, there have been a total of 59 bomb threats, most of which targeted HBCUs and Black churches. The FBI states that 31 field offices have been involved in working with local, State, and Federal law enforcement to identify those involved.

Has the Department of Homeland Security helped connect you with resources/programs to bolster your security in the wake of these events? If so, have you noticed an impact on the student's sense of safety and security?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1b. What can the Department of Homeland Security do to communicate with you more effectively regarding the threats that your institutions face?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2a. Yesterday, the Department of Education announced that Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that have recently experienced a bomb threat are eligible to apply for grant funds under the Project School Emergency Response to Violence (Project SERV) program. Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security has been providing resources, assessments, training, and grant funding to support emergency management and prevent acts of targeted violence and terrorism.

From your experience, have you found roadblocks to engaging with Governmental entities and do you have any thoughts on how they can further engage and support HBCUs?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2b. Have you have had any experiences with other groups or Government officials that have assisted you with the security of your institutions? For example, local police, State/local government, non-profit organizations, or other community groups or associations.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM CONGRESSWOMAN DINA TITUS FOR JANAI NELSON

Question 1. You testified about the history of White supremacist attacks on Black churches and how the church is the heart of the Black community.

You discuss this in your testimony, but can you elaborate on how threats to Black institutions have evolved over time?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2. Since January 4, there have been a total of 59 bomb threats, most of which targeted HBCUs and Black churches. The FBI states that 31 field offices have been involved in working with local, State, and Federal law enforcement to identify those involved.

White supremacy and racially-motivated extremism are not new. With that in mind, what unique public policy challenges do Black institutions, like HBCUs and Black churches, face as a result?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

