

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Establishing the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program

01/18/2022

TRENTON – Governor Murphy today signed legislation (A-1663/S-1842) establishing the “New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program”. The program follows a successful three-year pilot program managed by the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP) which expired in 2020.

“With hate crimes on the rise, we must do everything that we can to protect vulnerable communities from threats to safety,” **said Governor Murphy**. “This legislation provides funding that will allow nonprofits that are at high risk of being targeted to take measures to protect themselves. Our administration will always act as a partner to those who are targeted and under threat.”

“After a successful pilot, we thank Governor Murphy for signing the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program into law and investing in the security of our communities,” **said Acting Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness Laurie Doran**. “The legislation adds another resource to NJOHSP’s arsenal for mitigation efforts against acts of violence and terrorism. Similar to the federal homeland security program, eligible nonprofit organizations throughout New Jersey will have an opportunity to apply for a competitive State-funded grant program to enhance their physical security.”

Primary sponsors of this legislation include Assemblymembers Annette Quijano and Robert Karabinchak, and Senators Joseph Cryan and Nicholas Scutari. Former Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri-Huttle was a primary sponsor of this legislation in the prior legislative session.

“Times have not gotten any better since the pilot program was introduced. We’ve all seen the news reports,” **said Assembly sponsors Annette Quijano, Valerie Vainieri-Huttle, and Robert Karabinchak in a joint statement**. “Many religious based non-profits remain at risk and the need for security has heightened. Nonprofits, religious based organizations and members of these communities have a legitimate concern regarding their safety. Through the pilot program, we were able to see the need for funding. Now it’s time to make that support a permanent priority.”

“We have witnessed a disturbing increase in the number of incidents of hate and bigotry based on race, religion and ethnicity,” **said Senator Joe Cryan who previously served as Union County Sheriff**. “The pilot program helped protect houses of worship, community centers and other non-profit institutions that are most vulnerable. Making it permanent will improve security that protects the facilities, their staffs and the people they serve in communities throughout New Jersey.”

“No individual, group or organization should be left vulnerable to any threats or acts of violence because of their race, religion or heritage,” **said Senate President Nick Scutari**, “Places of worship and other locations that bring people together will be better protected with the support this program provides. We won’t allow bias or hate to intimidate anyone from practicing their religion or honoring their ethnic pride.”

This legislation creates a permanent “New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program” and makes available grants of up to \$50,000 for nonprofit organizations at greatest risk of attack for the purchase of equipment to harden vulnerable targets. Under the program, organizations will also be able to receive grants of up to \$10,000 to hire security personnel on a temporary or permanent basis. The legislation directs NJOHSP to request an annual appropriation of \$2 million for this program as a part of its annual budget request.

“We are very gratified the Governor and legislature have made the Nonprofit Security Grant Program permanent,” **said Robin Wishnie, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties**. “This program makes it possible for New Jersey’s religious-based organizations to have access to vital funds to enhance security. For us as Jewish New Jerseyans, it is more pressing than ever before that we secure our facilities and protect our community from acts of antisemitism and violence.”

“This is a welcome decision by Governor Murphy,” **said Dov Ben-Shimon, CEO of Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest, the largest Jewish organization in New Jersey**. “In light of the evil antisemitic attack on the Colleyville synagogue this past Shabbat (Saturday), making the nonprofit security grant program permanent is the first, minimum step forward in bringing more security resources to the Jewish community. We’re grateful for the Governor’s continued efforts in promoting the safety of our community.”

“We want to thank Governor Murphy, the co-sponsors, and the state legislature for passing this vital piece of legislation,” **said Jason Shames, CEO of Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey**. “We have worked tirelessly with our partners in the legislature and nonprofit community to ensure the safety and security of our state’s nonprofit and religious institutions. Particularly in the light of recent antisemitic incidents locally and around the county, it is essential to continue this important work with our partners to protect all of our citizens from acts of violence and hate. Making the Nonprofit Security Grant Program permanent goes a long way towards this goal.”

“Utilization of the funds made available through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program have been vital not only to enhancing the physical security within our community institutions but also in demonstrating a real appreciation for the vulnerability many individuals continue to feel throughout our community,” **said Jennifer Dubrow Weiss, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey**. “We are grateful to the bill sponsors for championing this legislations and to the Governor for signing it into law.”

“Jewish Federation in the Heart of NJ, along with neighboring Federations, interfaith partners, and legislators, has been integral to the formulation, creation, and expansion of the state nonprofit security grant program (NSGP) since its inception as a pilot program – helping inform how these grants should evolve through the years to meet changing threats and needs,” **said Susan Antman, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation in the Heart**



of New Jersey. "Our collective voices have been heard and with great satisfaction and gratitude, we applaud our elected leaders and thank Governor Murphy for signing the bill into law. Making the program permanent enables all faith and nonprofit communities in NJ to be more proactive in prioritizing security for the benefit of all who live, work, and play in our great state."

Governor Phil Murphy

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