

Congressman Gabe Amo (RI-01) Testimony for the Record

Subcommittee on Homeland Security

April 9, 2025

Chairman Mark Amodei and Ranking Member Lauren Underwood, thank you for inviting me to share my thoughts as the committee works on the Fiscal Year 2026 Homeland Security Appropriations Act.

I strongly urge you to maintain robust funding for our homeland security grant programs. As you know, the Department of Homeland Security has halted disbursements of various grants, including those implemented by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Freezing these disbursements has created chaos and uncertainty for programs that keep our citizens safe. These programs support first responders with training and equipment, help secure at-risk nonprofits, provide emergency prevention and mitigation services, and assist with rescue efforts after catastrophic disasters. I urge you to invest in these essential programs so our communities can stay safe.

Specifically, I request that you continue to provide:

- **At least \$500 million for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP)** – These grants fund physical security enhancements as well as emergency preparedness training for at-risk faith-based and nonprofit institutions.
- **At least \$405 million (from FY25) Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Program** – These grants help firefighters and other first responders

obtain needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, and training.

- **At least \$405 million (from FY25) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program** – This funding for fire departments helps recruit and retain trained firefighters.
- **Robust funding for the U.S. Fire Administration** – An entity of FEMA, the U.S. Fire Administration works to support fire departments and emergency services to prepare for, prevent, and mitigate responses to hazards.
- **Robust funding for the National Fire Academy (NFA)** – An entity of the U.S. Fire Administration, the NFA provides free and specialized training courses for firefighters and other emergency services professionals.
- **At least \$56 million for the Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System** – These expert task forces can be deployed by FEMA to a disaster area to provide search and rescue assistance following a disaster.

Additionally, Congress has a responsibility to ensure that appropriated funds are spent by the Executive Branch in the manner required by statute. The Trump administration's ongoing pauses to federal funding run counter to the funding requirements in the past appropriations bills. Therefore, it is essential the Fiscal Year 2026 Homeland Security Appropriations bill include language mandating that the appropriated funds be spent as required by statute and the Constitution.

Thank you for considering these priorities in the Fiscal Year 2026 Homeland Security Appropriations Act which are critical to the residents I represent in Rhode Island's First Congressional District.