



September 29, 2004

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The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
311 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
2406 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Martin Olav Sabo  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
2336 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators Cochran and Byrd, Representatives Rogers and Sabo:

On behalf of the Midwestern Governors Association, I write today to urge you to restore funding to the FY04 level for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), the primary source of coordinated funding for First Responders. The SHSGP program was funded at \$1.7 billion in FY04, and is decreased by \$425 million and \$735 million, respectively, in the House and the Senate versions of the FY05 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. Even with offsetting increases in the Urban Areas Security Initiative, our state and local homeland security grant programs will experience a significant decrease in FY05 unless funding to the SHSGP program is restored in the conference report.

The State Homeland Security Grants support the ability of state and local governments to prepare for another possible terrorist attack by funding essential prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities within states and across regional boundaries. At least 80 percent of these funds are passed-through directly to firefighters, police, and emergency personnel.

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, states and communities of all sizes have enhanced their level of preparedness to deal with potential emergencies of all types. This has required a great deal of planning, coordination and investment by all governments across the nation. *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* is based on these shared principles of responsibility and coordination between federal departments, states, local governments, the private sector and the American people.

America faces a nationwide threat, and reductions in funding would severely hinder states' ability to build statewide strategies, to maintain capacity for basic levels of preparedness and to train and exercise their response capabilities. Statewide preparedness is essential for a state's ability to protect both its urban and rural critical infrastructure. Whether it is the protection of an urban shopping mall or the prevention of a rural bioterrorism incident that affects our food and water supply, critical infrastructure in every state must be protected.

We further believe that federal funding to the states, including resources, programs and activities involving state and local governments, must be coordinated through the nation's Governors for maximum effectiveness and efficiency. Programs and funding that bypass the states could easily lead to gaps in coverage, incompatible local systems, and wasteful duplication of effort. *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* relies on implementation and coordination by states, and maintaining level funding will allow us to accomplish that mission.

We urge you to continue the State Homeland Security Grant Program at the FY04 level and maintain a minimum grant guarantee. Preserving these funds will aid states in fully implementing statewide strategies, providing necessary resources to our first responders, enhancing security and ensuring basic levels of prevention and preparedness across the country.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven

Governor of North Dakota and Chairman,  
Midwestern Governors Association

cc: Senator Bill Frist  
Speaker Dennis Hastert  
Senator Tom Daschle  
Senator Ted Stevens  
Senator Susan Collins  
Senator Joseph Lieberman  
Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi  
Congressman Chris Cox  
Congressman Jim Turner  
Congressman Bill Young  
Congressman David Obey  
Senate and House Conferees  
MGA Delegation