

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 3, 2023

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We write today to express concern with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Risk Review and Proposed Enhancement Recommendations for FY2023 Risk Methodology for the Homeland Security Grant Program and its impact on the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). We request you pause implementation of the proposed changes, engage in further targeted engagement with local subject matter experts, and host Congressional briefings on the subject before implementing any final changes.

In 2002, the Homeland Security Act created the UASI program to assist "high-risk urban areas in preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to acts of terrorism." Year after year, these investments in local preparedness have proven successful. If the proposed changes to the UASI program take effect, we are concerned our high-risk urban areas – which are collectively home to 100 million people – will not have the resources to continue building and sustaining the capabilities that help keep our nation secure.

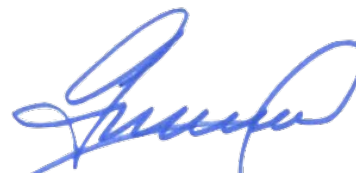
We understand the risk methodology for the UASI program has long been criticized as lacking transparency and subjected to seemingly arbitrary adjustments from year to year. While we acknowledge the intent of FEMA to broaden the scope of the program during this FY2023 risk methodology review, it is imperative changes are not made to the detriment of the success of the local programs supported by the UASI program to date. Modifications to the UASI risk methodology should be incremental and drafted in consultation with existing local programs.

The proposed risk methodology changes counter Congressional intent for this program and may leave our high-risk urban areas more vulnerable. Therefore, we request the newly proposed methodology changes not be implemented at this time and that any future proposed changes to the methodology allow for additional collection and analysis of data as well as comprehensive input from local subject matter experts and Congress.

Sincerely,



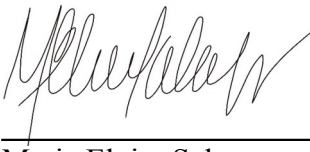
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



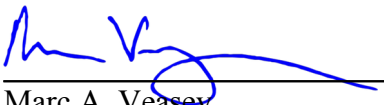
Carlos A. Gimenez
Member of Congress



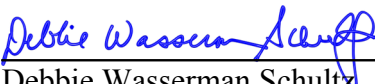
Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress