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December 1, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairperson
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairperson
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairperson Shelby, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairperson Lowey, and Ranking Member Granger:

Antisemitic attacks, harassment, and online hate have each hit historically high rates in the last few years, and they are all interconnected. They are occurring in a polarized political and cultural environment in which hate, terror, and violent extremism are increasingly threatening all Americans. As such, we write to ask you to include the following items that address these threats, and that have appeared appropriations legislation providing for the remainder of FY21.

FY 2021 HOMELAND SECURITY:

Non-Profit Security Grants: For the past decade, funding assistance from federal, state, and local governments has provided crucial support for security hardening and enhancements for our nation's religious institutions. But, in recent years, several high-profile murderous attacks on religious institutions have demonstrated that houses of worship are still at significant security risk.

ADL supports significantly increased funding for non-profit houses of worship and other religious institutions that government and law enforcement authorities objectively determine are at high risk of attack, by adopting in final FY21 appropriations the House's proposed increase in funding for the UASI NSGP to \$180 million, and the House's proposed increase in funding for the SHSGP NSGP to \$180 million.

Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention: DHS's Office for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention provides grants to empower civil society and research institutions to perform community-based activities that complement the government's violence prevention work. These efforts are crucial to protecting the sense of security that enables American communities to prosper, and in the face of rising threats – in particular, from white supremacists – they must be brought to scale.

ADL urges Congress to adopt the House Subcommittee Report's language highlighting of the problem of white supremacist violence; the Senate Subcommittee's Explanatory Statement language that requires briefings to Congress about this Office's grants and threat assessments; and increased funding for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention grants of \$20 million, as provided in the House's draft bill.

Protective Security Advisors: The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) provides crucial security assistance to State and local authorities, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders in the person of Protective Security Advisors (PSAs), who serve as onsite critical infrastructure and vulnerability assessment specialists. Unfortunately, this program has been underresourced.

ADL calls on Congress to give final approval to DHS's FY21 request to increase the PSA program to 158 Positions, 143 FTE, and \$21.6 million.

FY 2021 COMMERCE, JUSTICE AND SCIENCE:

Department of Justice and FBI Counterterrorism Coordination: In light of what our law enforcement and national security leaders have identified as a persistent threat of lethal violence from domestic terrorism, Congress directed DOJ's Domestic Terrorism Executive Committee to report on its coordination of investigators, intelligence agents, and prosecutors to enhance the effectiveness of prevention and punishment of acts of domestic terrorism, in language accompanying FY20 appropriations legislation.

ADL asks Congress to adopt the Senate Subcommittee's related FY21 Explanatory Statement language that calls for submission of an updated report on these activities; as well as the House Subcommittee's suggestion in its Report that the Attorney General establish an interagency task force with reporting obligations to combat domestic terror.

Improving Hate Crimes Reporting And Prevention: While the FBI's Hate Crimes Statistics reports provide the most comprehensive picture available of the scope and nature of hate crime – a persistent and growing problem – experts agree that they likely omit the vast majority of bias-motivated incidents that actually occur. The Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act, S. 2043/H.R. 3545, would provide grants to State and local governments to improve hate crime data collection and reporting; create hotlines to encourage reporting of suspected hate crimes; and develop new hate crime reduction programs built around deeper community engagement.

ADL urges Congress to include spending provisions of the NO HATE Act in legislation providing funding for the remainder of FY21, mirroring their inclusion in H.R. 6800, the HEROES Act. We also urge you to adopt report language promulgated by the Senate Subcommittee that expresses concern at increases in reports of hate-motivated violence and directs the Department of Justice to prioritize its fight against hate crime; and that calls for immediate delivery of the report requested from the FBI in S. Rep. 116-127 describing the agency's technical assistance on hate crimes reporting and its assessment of law enforcement agencies' progress in improving anti-hate crime efforts.

Matthew Shepard Act State and Local Police Training: Over a decade ago, section 4704 of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act authorized funding for “technical, forensic, prosecutorial, or any other form of assistance” to state and local law enforcement authorities for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes. The need for this funding is greater than ever, but Congress has never appropriated money for this purpose.

We support the adoption of the House's provision of \$8 million for this assistance in FY21.

Department of Justice Community Relations Service: At a time of increasing community tensions, hate, and hate violence, the unique mediation and conciliation services DOJ's Community Relations Service (CRS) provides in association with the respected Justice Department, but separate from its investigative and prosecutorial functions, are critically valuable.

ADL urges adoption of the House-enacted increase to \$20.3 million in annual funding for CRS, and the authorization to reprogram additional funds to it included in H.R. 7617.

FBI Uniform Crime Reporting System Modernization: Gaps in the data collected on hate crimes and other aspects of criminal activity clearly indicate the need to modernize collection mechanisms for reporting by local, tribal, and state agencies, and Congress must ensure that the FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics provide the necessary trainings and resources to help law enforcement meaningfully participate using the National Incident-Based Recording System (NIBRS) that will replace the Summary Reporting System as of January 2021.

ADL asks Congress to adopt report language from the Senate Subcommittee's Explanatory Statement that directs the FBI to submit a status report and regular updates on the transition to use of NIBRS.

FY 2021 INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES:

Holocaust and Genocide Education: Holocaust education teaches fundamental life lessons about world history, fascism, extremism, the fragility of democracy, the human capacity for immorality, scapegoating and stereotyping, the role of perpetrators and bystanders, the importance of empathy and diversity and efforts toward justice.

ADL urges Congress to adopt the House’s allocation of \$2 million to expand the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s education programming, pursuant to authorization in the Never Again Education Act, P.L. 116-141.

FY 2021 STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS:

Monitoring And Countering Antisemitism Abroad: The numerous indicators that antisemitism is a serious problem around the globe include ADL’s 2019 update on its “Global 100” survey, noting that one in four Europeans polled harbor pernicious attitudes toward Jewish people, and a study by Tel Aviv University’s Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry, which found violent anti-Semitic attacks worldwide rose 18 percent in 2019.

ADL asks Congress to provide \$1 million for the U.S. State Department’s Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, as provided in H.R. 7608, approved by the House in July 2020. We also urge you to adopt language in the Senate Subcommittee’s Explanatory Statement that decries rising racist and antisemitic prejudice, encourages the State Department to expand its global efforts to fight bias, and directs the Secretary to report on initiatives to counter racial and ethnic discrimination abroad.

Middle East Partnership for Peace Act: The Middle East Partnership for Peace Act would build people-to-people programming in the Middle East to foster tolerance and make an ultimate peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict more achievable. This legislation has earned support from Members in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle.

ADL urges Congress to include the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act in final appropriations for FY21, following the lead of the House which enacted the measure in H.R. 7608.

Countering Global White Supremacist Extremism: The rising prevalence of terroristic white supremacist organizations worldwide clearly demands prioritization among the important issues addressed by the Bureau of Counterterrorism, and Members should signal this through the appropriations process.

ADL support the adoption of report language from the House Subcommittee’s report that commends the designation of a white nationalist group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, directs the Department of State to investigate and report on whether other similar organizations should be so designated.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Sevilla', written over a horizontal line.

Max Sevilla
Vice President for
Government Relations, Advocacy
and Community Engagement