April 14, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the U.S House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Democratic Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Democratic Leader Jeffries,

We write as a broad coalition of faith-based and cultural organizations to express our deep concern about the unprecedented and escalating threat environment facing religious communities and institutions across the United States. This threat is not abstract; it is very real and felt by the communities we represent on a daily basis.

Houses of worship and religious centers of every tradition have been subjected to acts of violence, arson, and targeted harassment in recent years. The mass shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC; the fires set at the Islamic Center of Fort Pierce in Fort Pierce, FL; the massacre at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, TX; the shooting at the Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh, PA; the attack at Chabad in Poway, CA; the arson attack at the Diyanet Mosque in New Haven, CT; the arson at the Islamic Center of New Mexico; the hostage crisis at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, TX; the Bible study potluck shooting at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills, AL; the attack during Mass at the Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis, MN; the shooting and subsequent arson of a Latter-day Saints Church in Grand Blanc Township, MI; the arson of the Beth Israel Congregation synagogue in Jackson, MS; and the recent vehicular attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, MI, all underscore a disturbing pattern: **houses of worship and faith-based institutions are being targeted because of the communities they serve.**

Houses of worship and faith-based institutions are cornerstones of their communities, serving as gathering places, schools and childcare centers, and providers of critical social services that offer much-needed assistance to the communities they serve. These institutions should be able to solely focus on serving and strengthening their communities, but in this heightened threat environment, they instead must also worry about the next attack and whether they have the resources to stay safe. Members of these communities should never be forced to weigh the risk of violence against the act of worship. Every American should be able to pray without fear for their safety.

The federal government has a critical role to play in ensuring that faith-based institutions have the tools, resources, and coordination necessary to protect their communities while continuing to carry out their essential work. Therefore, we respectfully urge Congress to take the following two actions.

First, we urge Congress to provide up to $1 billion for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP).

We appreciate the funding Congress has provided for the NSGP, the primary federal program that provides critical resources for physical security, risk assessment, training, and planning at nonprofits and faith-based institutions facing elevated threats. Yet previous funding has not kept pace with demand. In fiscal year (FY) 2024, FEMA received 7,584 NSGP grant applications seeking nearly $1 billion, and it was able to fund only 43% of applicants. Many eligible and at-risk institutions have been left without support. More must be done to bolster this program; therefore, we encourage you to engage with communities in your district and to encourage the same of your respective caucuses. We have no doubt you'll hear about

the fear and threats our communities are facing at this moment, and therefore, we urge you to allocate appropriate resources to address this threat.

Second, we urge the Senate and House of Representatives to swiftly bring the *Pray Safe Act* (S.2947/H.R.5645) to the floor in both chambers for a vote.

S.2947 and H.R.5645 would establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Security Best Practices for Nonprofit Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations, and Houses of Worship within the Department of Homeland Security. Staffed by experts and accessible to congregations of every size and denomination, the clearinghouse would provide security guidance, connect faith communities directly to the resources for which they are eligible, and offer training resources that are desperately needed. This bipartisan legislation would make it easier for our communities to access the federal resources we need.

The freedom to openly practice one's religion without fear is a cornerstone of American democracy, and protecting this freedom is neither a partisan issue nor limited to any one community. We are grateful for the commitment that leaders on both sides of the aisle have shown to the security of our communities, and we urge you now to act on that commitment – provide the necessary funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program so that no community is left unprotected, and advance the *Pray Safe Act*. We stand ready to work with you on these critical matters.

Respectfully,

American Jewish Committee (AJC)
ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
American Muslim Advocacy Network Inc (AMAN)
Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations
Evangelical Lutheran Church In America
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Hillel International
Hindu ACTion
Hindu Jewish Coalition of America (HJCA)
Hindu Mandir Empowerment Council / World Hindu Council of America
JCC Association of North America
Jewish Federations of North America
Masjid Muhammad, The Nation’s Mosque
Muslim American Leadership Alliance
National Association of Evangelicals
National Latino Evangelical Coalition (NaLEC)
Rabbinical Assembly
Seventh-day Adventist Church North American Division
Sikhs of America Inc.
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism