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4TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

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STRATEGIC COMPETITION BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND THE
CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY**



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January 11, 2024

The Honorable Ruthzee Louijeune
President, Boston City Council
1 City Hall Square
Room 550
Boston, MA 02201

Dear President Louijeune,

I am writing to urge the Boston City Council's approval of \$13.3 million in Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) funding that has been granted to the Metro Boston Homeland Security Region (MBHSR) by the US Department of Homeland Security. This funding is crucial to counter-terrorism preparedness in Greater Boston, which is especially salient considering heightened threats of terrorism fueled by antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

In recent testimony to Congress, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation said he sees "blinking lights everywhere."¹ He also indicated that the FBI is "especially concerned about the possibility of Hamas supporters engaging in violence on the group's behalf", which is consonant with the UASI priority area of combating domestic violent extremism.² These concerns are reinforced by preliminary data from the Anti-Defamation League, which indicates that since the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel, U.S. antisemitic incidents have "skyrocketed." They document 1,317 rallies that included antisemitic rhetoric and expressions of support for terrorism against the state of Israel and/or anti-Zionism; they also cite 628 reported incidents against Jewish institutions such as synagogues and community centers.³

Boston and its eight neighboring communities in the MBHSR, including Brookline in my Congressional district, rely in part on UASI funds to keep residents safe during this period of escalated tension and threat. In Brookline alone last year, UASI funds were used for personnel training, technology upgrades, new public safety vehicles, and community preparedness measures. UASI funding is designed specifically for cities/regions at high risk for terrorist activity, and it has historically been approved unanimously by the Boston City Council. It is disappointing that its allocation was delayed in December, the same month

¹ Holmes Lybrand and Hannah Rabinowitz, "FBI director warns senators he sees 'blinking lights everywhere' on threats against the US," CNN, December 6, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/05/politics/fbi-director-senate-hearing/index.html>

² Christopher Wray, "Statement of Christopher A. Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Committee on Homeland Security United States House of Representatives at a Hearing Entitled 'Worldwide Threats to the Homeland,'" Department of Justice, November 15, 2023, <https://homeland.house.gov/hearing/worldwide-threats-to-the-homeland/>

³ "U.S. Antisemitic Incidents Skyrocketed 360% in Aftermath of Attack in Israel, according to Latest ADL Data," Anti-Defamation League, January 9, 2024, <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/us-antisemitic-incidents-skyrocketed-360-aftermath-attack-israel-according>

that the FBI director issued his warning to the nation, and just as Boston was experiencing a surge of incidents of antisemitism that track ADL's national statistics.⁴

The Israel-Hamas War has heightened our region's need for counter-terrorism security measures. Greater Boston is a national hub for the Jewish community. As antisemitism proliferates, counter-terrorism funding is more pertinent than ever. Impeding its disbursement could undermine the trust of Greater Boston's Jewish community.

I urge the City Council to accept this funding as soon as the mayor refiles the grant in the upcoming weeks.⁵ Your prioritization of Greater Boston's safety, including the town of Brookline in my district, is critical to our constituents.

Sincerely,



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

⁴ Steph Solis, "Antisemitic hate crimes hit record high in Boston," Axios, January 9, 2024,

<https://www.axios.com/local/boston/2024/01/09/hate-crimes-massachusetts-record-high-antisemitism>

⁵ "Boston Mayor Wu to put rejected anti-terror grant before City Council again," Boston Herald, Gayla Cawley, January 9, 2024, <https://www.bostonherald.com/2024/01/09/boston-mayor-wu-to-put-rejected-anti-terror-grant-before-city-council-again/>