



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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MAYORS RELEASE NEW HOMELAND SECURITY SURVEY IN BOSTON AT 72ND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Third Mayors' Report to the Nation Shows Too Many Cities Still Left Empty Handed

Boston, MA –The U.S. Conference of Mayors released today the third Homeland Security Report that assesses the flow of federal homeland security funds through the states to the cities. The new report, released during the 72nd Annual Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, reveals that while there has been some improvement, 52 percent of the 231 cities surveyed are still left empty-handed, have not received any money, nor have been notified that they will receive money from the state-block grant program – the *largest* homeland security program - which is designed to assist first responders such as police, fire, and other local officials.

The mayors' first survey, released last September, found that 90 percent of the 168 cities surveyed had not received any funding under the largest federal homeland security program. The second survey was released in January at the Conference's Winter Meeting and 76 percent of the 215 cities surveyed had not received any funding under the same program.

According to Conference President, Hempstead Mayor James A. Garner said, "While this report shows some improvement in certain areas, there are still too many cities who have not received homeland security funds, nor have been notified that they will receive money. As leaders of cities, we must be fully prepared to protect the home land."

The nationwide report, entitled, the ***Third Mayors' Report to the Nation: Tracking Homeland Security Funds Sent to the 50 State Governments***, found that under the Federal First Responder/Critical Infrastructure program, about one-fourth of the survey cities had received funding – exactly the same percentage reported in the second survey five months earlier – and another one-fourth had been told they would receive funding.

"Our first survey showed that many of the mayors' worst fears about the homeland security funding system were being realized," said Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, Chairman of the Conference's Criminal and Social Justice Committee. "In the second survey, when mayors were asked five months later, whether the system for distributing federal homeland security funds through the states was serving us better, the answer that came back was no. Today, the third survey shows that some progress is being made in certain areas, and little or no progress in others."

This new report, based on responses from 231 cities representing all 50 states and Puerto Rico, assesses the flow of federal homeland security money through the states to the cities. The survey examines ten different homeland security programs designed to strengthen cities' ability to protect their residents.

“As I have said before and continue to say, homeland security money went to the states by Federal Express, but is moving to cities by Pony Express,” Garner said.

“The goal of our surveys has always been to improve the system that supports homeland security on the front lines. We shared the findings of the first two surveys with the Department of Homeland Security and with those in Congress who have worked with us to make the system work better. We will do the same with this third survey.”

Conference of Mayors Vice President, Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic who also served as Vice Chair of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) State and Local Task Force said, “This report clearly shows the need for Congress to immediately act on the recommendations in the recently released DHS State and Local Task Force Report.”

Highlights from of this third homeland security survey are below. **The complete report is available on the U.S. Conference of Mayors website at usmayors.org.**

Fiscal Year 2003 Funding:

Federal First Responder/Critical Infrastructure -- \$1.5 Billion

- Officials in 52 percent of the survey cities have neither received this first responder/critical infrastructure funding through their states, nor have been notified that they would receive funds.
- Twenty-four percent of cities have received funds; another 24 percent have been notified that they will receive funds.
- In 52 percent of the cities, officials said they had not been given an adequate opportunity to influence their states in regard to how these funds could be used in their cities.

State Domestic Preparedness -- \$556 Million

- Of the cities surveyed, 51 percent have received this domestic preparedness funding through their states.
- In 44 percent of the cities, officials said they had not been given an adequate opportunity to influence their states in regard to how these funds could be used in their cities.
- Officials in 36 percent of the cities said the allowable uses of the funds will not address their top security priorities.
- Eighty-six percent of the cities receiving funds have been notified that they are eligible to expend funds on a reimbursement basis. Of these, 57 percent say that the reimbursement process is making it more difficult to take advantage of these funds and 31 percent say it is creating a fiscal hardship for the city.

Urban Area Security Initiative -- \$600 Million

- Officials in 33 percent of the cities surveyed said they have not been involved in the state planning process for the use of the UASI funds. Among those involved in the planning process, 23 percent do not believe they had a satisfactory opportunity to influence how the funds will be used.
- Forty percent of the cities do not believe that local governments in their area will be able to use the funds they receive to address their top security priorities.
- Fifty-five percent of the cities say that their state is exercising its option to keep a portion of the UASI funds to complement state assets that assist urban areas.
- Officials in 24 percent of the cities say they have gotten an indication that their city or area would receive less funding under other homeland security programs because they are receiving UASI funds.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Hospital Preparedness -- \$1.4 Billion

- Officials in 40 percent of the cities do not believe their city government or health department had an adequate opportunity to participate in their state's planning process for public health and hospital preparedness activities to be funded through this program.
- Officials in 36 percent of the cities do not believe their state's plan adequately reflects their priorities for the use of these funds.
- In 85 percent of the survey cities, officials anticipate that the health department serving their residents will be funded through this program; officials in 83 percent of the cities expect that one or more of their hospitals will receive funding.

Airport Law Enforcement Reimbursement

- In survey cities that provide law enforcement assistance to an airport, 48 percent of the airport operators have not been reimbursed for additional law enforcement costs associated with security at airport checkpoints.
- For those airports which have been reimbursed, 30 percent of the cities report that the airport operator has not provided reimbursement to the city government.

Port Security Grant Program -- \$245 Million

- Officials in 54 percent of the survey cities having a port that is receiving funding through this program say they were responsible for providing security or other services to that port.
- Of these cities, 69 percent say they are not receiving funding through the program.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors Homeland Security Report was sponsored by SentryPoints. More information about SentryPoints can be found online at sentrypointslc.net.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.

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Comments From Other Mayors Participating In Today's Press Conferences:

Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley:

"Cities remain on the frontline of homeland security, but in the back of the line for funding. We will continue to push for direct funding for cities and eliminate the bureaucracy of a middle man."

Sugar Land, TX Mayor David Wallace: Co-chair, Homeland Security Task Force

"The leadership in our cities – small, medium, and large - have the ultimate responsibility to keep our residents safe. When it comes to homeland security, no city should be underfunded or underprotected."

Gary, IN Mayor Scott King: Chairman of the Mayors and Police Chiefs Task Force

"Not only are we last in line for funding, we are last in line to be consulted about what it takes to protect our residents. Cities know their needs best."