



# NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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## **Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter Join Senators Shaheen and Booker, New York Police Deputy Commissioner Miller to Host Press Conference Call to Discuss Department of Homeland Security Funding Deadline**

### *Mayors Highlight Local Consequences of Agency Shutdown*

Washington, D.C. – Today U.S. Conference of Mayors Criminal and Social Justice Committee Chair Houston Mayor Annise Parker and U.S. Conference of Mayors Past President Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter joined U.S. Senators Jeanne Shaheen (NH) and Cory Booker (NJ), as well as New York City Police Deputy Commissioner John Miller in a press conference call to discuss the importance of fully funding the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the remainder of the 2015 fiscal year.

Some in Congress are currently insisting that funding legislation for the Department of Homeland Security include provisions to stop President Obama's executive actions relating to immigration, setting up a possible veto by President Obama and putting the agency at risk of a shutdown as its funding will expire in just a few weeks.

Mayor Parker and Mayor Nutter underscored that an agency shutdown would jeopardize funds for local first responders and other federal efforts that keep city residents and communities across the country safe.

Parker, who Chairs the Conference's Criminal and Social Justice Committee said, "This issue directly impacts jobs in Houston. Homeland security planners are funded by grants from DHS, so people here are wondering if they will be coming to work in just a couple weeks. Our airports, three in the Houston area, depend on DHS funding for our region's safety. If we don't get this straightened out and soon, the real impact will affect lives and security all across this country. ... Security is our highest priority in our nation's cities. Mayors are intimately linked to DHS activities and depend on DHS grants to deliver services to protect our citizens."

"Terrorism is not a game. Congress should not be playing games with the lives and security of our people in our nation's cities," said Mayor Nutter, who is a Past President of the Conference of Mayors. "State and local governments are without question impacted, and funding for all DHS activities are at risk. Congress is undermining our ability to protect and secure our citizens, and we should be pulling together to protect our citizens and our nation, not holding funding hostage because of partisan politics. ... We want a clean, fully funded DHS bill to make sure America is safe."

The bipartisan Conference of Mayors' organization recently sent a letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee urging the expeditious reporting of a "clean" funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security. The full text of the letter is available at [usmayors.org](http://usmayors.org), but an excerpt reads: "A fully functioning Department of Homeland Security is critical to the security of our nation, our cities, and our citizens. A Department operating on a short-term continuing resolution, despite its best efforts, faces uncertainty and delays and simply cannot be fully functioning. Under its current short-term continuing resolution, DHS cannot undertake any new

spending initiatives to respond to national needs, including those along the border, or release any grant funding for non-disaster programs.”

Just last month, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson spoke to the nation’s mayors in Washington, D.C. about the need for a clean funding bill through the end of the Fiscal Year. Later, he listed a few of the activities vital to public safety and security that the Department has funded, including new communications equipment for over 80 Los Angeles area public safety agencies, surveillance cameras and environmental sensors used by NYPD to detect in real time potential terrorist activity, upgraded oxygen masks and tanks for over 30 Denver area firefighter and law enforcement agencies; and 150 firefighter jobs in Detroit.

As the Mayors’ letter concludes, “The current threat environment is serious, given the terrorist attacks in Paris, Ottawa and Sydney and public calls by terrorist organizations for further attacks on the Western targets. It’s vital that Congress provide stable funding for the remainder of the year to this agency that is charged with keeping all of us safe and secure.”

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are nearly 1400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/usmayors](https://facebook.com/usmayors), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/usmayors](https://twitter.com/usmayors).

