



SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
CHAIRMAN CHRISTOPHER COX
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H.R. 3266 – The Faster and Smarter Funding For First Responders Act

❖ **Priority assistance to first responders serving where the risk is greatest.**

- Terrorists are not arbitrary in selecting their targets, and we cannot be arbitrary in protecting our Nation.
- H.R. 3266 will prioritize first responder grant applications based on the threat, vulnerability, and consequences of a terrorist attack to persons and critical infrastructure sectors. A First Responder Grant Board will help accomplish this.
- Because each state has its own unique preparedness needs, H.R. 3266 grants every state a base level of funding – equal to .25 percent of the total funds available under covered grants that fiscal year. Directly eligible tribes, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands will receive .08 percent.
- Higher-risk states, as determined by the Grant Board, will then receive additional funding, to ensure that they each receive at least .45 percent of the total covered grant amount.
- The new, post-9/11 reality has shown us that terrorists are targeting high-profile, high-impact targets within our borders. This new reality demands a new and smarter approach to first responder funding.
- At the same time, we cannot leave glaring weaknesses elsewhere in the country. That is why H.R. 3266 also requires the Grant Board to seek to achieve and enhance essential capabilities throughout the Nation.

The 9/11 Commission Report (page 396):

Resources must be allocated according to vulnerabilities. We recommend that a panel of security experts be convened to develop written benchmarks for evaluating community needs. We further recommend that federal homeland security funds be allocated in accordance with those benchmarks, and that states be required to abide by those benchmarks in disbursing the federal funds.

❖ **Faster, streamlined terrorism preparedness grant-assistance to first responders.**



- H.R. 3266 moves the planning process for using the grants upfront. It forces grant recipients to decide how to use the money BEFORE they actually receive it.
- For instance, H.R. 3266 requires applicants to submit a State Homeland Security Plan at the beginning of the application process.
- The application for grants must be linked to the Plan and specify how the money will be spent.
- H.R. 3266 also ensures that states award grant money to locals in a timely and efficient manner by establishing stringent timelines and incentives for grant disbursement, along with penalties for failures to do so.
- States must pass through 80 percent of their funds to local governments and first responders no later than 45 days after receiving funds from the federal government. Failure to do so may result in reduced payments, termination of payments, or other penalties.

❖ **Specific, flexible, and measurable goals for state and local government terrorism preparedness.**

- Clear preparedness goals help the federal government and states and locals know where to spend the money and to measure results. Funding can be prioritized to fulfill specific gaps in preparedness levels and reduce our greatest vulnerabilities.
- To accomplish this, H.R. 3266 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish specific, flexible, measurable, and comprehensive “essential capabilities” for state and local government terrorism preparedness.
- Clearer goals help states and localities focus their efforts and avoid wasteful spending, improving our Nation’s preparedness in specific and measurable ways.

❖ **Regional terrorism preparedness grants.**

- Under H.R. 3266, states and regions, both intrastate and interstate, may apply for terrorism preparedness grants.
- While states will continue to play a central role in coordinating the distribution of grant funds to first responders at the local level, the Committee bill also ensures that the unique needs of regions can be addressed by the Secretary through direct grants.
- These regional grant requests must be consistent with the applicable State Homeland Security Plan. States also have the opportunity to comment on the consistency of the regional proposal with their state plan. States must concur with the regional grant requests.



❖ **Targeted Terror Alerts**

- H.R. 3266 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to revise the Homeland Security Alert System to issue threat level warnings or designations specific to geographical regions and economic sectors.
- The Secretary must report annually to Congress regarding the region-specific and economic-specific warnings issued during the last fiscal year.