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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3204

May 31, 2006

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Mr. Secretary:

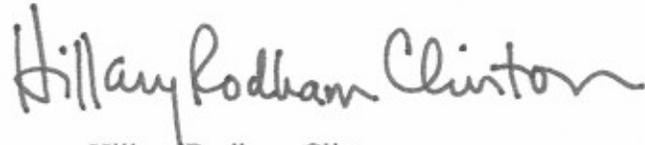
I was taken aback today by the Department of Homeland Security's announcement that it intends to award New York more than \$106.5 million less in Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds than it did last year. While I understand that HSGP funds were cut across the board nationwide, New York's funds were slashed by a disproportionately higher amount than most states. For example, funding under the Urban Area Security Initiative – just one component of the HSGP – was cut in New York City by more than 40 percent and in Buffalo by 48.5 percent. In our conversations, you have assured me that the Administration and the Department are committed to allocating our limited homeland security funds in a manner that ensures that these resources get to where they are needed most. Today's HSGP funding announcement contradicts this announced commitment.

For several reasons, today's funding announcement seems wholly misguided. There is no denying that New York is and has always been a prominent target for terrorist plots. As you well know, New York has the solemn distinction of being the scene of our nation's deadliest domestic terrorist attack. New York was targeted not only because it contains critical infrastructure and numerous commercial and industrial assets, but also because it is home to several national monuments and icons and is recognized as a national cultural center. These facts have not changed, and now is not the time to underfund our efforts to safeguard New Yorkers from terrorist threats.

I call on the Department to provide me and my colleagues with a detailed explanation of your justification for slashing New York's HSGP funding. This explanation must include the factors the Department used in calculating and estimating both risk and effectiveness in its allocation of these critical funds. In addition, I am calling on Senators Collins and Lieberman, the Chairwoman and Ranking Member respectively of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, to hold hearings and to investigate whether the Department's FY2006 distribution of HSGP funds truly meets their intended purpose.

Our nation deserves to know why the Administration is abandoning areas most in need less than five years after the tragic attacks of September 11th. These funding cuts are dangerous and shortsighted and the Department should account for these cuts.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hillary Rodham Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the word "Clinton".

Hillary Rodham Clinton