

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7296

To establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Best Practices for Non-profit Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of Worship within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 7, 2024

Ms. PORTER (for herself, Ms. SALAZAR, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Best Practices for Nonprofit Organizations, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of Worship within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Pray Safe Act of
5 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON SAFETY AND SECUR-**
2 **ITY BEST PRACTICES FOR NONPROFIT OR-**
3 **GANIZATIONS, FAITH-BASED ORGANIZA-**
4 **TIONS, AND HOUSES OF WORSHIP (PRAY**
5 **SAFE).**

6 (a) FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE.—

7 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270
9 days after the date of the enactment of this
10 Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the At-
11 torney General, the Executive Director of the
12 White House Office of Faith-Based and Neigh-
13 borhood Partnerships, and the head of any
14 other agency the Secretary determines appro-
15 priate, shall establish within the Department a
16 Federal Clearinghouse on Safety and Security
17 Best Practices for Nonprofit Organizations,
18 Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of Wor-
19 ship.

20 (B) PURPOSE.—The Clearinghouse shall
21 be the primary resource of the Federal Govern-
22 ment to—

23 (i) educate and publish online best
24 practices and recommendations for safety
25 and security for nonprofit organizations,

1 including faith-based organizations, and
2 houses of worship; and

3 (ii) provide information relating to
4 Federal grant programs available to non-
5 profit organizations, including faith-based
6 organizations, and houses of worship.

7 (C) PERSONNEL.—

8 (i) ASSIGNMENTS.—The Clearing-
9 house shall be assigned such personnel and
10 resources as the Secretary considers appro-
11 priate to carry out this subsection.

12 (ii) DETAILEES.—The Secretary may
13 coordinate detailees on a reimbursable or a
14 nonreimbursable basis as required for the
15 Clearinghouse.

16 (iii) DESIGNATED POINT OF CON-
17 TACT.—

18 (I) IN GENERAL.—There shall be
19 not fewer than one employee assigned
20 or detailed to the Clearinghouse who
21 shall be the designated point of con-
22 tact to provide information and assist-
23 ance to nonprofit organizations, in-
24 cluding faith-based organizations, and
25 houses of worship, including assist-

1 ance relating to the grant program es-
2 tablished under subsection (c).

3 (II) CONTACT INFORMATION.—

4 The contact information of the des-
5 ignated point of contact under sub-
6 clause (I) shall be made available on
7 the website of the Clearinghouse.

8 (iv) QUALIFICATION.—To the max-
9 imum extent possible, any personnel as-
10 signed or detailed to the Clearinghouse
11 under this subparagraph should be familiar
12 with—

13 (I) nonprofit organizations, in-
14 cluding faith-based organizations, and
15 houses of worship; and

16 (II) physical and online security
17 measures to identify and prevent safe-
18 ty and security risks.

19 (2) CLEARINGHOUSE CONTENTS.—

20 (A) EVIDENCE-BASED TIERS.—

21 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in
22 consultation with the Attorney General, the
23 Executive Director of the White House Of-
24 fice of Faith-Based and Neighborhood
25 Partnerships, and the head of any other

1 agency the Secretary determines appro-
2 priate, shall develop tiers for determining
3 evidence-based best practices and rec-
4 ommendations that demonstrate a signifi-
5 cant effect on improving safety and secu-
6 rity of nonprofit organizations, including
7 faith-based organizations, and houses of
8 worship.

9 (ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The tiers re-
10 quired to be developed under clause (i)
11 shall—

12 (I) prioritize—

13 (aa) strong evidence from
14 not fewer than one well-designed
15 and well-implemented experi-
16 mental study; and

17 (bb) moderate evidence from
18 not fewer than one well-designed
19 and well-implemented quasi-ex-
20 perimental study; and

21 (II) consider promising evidence
22 that demonstrates a rationale based
23 on high-quality research findings or
24 positive evaluations that an activity,
25 strategy, or intervention implemented

1 by the Department or a state or local
2 agency is likely to improve and pro-
3 mote safety and security of nonprofit
4 organizations, including faith-based
5 organizations, and houses of worship.

6 (B) CRITERIA FOR BEST PRACTICES AND
7 RECOMMENDATIONS.—The best practices and
8 recommendations referred to in paragraph
9 (1)(B)(i) of the Clearinghouse shall, at a min-
10 imum—

11 (i) identify areas of concern for non-
12 profit organizations, including faith-based
13 organizations, and houses of worship, in-
14 cluding event planning recommendations,
15 checklists, facility hardening, tabletop exer-
16 cise resources, and other resilience meas-
17 ures;

18 (ii) involve comprehensive safety and
19 security measures, including threat preven-
20 tion, preparedness, protection, mitigation,
21 incident response, and recovery to improve
22 the safety and security posture of non-
23 profit organizations, including faith-based
24 organizations, and houses of worship upon
25 implementation;

1 (iii) involve comprehensive safety and
2 security measures, including preparedness,
3 protection, mitigation, incident response,
4 and recovery to improve the resiliency of
5 nonprofit organizations, including faith-
6 based organizations, and houses of worship
7 from threats and incidents, including nat-
8 ural disasters, manmade disasters, or ter-
9 rorist attacks or other threats;

10 (iv) include any evidence or research
11 rationale supporting the determination of
12 the Clearinghouse that the comprehensive
13 safety and security measures under clauses
14 (ii) and (iii) have been shown to have a
15 significant effect on improving the safety
16 and security of individuals who, at the time
17 of any such threat or incident, are phys-
18 ically located in the place or building of a
19 nonprofit organization, including a faith-
20 based organization, or house of worship,
21 including—

22 (I) findings and data from pre-
23 vious Federal, State, local, Tribal, ter-
24 ritorial, private sector, and nongovern-
25 mental organization research centers

1 relating to the safety and security of
2 nonprofit organizations, including
3 faith-based organizations, and houses
4 of worship, including from targeted vi-
5 olence; and

6 (II) other supportive evidence or
7 findings relied upon by the Clearing-
8 house in determining best practices
9 and recommendations to improve the
10 safety and security posture of non-
11 profit organizations, including faith-
12 based organizations, and houses of
13 worship upon implementation; and

14 (v) include an overview of the avail-
15 able resources the Clearinghouse can pro-
16 vide to nonprofit organizations, including
17 faith-based organizations, and houses of
18 worship.

19 (C) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The
20 Clearinghouse shall maintain and make avail-
21 able a comprehensive index of all Federal grant
22 programs for which nonprofit organizations, in-
23 cluding faith-based organizations, and houses of
24 worship are eligible, which shall include the per-

1 formance metrics for each grant the recipient
2 will be required to provide.

3 (D) PAST RECOMMENDATIONS.—To the
4 greatest extent practicable, the Clearinghouse
5 shall identify and present, as appropriate, best
6 practices and recommendations issued by Fed-
7 eral, State, local, Tribal, territorial, private sec-
8 tor, and nongovernmental organizations rel-
9 evant to the safety and security of nonprofit or-
10 ganizations, including faith-based organizations,
11 and houses of worship.

12 (E) EXISTING PLATFORM.—The Secretary
13 may establish and maintain the Clearinghouse
14 on an online platform or a website that is in ex-
15 istence as of the date of the enactment of this
16 Act.

17 (3) ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—The Sec-
18 retary may produce and publish materials on the
19 Clearinghouse to assist and train nonprofit organiza-
20 tions, including faith-based organizations, and
21 houses of worship regarding the implementation of
22 the best practices and recommendations under this
23 subsection.

24 (4) CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.—

25 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

- 1 (i) collect for the purpose of contin-
2 uous improvement of the Clearinghouse—
- 3 (I) Clearinghouse data analytics;
4 (II) user feedback on the imple-
5 mentation of resources, best practices,
6 and recommendations identified by
7 the Clearinghouse; and
- 8 (III) any evaluations conducted
9 regarding implementation of such best
10 practices and recommendations;
- 11 (ii) in coordination with the Faith-
12 Based Security Advisory Council of the
13 Department, the Department of Justice,
14 the Executive Director of the White House
15 Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood
16 Partnerships, and any other agency the
17 Secretary determines appropriate—
- 18 (I) assess and identify Clearing-
19 house best practices and recommenda-
20 tions for which there are no resources
21 available through Federal Government
22 programs for implementation;
- 23 (II) provide feedback on the im-
24 plementation of such best practices
25 and recommendations; and

1 (III) propose additional rec-
2 ommendations for best practices for
3 inclusion in the Clearinghouse; and

4 (iii) not less frequently than annually,
5 examine and update the Clearinghouse in
6 accordance with—

7 (I) the data analytics, feedback,
8 and evaluations collected under clause
9 (i); and

10 (II) the recommendations pro-
11 posed under clause (ii)(III).

12 (B) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The
13 Secretary shall submit to Congress, on an an-
14 nual basis, a report on the updates under sub-
15 paragraph (A)(iii) made to the Clearinghouse
16 during the preceding 1-year period, which shall
17 include a description of any changes made pur-
18 suant thereto to the Clearinghouse.

19 (b) NOTIFICATION OF THE CLEARINGHOUSE.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
21 to the individuals, Federal agencies, and committees
22 specified in paragraph (2) written notification of the
23 establishment of the Clearinghouse, including up-
24 dates pertaining to grant programs identified under
25 subsection (a)(2)(C).

1 (2) INDIVIDUALS, FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND
2 COMMITTEES SPECIFIED.—The individuals and enti-
3 ties specified in this paragraph are the following:

4 (A) Every State homeland security advisor.

5 (B) Every State department of homeland
6 security.

7 (C) Other Federal agencies with grant pro-
8 grams or initiatives that aid in the safety and
9 security of nonprofit organizations, including
10 faith-based organizations, and houses of wor-
11 ship, as determined appropriate by the Sec-
12 retary.

13 (D) Every Cyber Security Advisor.

14 (E) Every Protective Security Advisor.

15 (F) Every Federal Bureau of Investigation
16 Joint Terrorism Task Force.

17 (G) Every Homeland Security Fusion Cen-
18 ter.

19 (H) Every State or territorial Governor or
20 other Chief Executive.

21 (I) The Committee on Homeland Security
22 and Governmental Affairs and the Committee
23 on the Judiciary of the Senate.

1 (J) The Committee on Homeland Security
2 and the Committee on the Judiciary of the
3 House of Representatives.

4 (c) FEDERAL GRANTS AND RESOURCES OVER-
5 VIEW.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent practicable,
7 the Secretary, when carrying out subsection
8 (a)(2)(C), shall include a grants program overview
9 on the website of the Clearinghouse that shall—

10 (A) be the location for all information re-
11 garding Federal grant programs that are open
12 to nonprofit organizations, including faith-based
13 organizations, and houses of worship for the
14 purposes of safety and security;

15 (B) directly link to each grant application
16 and any applicable user guides;

17 (C) identify all safety and security home-
18 land security assistance programs managed by
19 the Department that may be used to implement
20 best practices and recommendations of the
21 Clearinghouse;

22 (D) concurrent with the application period
23 for any grant identified under subsection
24 (a)(2)(C), provide information related to the re-
25 quired elements of grant applications to aid

1 nonprofit organizations, including faith-based
2 organizations, and houses of worship in meeting
3 the eligibility criteria for Federal grants; and

4 (E) provide answers to frequently asked
5 questions regarding the implementation of best
6 practices and recommendations of the Clearing-
7 house and best practices for applying for a
8 grant identified under subsection (a)(2)(C).

9 (2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION RELATING TO
10 FEDERAL GRANTS AND RESOURCES.—Each Federal
11 agency notified under subsection (b) shall provide to
12 the Secretary or other appropriate point of contact
13 for the Clearinghouse for inclusion in the Clearing-
14 house necessary information regarding any Federal
15 grant programs or resources of the Federal agency
16 that are available for nonprofit organizations, includ-
17 ing faith-based organizations, and houses of worship
18 for the purposes of safety and security.

19 (3) STATE GRANTS AND RESOURCES.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—Any State notified
21 under subsection (b) may provide to the Sec-
22 retary or other appropriate point of contact for
23 the Clearinghouse for inclusion in the Clearing-
24 house necessary information regarding any
25 grant programs or resources of the State avail-

1 able for nonprofit organizations, including faith-
2 based organizations, and houses of worship for
3 the purposes of safety and security.

4 (B) IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCES.—
5 The Clearinghouse shall, to the extent prac-
6 ticable, identify for each State the following:

7 (i) Each State agency responsible for
8 safety and security of nonprofit organiza-
9 tions, including faith-based organizations,
10 and houses of worship in the State, or any
11 State that does not have such an agency
12 designated.

13 (ii) Any grant program that may be
14 used for the purposes of implementing best
15 practices and recommendations of the
16 Clearinghouse.

17 (iii) Any resources or programs, in-
18 cluding community prevention or interven-
19 tion efforts, that may be used to assist in
20 targeted violence and terrorism prevention.

21 (d) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall, on the
22 website of the Clearinghouse, include a separate section
23 for other resources that shall provide a centralized list of
24 all available points of contact from which a nonprofit orga-
25 nization, including a faith-based organization, or a house

1 of worship may seek assistance in grant applications and
2 in carrying out the best practices and recommendations
3 of the Clearinghouse, including the following:

4 (1) A list of contact information to reach De-
5 partment personnel to assist with grant-related ques-
6 tions.

7 (2) The applicable agency contact information
8 to connect nonprofit organizations, including faith-
9 based organizations, and houses of worship with
10 Protective Security Advisors.

11 (3) Contact information for all Department Fu-
12 sion Centers, listed by State.

13 (4) Information on the “If you See Something
14 Say Something Campaign” of the Department.

15 (5) Any other appropriate contacts.

16 (e) GAO REPORT.—The Comptroller General of the
17 United States shall submit to Congress a report on the
18 state of Federal grants devoted to safety and security for
19 nonprofit organizations, including faith-based organiza-
20 tions, and houses of worship, and an evaluation of the rel-
21 evant programs and resources devoted to the safety and
22 security of nonprofit organizations, including faith-based
23 organizations, and houses of worship as of the date of the
24 report.

1 (f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
2 tion may be construed to create, satisfy, or waive any re-
3 quirement under Federal civil rights laws, including—

4 (1) title II of the Americans With Disabilities
5 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.); or

6 (2) title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42
7 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

8 (g) SUNSET.—This Act shall cease to be effective on
9 the date that is four years after the date of the enactment
10 of this Act.

11 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 (1) CLEARINGHOUSE.—The term “Clearing-
13 house” means the Federal Clearinghouse on Safety
14 and Security Best Practices for Nonprofit Organiza-
15 tions, Faith-based Organizations, and Houses of
16 Worship established under subsection (a).

17 (2) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department”
18 means the Department of Homeland Security.

19 (3) FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION.—The term
20 “faith-based organization” means a group, center, or
21 nongovernmental organization with a religious, ideo-
22 logical, or spiritual motivation, character, affiliation,
23 or purpose that meets the definition of nonprofit or-
24 ganization.

1 (4) HOUSE OF WORSHIP.—The term “house of
2 worship” means a place or building, including a syn-
3 agogue, mosque, temple, and church, in which
4 congregants practice their religious or spiritual be-
5 liefs.

6 (5) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term
7 “nonprofit organization” means an organization—

8 (A) of the type described in subsection
9 (c)(3) of section 501 of the Internal Revenue
10 Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under
11 subsection (a) of such section; and

12 (B) determined to be at risk of a terrorist
13 attack or other threat by the Secretary.

14 (6) SAFETY AND SECURITY.—The term “safety
15 and security” means prevention of, protection
16 against, or recovery from threats and incidents, in-
17 cluding natural disasters, manmade disasters, or ter-
18 rorist attacks.

19 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
20 the Secretary of Homeland Security.

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