

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2026

Robert J. Fenton
Acting Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Acting Administrator Fenton:

I write to express my grave concern regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) recent notice conditioning more than \$1 billion in Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) terrorism prevention funding on state and local compliance with a sweeping new set of election administration mandates.¹ According to the notice, FEMA will withhold 20 percent of each recipient's total HSGP award until the recipient proves it has complied with the Department's newly invented "Election Security" requirements.² This unprecedented attempt to leverage congressionally appropriated funds to influence state election administration is directly drawn from Project 2025, and it is coercive and unconstitutional. I urge you and the Trump Administration to stop all attempts to undermine trust in our elections on baseless claims of widespread fraud, and maintain full funding for state's HSGP awards.

The specific conditions that FEMA has outlined make clear that this is yet another attempt to threaten American voters' access to the ballot box. The notice conditions funding for grant recipients by requiring states to submit plans to eliminate ballot-marking devices in favor of hand-marked paper ballots, commit to a 5 percent manual post-election audit, reconcile voter turnout figures with ballots cast, and use the Department of Homeland Security's Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) database to check the citizenship status of every registered voter within 120 days of accepting the award.³ Several of these mandates, such as the SAVE requirement, have already been blocked or viewed with considerable skepticism by federal courts when the Administration tried to impose them through executive order. On June 25, Judge Talwani issued an injunction holding that the President lacked constitutional and statutory authority to direct the Postal Service to condition ballot delivery on states' compliance with federal election mandates, declaring key provisions of the Executive Order "legally void" and enjoining their enforcement in the plaintiff states.⁴

In a separate opinion last month, a federal Judge Sullivan already blocked the Department of Homeland Security from using the SAVE database to purge voters from voter rolls.⁵ Judge Sullivan wrote in his finding that the administration "knowingly trampled on the privacy rights of American citizens in a manner that

¹ Scott Dance, Nick Corasaniti and Hilary Howard *Administration Demands States Change Voting Rules or Lose Antiterrorism Funds*, N.Y. Times (July 7, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/07/climate/fema-grants-states-election-changes.html>

² *Id*

³ Yunion Rivas *FEMA threatens to withhold terrorism prevention funds unless states adopt Trump's anti-voting agenda*, Democracy Docket (July 7, 2026), <https://www.democracydocket.com/news-alerts/fema-threatens-to-withhold-terrorism-prevention-funds/>

⁴ Luc Cohen *Judge blocks US Postal Service's proposed restrictions on mail-in voting*, Reuters (July 1, 2026), <https://www.reuters.com/world/judge-blocks-us-postal-services-proposed-restrictions-mail-in-voting-2026-07-01/>

⁵ Jude Joffe-Block *A federal judge finds a Trump data system to verify voters is unlawful*, Reuters (June 22, 2026), <https://www.npr.org/2026/06/22/nx-s1-5866719/save-voter-data-trump-judge-unlawful>

threatens the sacred right to vote.”⁶ Therefore, FEMA's proposed grant conditions require states to submit compliance documentation tied to the same citizenship-verification framework that the court has already found legally unenforceable. The agency's threat to withhold a fifth of a state's terrorism-preparedness funding unless it cooperates is yet another attempt to threaten the voters' access to the ballot box by circumventing the law and instill skepticism in our elections.

This scheme is not improvised. It traces directly to Project 2025's Mandate for Leadership, which called on the next Administration to condition FEMA grant funding on “compliance” requirements for state and local recipients to ensure they comply with executive actions.⁷ Project 2025 outlines certain preconditions that should be met for grant funding, including “total information-sharing in the context of both federal law enforcement and immigration enforcement,” including “voter registration databases.”⁸ DHS's proposal puts the Heritage Foundation's plan into action by mandating the SAVE database check, voter-roll reconciliation, and citizenship-verification requirements for poll workers to receive full funding for FEMA grant recipients.

Finally, this policy will fall hardest on the states and localities least equipped to absorb a sudden funding gap. A 20 percent holdback imposed after the fact, tied to a legally dubious set of election mandates, will force local governments to make painful, last-minute choices about which counterterrorism and emergency-preparedness activities to delay or cut. Communities across our country depend on this funding, and they should not be used as leverage in the Administration's ongoing effort to seize control over elections that the Constitution assigns to the states and Congress, not the Executive Branch. I request that FEMA provide the following no later than July 29th, 2026:

1. All records, communications, and legal analyses concerning the decision to condition HSGP funding on the FY 2026 Election Security NPA requirements, including any role played by the Department of Homeland Security or the White House;
2. An accounting of which states and urban areas have had HSGP funds withheld to date, and the dollar amount withheld from each;
3. Any legal opinion FEMA relied upon in concluding it may condition terrorism-prevention funding on election administration requirements unrelated to the statutory purposes of the Homeland Security Grant Program; and
4. All records reflecting consideration of Project 2025's Mandate for Leadership in the drafting of the FY 2026 HSGP Notice of Funding Opportunity.

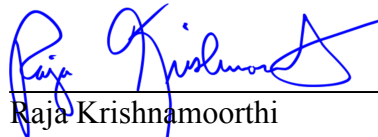
FEMA's obligation is to help states and localities prepare for and respond to real threats, not to serve as an instrument of political coercion. I expect FEMA's full cooperation with this request and, if that cooperation is not forthcoming, will consider all tools available to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, including compulsory process, to obtain these records.

⁶ *Id*

⁷ Paul Dans & Steven Groves eds., *Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise 2025*, (The Heritage Foundation 2023), https://static.project2025.org/2025_MandateForLeadership_FULL.pdf.

⁸ *Id*

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress