



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

May 08, 2023

The Honorable Deanne Criswell  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C St SW  
Washington, DC 20024

The Honorable David Warrington  
Regional II Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
26 Federal Plaza, Room 1337  
New York, NY, 10278

Dear Administrator Criswell and Regional Administrator Warrington:

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to aid individuals and families encountered by the Department of Homeland Security at the southern U.S. border. Given the influx in asylum seeker arrivals at the U.S. border, we write to urge the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to swiftly disburse the remaining \$360 million of the newly authorized *Shelter and Services Program* (SSP) funds as quickly as possible.<sup>1</sup> As you know, in fiscal year 2023, Congress authorized SSP to fund nonfederal entities, including local government and nonprofit organizations, for sheltering migrants and supporting related activities.

This is a matter of grave importance to us, Members of the New York City Congressional Delegation, as our great city has been working diligently to sustain and expand shelter capacity and provide mental health services, adequate food, and appropriate legal services that are critical in supporting asylum seekers. As of April 30, 2023, over 60,000 asylum seekers have gone through New York City's system and have been offered a place to rest at night since last spring. Currently, over 36,800 asylum seekers are in New York City's care. In just the last week, New York City has welcomed over 500 asylum seekers. New York City has opened 116 emergency shelters and 8 Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers to meet this unprecedented need and welcome our new New Yorkers.

While we are grateful that on December 13, 2022, the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program National Board allocated \$7.89 million to the New York City Office of Management and Budget to provide relief for asylum seekers, and \$30 million, most recently, additional aid is warranted for this extraordinary situation.<sup>2, 3</sup> New York City is a right-to-shelter city that is legally responsible for providing emergency shelter and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We commend New York City for this policy and for providing asylum seekers with a multitude of life-saving resources, including shelter, food, health care, education, and legal services.

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<sup>1</sup> Alvarez, P. (2023, May 3). *Plans set in motion as Biden administration eyes end of covid-era border restriction* | CNN politics. CNN. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/03/politics/border-restrictions-biden-administration-plan/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Emergency food and shelter program National Board allocates \$75 million for humanitarian assistance*. FEMA.gov. (n.d.). Retrieved May 3, 2023, from <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20230103/emergency-food-and-shelter-program-national-board-allocates-75-million>

<sup>3</sup> *Emergency food and shelter program National Board allocates over \$300 million to local communities for humanitarian support*. Emergency Food and Shelter Program National Board Allocates Over \$300 Million to Local Communities for Humanitarian Support | Homeland Security. (n.d.). <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2023/05/05/emergency-food-and-shelter-program-national-board-allocates-over-300-million-local>

In closing, many of the individuals arriving are escaping life-threatening situations, and it is our duty to provide humanitarian support and protection. Accordingly, we support a swift disbursement of the remaining SSP funds as we continue to work with the City to support its long-term sustained effort to shelter and support asylum seekers.

Sincerely,




Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



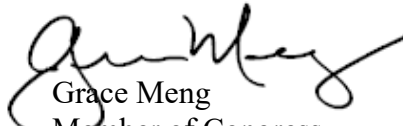
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate



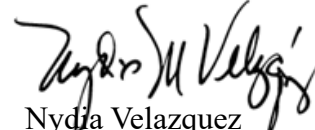
Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress




Jamaal Bowman  
Member of Congress




Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



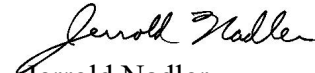
Nydia Velazquez  
Member of Congress



Yvette Clarke  
Member of Congress



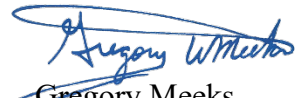
Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress




Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



Gregory Meeks  
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress

Cc: Troy A. Miller, Commissioner, U.S. Customs & Border Protection, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004