

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 5, 2023

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Shaheen and Ranking Member Moran:

We write to respectfully request your support and assistance to secure federal funding for security costs associated with the 2024 Presidential Candidate Nominating Conventions.

The City of Milwaukee and other regional officials have begun security preparations for the Republican National Convention (RNC), which state and local law enforcement officials believe will be “all hands-on deck” event with little precedent in recent Wisconsin history. Milwaukee is a vital economic hub for the southeast region and entire State of Wisconsin and is a gateway for tourism, conventions, commerce, business growth, and economic development. While Milwaukee is well-positioned to host the RNC, like any host city it will need the assistance of federal partners to meet the security needs of this special event.

Given that these conventions are typically designated a National Special Security Event (NSSE) and Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers has formally requested the Department of Homeland Security make such a designation, there are likely to be additional planning and law enforcement resources needed so that the city and its partners are fully prepared to ensure security for this high-profile national event. The successful implementation of a NSSE plan requires the participation and coordination of a variety of partner agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. Local law enforcement will need support to provide police escorts for all credentialed convention personnel, as well as armed security patrols for convention offices and related facilities, install and operate a range of security equipment including magnetometers, hand scanners, and package scanners/x-ray machines to screen tens of thousands of individuals at numerous sites, and implement other necessary security protections.

Costs have risen sharply across all sectors in recent years, and security costs are no different. As a result, it has become more difficult for host cities to absorb security costs in existing budgets and wait for federal reimbursement. Congress has appropriated \$50 million per host city since 2004, with no adjustments accounting for inflation or increased security needs. It is vital that Congress address these increased costs now to ensure the safety of these important events.

As such, we respectfully request that \$150,000,000 be appropriated for law enforcement activities associated with the presidential nominating conventions, to be divided equally between the Republican and Democratic National Convention host cities. As one of the hosts, the City of Milwaukee anticipates spending at least \$75 million in security costs for the 2024 RNC due to inflation, supply chain issues, increased public safety personnel and equipment needs, and higher insurance costs due to potential security threats. Appropriated funds will be used only for security purposes and ensuring law enforcement have the tools they need. Full and timely appropriation of the federal share of convention security costs is imperative for successful planning and execution of next year's party nominating conventions and to ensure the safety of the RNC. Thank you for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Tammy Baldwin in blue ink.

United States Senator
Tammy Baldwin

Handwritten signature of Ron Johnson in blue ink.

United States Senator
Ron Johnson