



January 30, 2019

Dear Partner:

Reverend Thomas Bowen and I would like to invite you to participate in a new initiative, the Interfaith Preparedness & Advisory Group (IPAG), sponsored by the Mayor's Office of Religious Affairs and the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA). The IPAG provides a platform for faith-based organizations to exchange information with security and preparedness professionals on threats, vulnerabilities, best security practices, and protective measures related to the safety and security of congregations and facilities.

This group will facilitate content-rich quarterly meetings. Over the past several years, faith-based communities of all denominations have been the targets of intimidation and violence; therefore, these acts demonstrate the need for information sharing and collaboration between faith-based communities and public safety agencies.

IPAG objectives:

- **Grant funding:** IPAG will provide a platform for HSEMA to engage FBOs on procedures to apply for FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program and other federal funding. These funds are distributed annually to build resilience and emergency preparedness at religious institutions.  
**Cybersecurity:** HSP will monitor current and emerging cyber threats impacting FBOs, helping them mitigate cyber risk. Additionally, HSP will provide training and exercises designed to strengthen and improve FBOs' overall cybersecurity posture.
- **Briefings:** IPAG plans to meet with FBO leaders on a quarterly basis and convene ad hoc meetings to address specific concerns, local and national developments, and all hazards threats.
- **Information sharing:** HSP will field information requests from IPAG and promote two-way communication with faith-based communities. Most products will include general preparedness information, specifically related to the ReadyDC campaign.

The tentative 2019 IPAG quarterly meeting schedule is: February 28, May 24, September 11, and December 10. *To RSVP for the February meeting, please contact John Mein, HSEMA's Program Manager, by Friday, February 22, by replying to this email or calling 202-815-8780.*

Sincerely,

Reverend Thomas Bowen, Director  
Mayor's Office of Religious Affairs

Dr. Christopher Rodriguez, Director  
DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency