

Last week's announcement that homeland security funding for the Washington region was being cut drew fire from Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.).

Hoyer criticized the Department of Homeland Security's announcement that the National Capital Region's Urban Areas Security Initiative allocation is being reduced from last year's level of \$77 million to \$46 million, a 40 percent cut.

The congressman, who represents Southern Maryland, said the move "is a deeply misguided decision by an administration that has failed to adequately protect some of our nation's most vulnerable locales."

Hoyer's statement continued, "No one needs to remind my Washington area constituents about the deadly threat of a terrorist attack. Distributing homeland security dollars without adequate consideration of risk is a dangerous practice that diminishes our ability to protect potential targets."

Defending their decision, Homeland Security officials said the grants were based on a new risk-scoring system.

"We have to understand that there is risk throughout the nation," one department official said. "We worked very hard to make sure that there was fairness in the process."