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The Department of Homeland Security today announced an additional \$725 million dollars from the FY '04 Budget for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), for grants to urban areas within the United States to help enhance their overall security and preparedness level to prevent, respond and recover from acts of terrorism. These funds are being made available in addition to the nearly \$800 million that the Department's Office for Domestic Preparedness awarded during FY '03 specifically for urban areas.

Today's announcement by Secretary Tom Ridge of the Department of Homeland Security designated \$15,058,528 to the City of Santa Ana and \$10,345,691 to the City of Anaheim. Funding totalling \$675 million will be allocated in the form of grants through the states to urban areas selected by the Department of Homeland Security to enhance their overall security and preparedness level to prevent, respond and recover from acts of terrorism. The urban areas are chosen based on a formula that takes into account factors including critical infrastructure, population density and credible threat information. Funding allocations among the cities, contiguous counties and mutual aid partners will be based on an urban area assessment and strategic plan. Eighty percent of the funds allocated to the state under this program must be awarded to the designated cities and contiguous counties within the urban area based on the strategic plan. The state may use the remaining twenty percent for further security enhancements within the urban area.

"This is exciting news for the two largest cities in Orange County and it's long overdue," said Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez, who represents both cities in Congress. "I certainly hope that the Administration continues to provide our local municipalities with the resources they need to be fully prepared to protect our nation's citizens."

Congresswoman Sanchez serves on the Homeland Security Committee and has been working to help first responders in California get the funding they require to meet federal mandates surrounding new security requirements.