



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, September 8, 2014

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GILLIBRAND, MALONEY, NADLER, KING, DE BLASIO, FIRST RESPONDERS, SURVIVORS, LABOR LEADERS UNITE AT GROUND ZERO ONCE AGAIN TO BAND TOGETHER IN FIGHT TO REAUTHORIZE JAMES ZADROGA 9/11 HEALTH AND COMPENSATION ACT

As 13th Anniversary of 9/11 Nears, Critically Needed Health and Compensation Programs Passed Into Law After Almost Decade Long Fight Set to Expire Next Year – Participants in 9/11 Health Program Living in All 50 States and 431 of 435 Congressional Districts

Lawmakers: 'We Have a Moral Obligation to Continue to Provide the Care and Compensation That Our 9/11 Heroes, Survivors and Their Families Need and Deserve'

New York, NY – With the country set to reflect on the 13th Anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center later this week, many of the federal bipartisan lawmakers who led the fight in Congress to pass the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act – U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Rep. Carolyn Maloney, Rep. Jerrold Nadler, Rep. Peter King – gathered together at Ground Zero today along with Mayor Bill de Blasio, 9/11 first responders, community survivors and union leaders to begin their push to reauthorize the critically needed programs originally passed in December 2010. The Zadroga bill's two critical programs providing medical treatment and compensation for 9/11 heroes – the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund – are set to expire in October 2015 and October 2016 respectively. To continue these programs for 25 more years, through 2041, Senators Gillibrand and Schumer will introduce the *James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act* later this month in the Senate, and Representatives Maloney, Nadler and King will do so in the House.

Nearly 13 years after September 11th, 9/11 responders and survivors are battling serious health crises resulting from exposure to the toxins at Ground Zero. More than 30,000 9/11 responders and survivors have an illness or injury caused by the attacks or their aftermath, and over two-

thirds of those have more than one illness. Many are disabled and can no longer work. They are suffering from a host of chronic diseases: asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease and gastroesophageal reflux disease, and many more.

Medical research has identified more than 60 types of cancer caused by 9/11 toxins. More than 2,900 people have been diagnosed with cancers caused or made worse by the aftermath of the attacks - more than 800 New York Fire Department members and more than 550 New York Police Department personnel are struggling with serious 9/11-related illnesses, not including the more than 70 firefighters and 60 NYPD officers who have died from their 9/11-related illnesses.

Responders came from all over the country to aid in the response to the attacks. And some area residents, workers and survivors have since moved and are currently receiving care in cities and states across the country. Participants enrolled in the World Trade Center Health Program for treatment currently reside in all 50 states and in 431 of the 435 Congressional districts in the country.

“Our 9/11 heroes, survivors, and my colleagues fought hard to ensure that Congress fulfilled its undeniable moral obligation by providing long-overdue health care and compensation for 9/11 responders and community survivors,” said **Senator Gillibrand**. “So just as our first responders and survivors worked hard to pass the 9/11 health bill in 2010, tirelessly walking the halls of Congress week after week, month after month, and year after year, we will do everything in our power to get this new legislation passed and signed into. But it shouldn’t have to take another ‘Christmas Miracle’ for Congress to do the right thing. It should simply take listening to these heroes and reflecting on 9/11 and about who we are as a nation.”

“With the 13th Anniversary of 9/11 upon us this week, it is clear that while the dust has settled from the tragic attacks, the physical ramifications are still with us,” said **Senator Schumer**. “The brave first responders that saved so many victims are now suffering from illnesses from the airborne toxins at the World Trade Center site, and they should not bear the burden of health costs on their own. This legislation, which will extend critically needed medical treatment and compensation programs for another 25 years, must be a top priority. It is our duty to care for the heroes that sacrificed so much in a time of great despair and pain.”

“In the aftermath of 9/11 we said that we would never forget – not someday forget or eventually forget, but never forget,” said **Congresswoman Maloney**. “That vow comes with an obligation on the part of Congress to ensure that we as a country remember, honor and care for those who are now sick or may still become sick due to their exposure to toxins at ground zero. The unbearable sorrow of the attacks is forever seared in our collective memory. We have a moral obligation to assist those who still carry the wounds of that day. We must extend the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.”

“Just as we stood together as a nation in the days following September 11, 2001, and just as we stood strong together in 2010 to create these vital programs, we must join forces again to ensure that the heroes of 9/11 are not abandoned when they need us most,” said **Congressman Nadler**.

“To this day too many of our 9/11 responders and survivors continue to fight serious illnesses, includes 60 types of cancer caused by 9/11 toxins,” said **Congressman King**. “This reauthorization is critical for these individuals and their families. We have come too far and we must continue to ensure that our 9/11 heroes receive the care they deserve.”

“No group deserves our gratitude and help more than those who went to Ground Zero in the days and weeks following the September 11 attacks. We have a moral obligation to make sure that these heroes and their families get the medical treatment and compensation they deserve,” said **New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “These police officers, firefighters, medical professionals and other first responders came from across the country to Ground Zero, and as the Mayor of New York City, I am proud to advocate for this critical piece of legislation that will provide care to those heroes in their own communities right here in New York but also in cities across the country.”

"Following September 11th, there was no progressive or conservative, left or right, we were all simply New Yorkers, committed to helping one another overcome a challenge, the likes of which we had never seen before," said **Mario Cilento, President of the New York State AFL-CIO**. "We join here today, with that same resolve to take care of the responders and survivors who have given so much, and who continue to bear the burden of the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center. Together, we will succeed once again in securing federal reauthorization and funding for the desperately needed programs created by the Zadroga Act."

“As many of us knew would happen when fighting for passage of the original Zadroga Act, we have now reached the point where more law enforcement officers have died of a 9/11-related illness than fell on September 11, 2001. It is an unfortunate fact of life for those who left their health on ‘The Pile’ thirteen years ago this week, and who struggle each and every day with the effects of their brave service in responding to the single most heinous terrorist attack in our nation’s history,” said **Sergeants Benevolent Association President Ed Mullins**. “We have witnessed the importance of the WTCHP and the VCF to the care and treatment of those who are sick, and the SBA is grateful to Sen. Gillibrand, Rep. Maloney, Rep. King, Rep. Nadler, and the other Members of the New York congressional delegation for their leadership and steadfast commitment to reauthorizing the Zadroga Act as quickly as possible.”

“In three days, as a Nation we will remember those lost to senseless violence on the horrific day we simply call 9/11,” said **John Feal, President of the FealGood Foundation**. “But let’s finish the sentence, thousands died that day, but thousands are sick and dying still and we have a moral obligation to pray for those who have passed, but fight like hell for those who still suffer. And fighting like hell includes making sure the Zadroga Bill is re authorized for another 25 years.”

"The reauthorization bill for the Zadroga Act is critical for both the responder and survivor population for the continuing needs due to 9/11 toxin exposures," said **Catherine McVay Hughes, Chair of Community Board 1**. "We must all come together to pass this bill so that these vital programs can continue."

The *James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act* passed by Congress in 2010 helped ensure proper monitoring and treatment for thousands of men, women and children that face

potential life-threatening health effects due to the toxins released at Ground Zero in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

Currently, over 30,000 responders and survivors across the nation are sick and receiving critical treatment and medical care through the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program. Over 60,000 9/11 responders are receiving medical monitoring. The program treats responders and survivors for many chronic diseases and respiratory illnesses, including asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease, and gastroesophageal reflux disease.

The WTC Health Program continues to be a critical lifeline for many, particularly when the number of 9/11-related cancer cases among rescue workers and responders has increased over the past decade and continues to grow. So far, more than 2,900 responders and survivors have been diagnosed with 9/11-related cancers, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since 2012, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has added over 60 types of cancers to the list of 9/11-related illnesses covered by the WTC Health Program. Studies show that 9/11 workers have gotten certain cancers – including prostate, thyroid, leukemia, and multiple myeloma – at a significantly higher rate than the general population.

The September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF), which was reopened under the Zadroga 9/11 Health Bill, provides compensation for economic losses to 9/11 responders and survivors and their families for physical injuries as a result of involvement in Ground Zero, including breathing in toxins. Since 2013, the VCF has made over 1,300 compensation determinations and has so far deemed over 7,000 injured 9/11 individuals eligible for compensation.

Numerous studies have documented the health effects of the WTC attacks, which include lower and upper respiratory, gastrointestinal, and mental health conditions. These illnesses have caused major financial strains on many of those exposed, who are subsequently no longer able to work and face the high price of health care without a federally-funded national program to incur the costs.

The new *James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act* would:

Continue the World Trade Center Health Program, within the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), to provide medical monitoring and treatment for WTC-related conditions to WTC responders and WTC survivors, delivered through Centers of Excellence. The WTC Program Administrator is required to implement a program to ensure the quality of medical monitoring and treatment, a program to detect fraud, and to submit an annual report to Congress on the operation of the program.

Continue to Provide Monitoring and Treatment for WTC Responders and NY Community Members. Clinical Centers of Excellence will monitor and deliver treatment for responders and eligible members of the New York area, which will be delivered by FDNY, a consortium of clinics that includes Mt. Sinai, Long Island Jewish/North Shore Hospital, NYU, SUNY Stony Brook, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences Institute as well as by the NYC Health and Hospital Corporation at Bellevue, East Elmhurst Hospital and Gouverneur Healthcare Services.

Continue to Provide Monitoring and Treatment for WTC Responders in the NY Area. The legislation will continue the existing monitoring and treatment program by the World Trade Center Health Program delivering expert medical treatment and monitoring for WTC-related illnesses for over 60,000 9/11 responders.

Continue to Provide Monitoring and Treatment for Survivors. The bill continues the World Trade Center Health Program providing health care for over 7,000 injured and ill 9/11 survivors including lower Manhattan residents, students, and area workers.

Continue to Provide Monitoring and Treatment for Communities Beyond NY. Heroes came from across the country to help in the aftermath of 9/11. This legislation continues the World Trade Center Health Program that provides medical monitoring and treatment for over 6,000 individuals nationwide, ensuring they have access to monitoring and treatment benefits where they live. The program also provides medical care for responders to the Pentagon and the Shanksville, PA crash site.

Continue the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF). The fund would remain open until 2041 to provide compensation for economic damages and loss for individuals who become ill from the toxins at Ground Zero. Because the bill links the VCF to the limitation on liability, this later date allows for compensation for victims with latent claims while extending liability protection. The bill requires the Special Master to update regulations consistent with revisions to VCF under this Act.

Continue to Establish Cost Share for the City of New York. The City of New York would continue to contribute a 10 percent matching cost share of the World Trade Center Health Program.

Continue to Research New Conditions. New research is critical for reaching breakthroughs in diagnosing and treating WTC-related illnesses. The legislation will continue research on WTC-related conditions.

Extend Support for NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Under the legislation NIOSH would continue to extend and expand support for the World Trade Center Health Registry.

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