



# SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW YORK

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October 31, 2018

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

I am writing on behalf of the more than 13,000 active and retired members of the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the New York City Police Department to advise you of our strong support for S. 3591, the "Never Forget the Heroes: Permanent Authorization of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) Act." We are grateful for your strong and steadfast commitment to all those who suffer from the health effects of the 9/11 attacks.

Last month, our nation paused to mark seventeen years since the most heinous terrorist attack in our history, and to honor all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice on that fateful day and since. Each week the news contains stories of an ever-growing casualty list of first responders who have been diagnosed with or died from a 9/11-related health condition. Last year, 23 current or former members of the NYPD died of 9/11-related cancers and other illnesses. This is the exact same number of NYPD officers our Department lost on 9/11. Today the total number of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers who have died of a 9/11-related illness is more than *double* the 71 who perished on 9/11. Unfortunately, these numbers are expected to continue to rise in the years ahead and as we continue to witness the long-term health effects among those who performed rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero.

Twice in the past decade, Congress has recognized this ongoing health crisis among 9/11 responders and survivors by passing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act in 2010 and a reauthorization of the Act in 2015. As part of the 2015 legislation, Congress essentially made

permanent the World Trade Center Health Program by extending its authorization to monitor and treat those with 9/11-related health conditions until 2090. In the nearly three years since the 2015 reauthorization, there have been 16,000 new enrollments in the WTCHP—men and women from each of the 50 states and nearly every Congressional District in the nation. These numbers highlight the foresight Congress showed in making the WTCHP permanent. Now Congress must do the same for the VCF and do so quickly, particularly in light of the recent report from the Special Master that the VCF may run out of funding even before the current authorization expires in 2020.

The legislation you have introduced will accomplish our shared goal of permanently reauthorizing the VCF and providing full compensation to the Heroes of 9/11. The SBA is proud to stand beside you again as we work to reauthorize this critically important program, and we are grateful for your strong leadership on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Washington Representatives Andrew Siff and Chris Granberg at (202) 457-7756, as we work with you to reauthorize the VCF.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Mullins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ed Mullins  
President