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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

September 8, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

The tragedy on September 11, 2001 is one that has shaped our world and that we will never forget. As we approach the anniversary and remember all of the innocent civilians we lost in New York City, Shankesville, and the Pentagon, I encourage you to also remember the courageous first responders that arrived at the scenes and worked for days, weeks and months to look for survivors and recover those we lost. These brave men and women inhaled a toxic cocktail of burning chemicals, pulverized drywall and powdered cement while rummaging through what was left of the Twin Towers; unaware that their efforts would result in lifelong health consequences.

In the coming days, the Senate will need to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act; a bill established to extend medical assistance to the first responders and survivors who consequently developed illnesses after their heroic recovery and rescue efforts. The list of illnesses include severe upper and lower respiratory conditions, gastrointestinal illnesses, and pulmonary diseases. To date, over 30,000 responders, from 431 Congressional districts, have received treatment from the World Trade Center Health Program due to their 9/11-related illnesses and injuries.

These brave men and women answered the call to assist our country in a time of vulnerability, and now it is our turn to insure that they receive the medical care that they desperately need and deserve. They came from all corners of the country bearing various racial, religious, and political stripes; united for a common cause to serve their country. These men and women deserve the support of every one of us honored to represent them. If you would like to cosponsor the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act, please contact Brooke Jamison at brooke_jamison@gillibrand.senate.gov

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand