



SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

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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. 928, the "James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act." We are grateful for your leadership and unwavering commitment to our nation's first responders.

This September, our nation will mark fourteen years since the most heinous terrorist attack in our history. In addition to remembering those lost on 9/11, we also mourn an ever-growing number of first responders who have died of a World Trade Center-related (WTC) health condition and we pray for those who are now sick. To date, there are more than 30,000 9/11 responders and survivors who are struggling with a WTC-related illness, over two-thirds of whom have more than one illness. The WTC Health Program has identified more than 60 types of cancer caused by exposure to the toxins at Ground Zero. And most shockingly, the number of NYPD officers who have died of a WTC-related illness is now *triple* the 23 who perished in the collapse of the Trade Center towers on 9/11.

Since enactment of the original Zadroga Act in 2011, those who are sick and the families of the fallen have found support and assistance through the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) and the Victims Compensation Fund (VCF). Today, the WTCHP serves participants in all 50 U.S. states and in 429 of our nation's 435 Congressional Districts. This includes more than 3,200 people who have been diagnosed with a WTC-related cancer. The VCF has also played a major role in aiding victims, determining compensation awards for nearly 4,500 individuals for physical injuries and economic losses as a result of the 9/11 attacks. But there is still more to be done. We have only begun to see the long-term health effects of the countless hours spent engaging in the rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero. It is for these and many other reasons that Congress should reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act as quickly as possible.

The legislation that you have introduced will do just that, ensuring continued care for those who sacrificed so much in responding to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Specifically, S. 928 will allow the WTCHP to continue to provide long-term medical monitoring and treatment services nationwide for the first responders who labored in the toxic environment of Ground Zero. It will also continue the work of the VCF, enabling it to provide compensation to victims. Finally, the bill will ensure the continuation of research into the diagnosis and treatment of WTC-related health conditions, and the adequacy and coordination of care for victims. In so doing, this legislation honors the sacrifice that so many of our fellow officers and their families continue to make for carrying out their sworn duty to protect and serve on that fateful day.

The SBA is proud to stand beside you again as we work to reauthorize this critically important Act and we are grateful for your strong leadership on behalf of our nation's first responders. 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 Zadroga Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Mullins".

Ed Mullins
President