



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

Providing leadership for the fire and emergency services since 1873

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November 9, 2015

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Maloney:

On behalf of the approximately 11,000 fire service leaders of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I would like to thank you for introducing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1786). This legislation would reauthorize the World Trade Center Health Program permanently. It also would continue to allow the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund to compensate first responders, who are suffering from economic damages due to illnesses and injury incurred during the response at Ground Zero. The IAFC looks forward to working with you and the legislation's primary cosponsors to pass this legislation this year.

The terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, was a tragic event in United States history, where 343 firefighters perished in the response at the World Trade Center. However, the effects of that day echo on as many of the firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, and other volunteers who assisted in the rescue and recovery operations at Ground Zero are now being affected by illness. These selfless individuals now suffer from diseases such as cancers, severe upper and lower respiratory conditions, pulmonary diseases, and gastrointestinal illnesses.

Currently, more than 70,000 9/11 responders and survivors are in the World Trade Center Health Program, including over 15,000 FDNY members. Overall the program has provided treatment for more than 13,000 FDNY members, including more than 7,500 people in the last year. Medical monitoring, early diagnosis, and aggressive treatment are keys to reducing fatalities due to WTC-related illnesses. In addition, it is important that the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund is funded adequately to pay the claims of those whose illnesses have prevented them from maintaining their employment.

In 2010, Congress passed the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act (P.L. 111-347) to look after the fire, EMS, law enforcement and other volunteers who assisted at Ground Zero. Sadly, this legislation has expired causing uncertainty for many of these selfless heroes and their families. We urge the House to pass H.R. 1786 this year in order to sustain these vital programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rhoda Mae Kerr".

Fire Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr, EFO, CFO, MPA
President and Chair of the Board

c: Representative Peter T. King
Representative Jerrold Nadler

:kpl