



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS February 13, 2019

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Executive Director and

General Counsel

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
United States House of Representatives
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Maloney:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing over 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers across the nation, I am writing to you to express our full support for the Never Forget the Heroes: Permanent Authorization of the September 11th Victims Compensation Fund Act.

This year will mark the 18th anniversary of the deadliest terrorist attack on our nation's soil. As we remember those who died on September 11, 2001, we also must recognize those we continue to lose as the lasting effects of that day make themselves known. We have lost more federal, state and local law enforcement officers from 9/11-related illnesses over the past 17 years than we lost on September 11, 2001. 9/11 responders and survivors are still battling serious health crises resulting from exposure to the toxins at Ground Zero.

NAPO fought hard for the passage of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act in 2010 and its reauthorization in 2015 to ensure our nation took care of the victims and first responders who are coping with 9/11-related chronic health conditions. James Zadroga, a New York City Police Department Detective and member of NAPO, died of respiratory disease caused by his exposure to toxic chemicals during rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero.

In 2015, Congress, recognizing the importance of these programs, reauthorized the World Trade Center Health Program until 2090 and reauthorized and fully-funded the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund (VCF) at \$7.3 billion for 5 years. Unfortunately, this has proven to not be enough as the Special Master of the VCF indicated in September 2018 that given the significant increase in claims just from the last year alone, the Fund may not be able to fully compensate all claims.

The VCF saw a 36 percent increase in claims between September 2017 to September 2018, and a 94 percent increase in eligible "deceased claims" – claims by families of 9/11 survivors who have succumbed to their 9/11-related illnesses. Further, as of June 2018, 88,484 first responders and survivors have registered with the World Trade Center Health Program, of which approximately 10,000 have a 9/11-related cancer. In 2018 alone, the Health Program saw more than a 260% increase in participants. What

these numbers mean is that claims to the VCF will continue to grow and the need to reauthorize and fully fund the VCF is imperative.

This legislation honors those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our nation. It is our obligation and duty to remember these heroes and ensure that survivors who risked their lives to protect us continue to receive the compensation that they deserve.

NAPO stands ready to support any efforts necessary to pass this legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William J. Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William J. Johnson
Executive Director