

## **9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2025**

*Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Representative Andrew Garbarino (R-NY-02)*

### **Background**

The World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) provides medical treatment and monitoring for over [135,000](#) responders and survivors from the World Trade Center and lower Manhattan, Pentagon, and Shanksville sites, living in every state and [434 out of 435](#) congressional districts.

The WTCHP was created by Congress in 2010 and was reauthorized in 2015 until 2090. Program costs and increased participation by injured 9/11 responders and survivors have increased beyond what was projected in the 2015 extension. Due to these increased costs, the program now faces a projected funding shortfall.

Congress has acted twice on recent occasion to delay this projected shortfall. The *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023* provided \$1 billion in funding to the program, and the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024* included a provision totaling \$676 million for the WTCHP with \$444 million designated to address the funding shortfall. The remaining \$232 million created a fund to expand WTCHP program enrollment to active duty and civilian DoD responders from the Pentagon and Shanksville site who were formerly ineligible. The WTCHP currently faces an impending shortfall, and without action by Congress, the program will be forced to make cuts to enrollee treatment and care in the next several years to avoid a deficit.

### **Funding Shortfall Timeline:**

- By approximately October 1, 2027, the WTCHP will have to close acceptance of new responder and survivor enrollment applications to help ensure that application processing is complete by October 1, 2028. The program will likely be forced to start making cuts to crucial enrollee services in an attempt to avoid a deficit.
- By approximately October 1, 2028, the WTCHP will close enrollment to new prospective 9/11 responders and survivors, even if their application is still being processed, denying them care they need because the program lacks the funding to provide it.
- By FY2029, not only will no new responders and survivors who become sick from 9/11-related conditions in subsequent years be able to enroll in the program, existing enrollees will face direct cuts to their care, denying them access to the medical monitoring and treatment guaranteed under the Zadroga Act before the end of the Trump administration.

### **Summary of 2025 Bill Updates**

1. Updates funding formula to avert impending shortfall and ensure adequate funding until the program expires in 2090.
2. Increases funding for data collection and research on 9/11-related health conditions.
3. Allows qualified mental health providers to conduct evaluations and certify 9/11-related mental health conditions for program members.
4. Increases time period for evaluating and adding health conditions to the list covered by the program.
5. Requires a report to Congress evaluating the budgetary needs of the program.
6. Makes certain technical corrections to the current statute.

## Section-by-Section

### **Section 1. Short Title**

Provides the short title of the bill as the “9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2025.”

### **Section 2. Flexibility for Mental Health Condition Certifications Under the World Trade Center Health Program**

Authorizes licensed mental health care providers to conduct initial health evaluations of mental health conditions for responders and survivors, including enrollees in the nationwide provider network, in the same manner as licensed physicians.

### **Section 3. Criteria for Credentialing Health Care Providers Participating in the Nationwide Network**

Reassigns the responsibility to the WTCHP Administrator for setting the criteria for credentialing and selecting health care providers for the nationwide network from the Data Centers.

### **Section 4. Clarifying Calculation of Enrollment**

Clarifies that deceased individuals should not be included in the count of program enrollees or certified-eligible survivors for the purposes of the numerical limit of enrolled responders or survivors or the funding adjustment.

### **Section 5. Time Period for Adding Health Conditions to List for WTC Responders**

Changes the time limit for the WTCHP Administrator to respond to a petition to add a condition to the list of program-covered health conditions from 90 to 180 days. It also changes the time limit for the Administrator to publish a proposed rule or determination not to propose a rule from 90 to 180 days, following the Advisory Committee’s recommendation on whether to add a condition to a list of covered health conditions.

### **Section 6. Funding for the World Trade Center Health Program**

Replaces the existing funding model with a new formula for FY2026 – FY2090 that includes the amount of funding from the previous year, multiplied by 1.07, multiplied by the ratio of the total number of individuals enrolled on July 1 of the fiscal year prior to such fiscal year. It also increases the limit for spending on data collection and research for 9/11-related health conditions.

### **Section 7. Report to Congress**

Requires the HHS Secretary to provide a report assessing a projection of budgetary needs per fiscal year through FY2090; a review of the program’s budget authority and outlays from previous fiscal years; a projection of the program’s budget authority and expected expenditures through FY2090; and recommendations on changes to the federal funding formula to offset anticipated expenditures through FY2090.