

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3202**

February 19, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write today to express our grave concerns regarding potential changes to the World Trade Center (“WTC”) Health Program (“the Program”). As strong supporters of this crucial health program, we are committed to ensuring that the Program has the adequate tools and resources to continue to provide the health care and medical monitoring as was originally intended.

The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 established the WTC Health Program within the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to provide monitoring and treatment for 9/11-related health conditions for enrolled responders and survivors. The Program not only provides vital medical monitoring and care to nearly 137,000 responders and survivors across the United States, but also conducts research on the extent of the health impacts and how to improve the lives of Program members.<sup>1</sup> It is also worth noting that the Program has been consistently free of reports of fraud since its inception.

As you are aware, on February 11, you signed Executive Order “Reforming the Federal Workforce to Better Serve Americans” to implement the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) workforce optimization initiative.<sup>2</sup> Based on subsequent reports, it is our understanding that as part of this Executive Order probationary staff of the Program have been terminated. In addition, several members of the Program’s workforce have reportedly taken the Administration’s buyout offer, reducing the Program’s overall workforce by almost 20%.<sup>3</sup>

While we commend your effort to hold our government’s workforce to a higher standard of conduct, we implore you to ensure that any overall workforce reduction at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is done in a targeted manner so as to not impact the vital functions of the Program. This staff reduction will only make it more difficult for the Program to supervise its contracts and to care for its members who are comprised of the brave men and women who ran towards danger and helped in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

We are also deeply concerned about the reports that statutorily-required WTC research grants will be impacted by recent HHS actions. As part of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010, the WTC Health Program Administrator is directed to conduct “1)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/wtc/ataglance.html#enrollmentWTC>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/02/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-works-to-remake-americas-federal-workforce/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.newsday.com/news/nation/world-trade-center-health-program-raycmm1z>

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research on physical and mental health conditions that may be related to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks; 2) research on diagnosing World Trade Center-related health conditions of such individuals, in the case of conditions for which there has been diagnostic uncertainty; and 3) research on treating WTC-related health conditions of such individuals, in the case of conditions for which there has been treatment uncertainty.”<sup>4</sup>

Our offices have been informed that a Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) research grant has been terminated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) within the last few days. We were told that the grant termination was at the direction of CDC contract staff who said that the FDNY’s contract was determined to be “non-essential because the outputs from the contract are not statutorily required.” This could not be further from the truth.

It is our understanding that the now-canceled grant was being used as part of the FDNY’s efforts to compare disease incidence rates of FDNY membership with those of three other urban fire departments. This critical research helps prove that any new condition is WTC-related, and therefore, should be added by the Program as a covered WTC condition. Further, this grant termination will severely hinder the FDNY’s effort to provide WTC-exposed members with the necessary treatment coverage for emerging WTC-related health conditions, such as the soon-to-be-announced autoimmune and cardiovascular conditions.<sup>5</sup>

To fulfill our moral obligation to 9/11 survivors and responders, we must ensure that the Program not only has the necessary resources, but also is properly administered, so that Program members receive the high-quality care that they need and deserve. We urge you, as a native New Yorker who lived in New York City as it recovered from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, to reverse these actions by rehiring the terminated probationary staff, restoring the canceled FDNY research grant contract, and fencing off the WTC Health Program, which was authorized in statute as mandatory spending, from any further staff and funding reductions.

Sincerely,



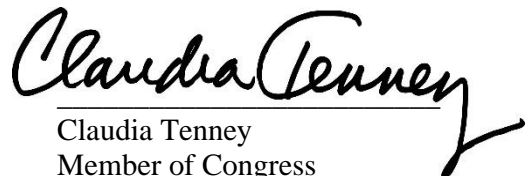
Andrew R. Garbarino  
Member of Congress



Michael V. Lawler  
Member of Congress



Nick LaLota  
Member of Congress



Claudia Tenney  
Member of Congress

<sup>4</sup> P.L. 111-347

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.newsday.com/news/health/wtc-health-conditions-kdxliwms>

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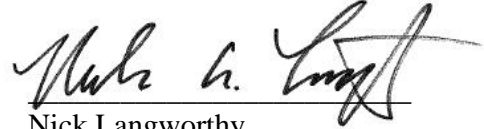
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Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress



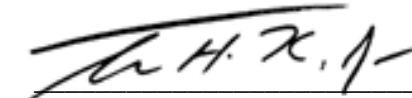
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Nick Langworthy  
Member of Congress



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Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



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Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Member of Congress