



September 30, 2009

Cosponsor the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2009 (H.R. 847)

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), I urge you to support and cosponsor the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2009 (H.R. 847). This bipartisan bill would provide medical monitoring, treatment, and compensation to emergency responders, recovery and clean-up workers, and others suffering serious diseases as a result of hazardous exposures resulting from the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It would also reopen the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) to provide compensation for economic losses and harm as an alternative to the current litigation system.

In the days and hours following the events of September 11th, tens of thousands of emergency workers, construction workers, and others rushed to the World Trade Center (WTC) to assist in rescue and recovery operations. These workers were exposed to a toxic mix of dust and fumes from the collapse of the WTC and the subsequent fires. Now these individuals, particularly the heroic first responders who experienced the highest exposures, are suffering from serious respiratory diseases and other health problems.

In fact, nearly 70 percent of responders examined by the Mount Sinai School of Medicine suffered respiratory problems, with one-third suffering significant loss of lung function. The FDNY found that rescue workers suffered an average loss of 12 years of lung capacity. Many of those who are sick can no longer work, their workers' compensation claims are being contested and they have lost their health insurance and a number of deaths have now been officially attributed to exposure to WTC toxins. These workers are in dire need of medical treatment.

For the past several years, Congress has designated funding for the WTC Worker and Volunteer Medical Screening Program, which has provided medical monitoring through the FDNY and a consortium of clinical centers coordinated by Mount Sinai. For the past year, additional funds have been appropriated for medical treatment for WTC responders who are sick. But this funding is only a short-term stopgap measure.

H.R. 847 would provide a comprehensive long-term solution to address the serious health problems that WTC responders and area residents are facing as a result of 9/11 hazardous exposures. H.R. 847 would establish the World Trade Center Health Program, under the direction of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), to provide medical monitoring and treatment for WTC-related health conditions to responders and area

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

888 16th Street, NW • Suite 650 • Washington, DC 20006 • tel: 202.628.9262 • fax: 202.628.0391 • www.ttd.org
Edward Wytkind, President • Patricia Friend, Secretary-Treasurer



residents. It would build off the existing medical programs to provide high quality care through the Clinical Centers of Excellence at the FDNY, the Mt. Sinai consortium, and the WTC Environmental Health Center at Bellevue Hospital. Additional clinical centers would be designated, including those to provide monitoring and treatment for those outside the New York area. Coordinating Centers of Excellence would be established to develop uniform treatment protocols and collect and analyze data.

The attack on the World Trade Center was not only an attack on New York; it was an attack on the nation. Compelled by a moral obligation, the nation acted to compensate and care for those injured in the collapse of the World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon and the surviving family members of those who were killed. The same moral obligation should compel the nation to meet the needs of 9/11 rescue, recovery, and clean-up workers and area residents who became ill because of their exposure to WTC hazards.

It has been more than eight years since the 9/11 attacks. Congress should take action on this important legislation and on behalf of transportation labor, I urge you to support H.R. 847. To cosponsor this legislation, please contact Anna Cielinski in Rep. Maloney's office at 202-225-7944.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Wytkind
President