

Report

on the response to 9/11 from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

NOVEMBER 2005

Dear New Yorker,

All of us are concerned for the welfare of those devastated by Hurricane Katrina—and angered by the life-threatening inadequacy of response efforts in the days following.

The needs of those affected by the disaster should stay at the forefront of Congress' attention in the months ahead. Congress and the president were right to quickly provide emergency funding, but that is only the first step. There is more that Congress can and must do.

We must ensure that this aid is distributed fairly and quickly, via well-designed programs that are managed with strong accountability, and we must work to improve the federal response for future large-scale disasters.

I recently produced a report with members of the New York Congressional Delegation and shared it with Members of Congress from the Gulf Coast. Our report detailed 23 lessons we learned from the 9/11 response that can improve recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina. If you'd like to read it, it's available on the web at www.house.gov/maloney.

E-mail updates

If you'd like to receive updates from me by e-mail about news and issues affecting New York and the nation please sign up at www.house.gov/maloney

Regular postal mail to my Washington office is subject to screening delays. If you would like to reach me quickly about an issue in Washington, the best methods now are via the Internet at www.house.gov/maloney or by fax at 202/225-4709.

Washington, D.C. :
2331 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
202/225-7944

Manhattan:
1651 Third Avenue, Suite 311
New York, NY 10128
212/860-0606

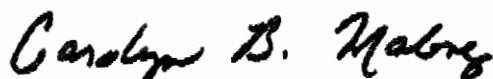
Queens:
28-11 Astoria Blvd.
Astoria, NY 11102
718/932-1804

Web page:
www.house.gov/maloney

This newsletter is a review of the ongoing federal response to 9/11; what went right and what went wrong. Four years later, New York has made great progress in recovering but many survivors still suffer the ill-effects of the attack and lack federal support. A strong and complete recovery after 9/11 remains essential for New York and would set a strong precedent for future disaster relief efforts. If we hope for a strong and effective recovery after Katrina, we should make sure to get the full recovery of New York done right, even four years after 9/11.

As always, please feel free to contact me should you have any problems, concerns, or ideas you feel could put our country in the right direction.

Sincerely



Carolyn B. Maloney

9/11 Commission reforms passed

The nation's anti-terrorism security took a strong step forward when the reforms proposed by the 9/11 Commission were enacted into law last year, an achievement I am especially pleased to have been instrumental in advancing.

As a New Yorker, I was committed to the creation of the 9/11 Commission in order to find out what intelligence gaps existed prior to the attacks and to determine precisely what could be done to become more secure from future attacks.

While sadly the White House opposed the 9/11 Commission's creation, and opposed the Commission's requests for adequate funding, important documents and additional time, in the end the Commission did overcome these challenges and provided vital recommendations for the nation's future security.

The Commission's final report was hailed for its bipartisan consensus and for providing vital recommendations for the nation's future security. From the start, I was committed to working with 9/11 family members to support the Commission's work and enact its carefully considered recommendations into law.

Joining forces with Rep. Christopher Shays, we formed the "9/11 Commission Caucus" in the House to push for enactment of all 41 of the Commission's reforms. Most were incorporated into a bill that we sponsored in the House.

Working closely with the 9/11 Family Steering Committee, we helped coordinate efforts to persuade the House and Senate to pass the reforms; the families' demands for action were invaluable to passage.

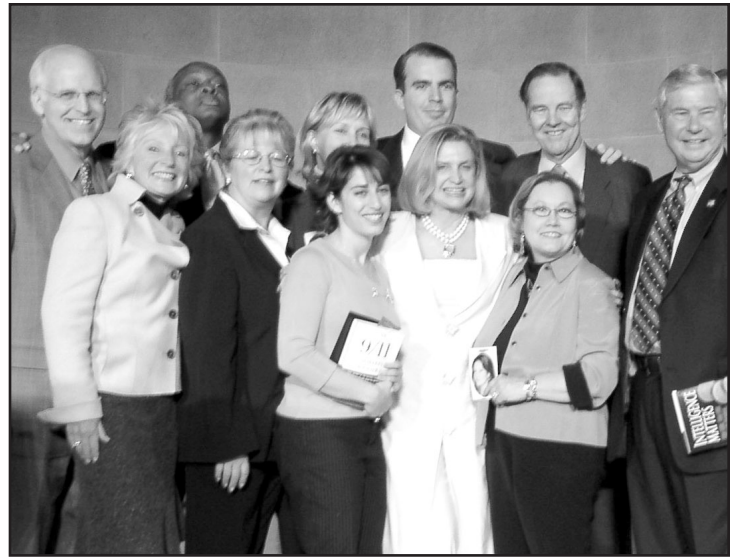
Finally, in December 2004, Congress passed the package of proposals, which includes:

- A new Director of National Intelligence who will coordinate our overlapping intelligence agencies.

- Increased border patrol forces to help prevent terrorists from entering our country in the first place.

- Tougher standards for visas to help ensure that would-be terrorists cannot enter legally, as they did before 9/11.

Certainly there is much more that must be done. Some of the Commission's suggestions, including the need to reorganize Congressional oversight of intelligence, have yet to be enacted into law. I continue to urge Congress to heed the Commission's warning to



>> Rep. Maloney with family members of those lost on 9/11, fellow Members of Congress, and members of the 9/11 Commission, after the official bill signing for 9/11 Commission reform legislation.

start distributing funds for first responders solely on the basis of risk and stop treating it as pork-barrel funding to be spread around the nation, whether it's needed or not.

Nat'l Guard responding to attacks deserve better

Days before the 69th Infantry of the N.Y. National Guard shipped out to Iraq, I met with many of the soldiers at the Lexington Avenue Armory, in part to inquire about any needs they had before departure. They raised the important concern that National Guard Soldiers deployed to lower-Manhattan after 9/11 were not receiving federal retirement credits for their service although those sent to federal sites after the attacks were eligible for such credits.

I am so pleased to report success in advancing legislation that provides fair retirement treatment to all National Guard soldiers who protected New York and assisted in the recovery after 9/11. Along with Rep. Peter King (NY) and other members of the New York delegation, I introduced legislation to make these soldiers eligible to earn federal retirement credit, and the bill was included in the House-passed version of the National Defense Authorization Act.

For their service to our country after 9/11, National Guard soldiers deserve nothing less than fair military retirement credit for their courageous service in New York and Washington, DC.

'Take-back' of 9/11 aid still in the works

It seems incredible, but President Bush has proposed taking back \$125 million in funds set aside for sick 9/11 responders. With thousands still sick or injured and in need of

help, it's just plain wrong to pull back promised aid for medical treatment and other needs. The President proposed this 'take back' claiming that these 9/11 funds are no longer needed. I can't accept this argument when my office is frequently contacted by 9/11 responders who are being denied the aid they deserve.

While the outcome of this proposed cut in aid is still uncertain, I am leading the fight to stop it. Working with 9/11 responders and the New York Congressional Delegation, we have met with key Congressional leaders in both the House and Senate and have held numerous public events to pressure Washington to do the right thing. This allowed 9/11 responders to take their case directly to Congress. Additionally, a bipartisan group of twenty New York Members has sent a letter to President Bush demanding that he restore this funding to the heroes of 9/11. These brave men and women were there for New York when we needed them. It would be wrong to turn our backs on them now in their time of need.

9/11 health program missing in action

A recent report that I requested along with Rep. Christopher Shays (CT) that was issued by the investigative arm of Congress, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), reported that a

program established to medically monitor the health of 9/11 federal responders, was shut down after the program had only screened 400 of the approximately 10,000 exposed to toxins at Ground Zero. The GAO found that the program stopped screening federal employees when officials could not determine how to help the injured responders it identified. The report indicates that the federal government has plans to eventually start this program after developing protocols to refer employees who are still sick to proper medical treatment. Even four years after the disaster, however, the administration has yet to make clear when they plan to reinstate the program.

Following the uneven federal response to the medical needs stemming from 9/11, I have introduced legislation to correct the problems that still exist from 9/11 and to put in place a framework that the federal government could use following future disasters. "The Remember 9/11 Health Act," H.R. 566, would provide medical treatment to 9/11 responders who are sick or injured as a direct result of 9/11.



>> Maloney leads effort to prevent the federal take back of \$125 million in 9/11 aid. Here, she is joined by N.Y. Sen. Clinton, N.Y. Reps. Fosella and McCarthy and other elected officials and injured 9/11 responders in DC.

"The Disaster Area Health and Environmental Monitoring Act," H.R. 3850, would establish medical monitoring following a major disaster. Unfortunately, Congress has yet to pass this legislation and there is no program for medical monitoring of first responders currently working in the toxic soup created by Hurricane Katrina around New Orleans.

Civil liberties cannot be a casualty in terror fight

The 9/11 Commission strongly recommended in its final report that Congress create an independent and powerful "Civil Liberties Board" to protect our basic rights.

Such a board was partially created last year in the landmark intelligence reform bill (see article on p.2), but it was not even close to what the Commission recommended. Even today, eleven months after creation, the board has yet to hold its first meeting.

To make the Civil Liberties Board all that it should be, I've introduced the Protection of Civil Liberties Act (H.R. 1310) that would significantly strengthen the Board, bringing it in line with the 9/11 Commission's recommendations. The legislation is bipartisan, and it has the support of 9/11 commissioners, as well as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

The provisions of my bill include: provide the Board with subpoena powers; establish the Board as an independent agency in the executive branch; require all five members of the Board be confirmed by the Senate, with no more than three members coming from the same political party; make the chair a full-time member of the Board; restore reporting requirements to Congress; and require semiannual reports to help increase Congressional oversight.

For more information regarding the Protection of Civil Liberties Act please visit: www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050315CivilLiberties.htm



Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

M.C.
FRSRT STD

Increased federal aid efforts for 9/11 aftermath

Ever since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, I have made it my top priority to monitor and strengthen the federal response in each area of the recovery. Strong oversight is vital in order to ensure adequate federal aid for all remaining unmet needs

emerging from the disaster. For instance, the economic reports and Congressional hearings I requested have helped to shed light on serious needs that remain after 9/11.

My efforts have yielded some notable successes, in particular the hard fought but effective efforts to obtain over \$210 million in federal recovery aid for the health monitoring of injured Ground Zero responders, for New York's damaged school buildings, and for the extensive reform and expansion of federal aid programs for individuals affected by the disaster.

I was pleased in particular that after years of struggle, Congress finally allocated \$90 million allocation to support the World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Medical Monitoring program. Through this program, 9/11 responders have received expert diagnoses of any illnesses caused by their work at Ground Zero, including guidance on treatment plans that can best improve their medical conditions. Sadly, the program is only funded for five years, with no funds provided for the actual treatment of responders.

I have introduced legislation, "The Remember 9/11 Health Act," with Rep. Christopher Shays to extend this medical monitoring program and to expand it to cover the treatment of injuries where insurance falls short. While continuing to urge the

President and Congress to allocate the resources needed to help all those affected by 9/11, it is important to remember what we have achieved in strengthening the federal response.

Robust Congressional oversight will be needed in response to the recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to ensure that affected areas receive the assistance they deserve.

FDNY communications systems need fixing

During the World Trade Center attack in 1993, during 9/11, and during the blackout of 2003, the New York Fire Department's communications system failed in certain places in the city during certain high volume periods. Right when they need it

most, during the largest and most challenging emergencies, communications systems are failing New York's firefighters and putting lives at risk. Despite this alarming evidence, FDNY's communications system is still not adequate.

That is why I have reintroduced the "9/11 Can You Hear Me Now Act," (H.R. 1794) which would require the Dept. of Homeland Security to work with New York City to develop a communications system that can work for New York's firefighters in the toughest situations, in any part of this city. We hope a new system for New York City could become a model for all high threat cities and fire departments across the country.

For more information about my bill, please visit: www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050421CanYouHearMeNow.htm