



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

April 20, 2007

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Byrd and Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2007 Supplemental Appropriations Bill and the Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations Bill for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), I urge you to support the New York delegation's request for \$282,997,330 to provide urgently needed resources to address the physical and mental health impacts of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The City's delegation has worked tirelessly to secure funding on behalf of the many thousands of New Yorkers and volunteers from all 50 states who answered the nation's call in the aftermath of 9/11. I am deeply grateful for their efforts.

A few weeks ago I testified before Congress about a report I commissioned by a panel composed of the City's top health experts that details the substantial health impacts of the 9/11 attacks. The panel made 15 recommendations to ensure that those who are sick or who may become sick get the first-rate care they deserve. As the report observed, it is well documented that thousands of people suffered adverse physical and mental health effects in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks. While many have since recovered, others continue to suffer from a range of conditions that are or may be associated with 9/11 exposures, including upper- and lower-respiratory illnesses, and mental health conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

I urged Congress to recognize that the federal government has a responsibility to help those who answered the City's and the nation's call on 9/11 and requested immediate funding to implement a number of the panel's recommendations. While the City has begun to implement some of the recommendations, many will require substantial and sustained federal assistance.

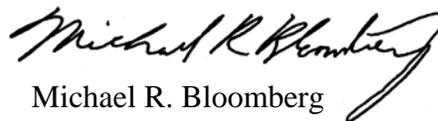
Foremost among these is the need to fully fund the three clinical “Centers of Excellence” in the diagnosis and treatment of 9/11-related conditions: the Fire Department of New York’s Medical Screening and Treatment program, the WTC Medical Monitoring program for responders, construction workers and volunteers coordinated by Mount Sinai hospital, and the WTC Environmental Health Center at Bellevue hospital, the only program open to residents, office workers and other non-responders. These programs have sufficient funding to continue operating in the near term, but all three lack the dedicated federal support needed to guarantee their long-term sustainability.

Similarly urgent is the need for federal funding to sustain the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DOHMH) World Trade Center Health Registry, a collaborative effort of DOHMH and the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry. Along with the Centers of Excellence, the WTC Health Registry is helping to produce invaluable research, but all these programs may soon be discontinued unless they get sustained federal support.

The panel report also noted more than 34,200 officer and civilian members of the Police Department (NYPD) participated in WTC rescue, recovery, and clean-up operations, and detailed NYPD’s efforts to offer its members 9/11-related monitoring, tracking, evaluations and referrals. The report noted, however, that NYPD has not received any federal funding for treatment or monitoring and calls for federal funding to support the Department’s efforts. Finally, the report observes that although funding for mental-health treatment programs is ending, treatment capacity likely will need to be expanded since 9/11-related mental health problems persist. The report calls for federal funding to meet this on-going need.

The health impacts arising from 9/11 are daunting, but they must be addressed. In order to ensure that those needs are met on the most basic level, I urge you to support the New York delegation’s request to provide at least \$282,997,330 for the World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in the FY07 Supplemental Appropriations bill or, failing that, in the FY08 Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

cc: New York State Congressional delegation