

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2007

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and
Education
House Appropriations Committee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James T. Walsh
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor
Health and Human Services, and
Education
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh:

As your Subcommittee prepares to consider the Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations Bill for the Department of Health and Human Services, we urge you to recommend 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), which provides comprehensive medical services for morbidities that are the result of WTC exposures in the responder population.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 were attacks on the United States, not just New York City. In the aftermath, responders and volunteers came from every state in the country to assist in the massive rescue, recovery and clean-up efforts. While they worked in and around Ground Zero they were exposed to a poisonous cocktail of toxins.

As of January 2007, the World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program provides medical monitoring and treatment for 34,000 responders who were exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero. This group is comprised of 14,000 from the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) who are currently enrolled in the FDNY World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program and 20,000 other responders, who are currently enrolled in the WTC Medical Monitoring and Treatment program, a consortium coordinated by Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, NY.

We are pleased that the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget proposal included \$25 million for "expenses to provide screening and treatment for first response emergency services personnel related to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center." However, it is clear that \$25 million will not come close to meeting the needs to continue the current program. In fact, an internal estimate from NIOSH dated January 30, 2007, shows that the total annual costs for the current program will be \$282,997,330. This estimate will certainly increase in future years as more responders experience symptoms or learn about available services, conditions do not resolve with treatment, costs of treatments increase, new conditions are determined to be associated with WTC

exposure, and new special needs develop. In addition, it does not take into account diseases that are likely to emerge over time, including pulmonary fibrosis and cancers. Last, it is important to note that this estimate only covers responders who are in current programs, not area residents, office workers, and students who were also exposed and have become sick as a result of 9/11.

Understanding the limits of this NIOSH estimate and knowing that it is probably a very conservative estimate of what will be needed, we urge you to recommend at least \$282,997,330 for the World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program administered by NIOSH.

Sincerely,


CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress


JERROLD NADLER
Member of Congress