

May 20, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing nearly 400,000 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, we are writing to advise you of our strong support for S. 928, the “James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act.” We are grateful for your engagement on this issue to date, and look forward to working with you to ensure Committee consideration of S. 928 at the earliest possible opportunity.

Nearly fourteen years ago the heinous and premeditated terrorist attacks against our nation claimed nearly 3,000 lives—including 72 of our fellow law enforcement officers. In the weeks and months that followed, first responders like us from every corner of America descended on New York, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania to assist in rescue and recovery efforts. At the World Trade Center (WTC) site we willingly labored countless hours searching for our friends, colleagues, and fellow citizens who were trapped in the wreckage. Although each first responder who was there would willingly volunteer again, we now see the price of that service in the 30,000 responders and survivors who are struggling with a WTC-related illness.

To address the health crisis that emerged among 9/11 responders, you and your colleagues came together in 2010 to pass the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. The World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) established by the Act now serves participants in all 50 U.S. states, including more than 2,900 individuals who have been diagnosed with a WTC-related cancer. Yet despite the strides that have been made to care for those who are ill, there is still more to be done. The WTCHP continues to identify illnesses caused by exposure to the toxins at Ground Zero, which now include more than 60 types of cancer. Ground Zero first responders continue to be diagnosed with WTC-related illnesses, many of whom suffer from multiple conditions. And law enforcement officers continue to die from 9/11. Tragically more officers have now succumbed to a WTC-related illness than perished in the collapse of the WTC towers on 9/11. It is for these reasons and many others that Congress must reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

On behalf of our organizations and the men and women of law enforcement that we are proud to represent, thank you again for your engagement and leadership on this important legislation. We stand ready to work with you and the other Members of the Committee to pass S. 928 as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,

Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association
National Association of Police Organizations
National Treasury Employees Union
National Troopers Coalition
Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (NYPD)

Detectives’ Endowment Association (NYPD)
Sergeants Benevolent Association (NYPD)
Lieutenants Benevolent Association (NYPD)
Captains Endowment Association (NYPD)
Port Authority Police Benevolent Association

CC: Members, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, United States Senate