

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 24, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Walsh
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin and Obey and Ranking Members Specter and Walsh:

When the World Trade Center collapsed on September 11, 2001, first responders, workers and volunteers came from all around the country to aid in the enormous rescue and recovery efforts. These workers were exposed to a poisonous mixture of asbestos, dioxin, jet fuel, and scores of other toxins. Many of them are now suffering from serious, and sometimes fatal, illnesses as a result of their heroism. The World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program provides monitoring and treatment for those who have become sick, but it requires significantly more funding to meet the long term needs of the thousands of workers who are ill. The program must also be opened to residents, area workers, students, and others who were also exposed to World Trade Center toxins.

We want to thank you for including a landmark \$50 million in the House bill for 9/11 health. This is a significant step toward providing for the heroes of 9/11. As you consider the FY2008 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill, however, we urge you to adopt the Senate's funding level of \$55 million for the World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program, appropriated to and administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). This program provides comprehensive medical services for illnesses that resulted from World Trade Center exposures in the rescuer and responder population. In addition, the Senate bill contains general provision statutory language that would provide screening and treatment for first response emergency services personnel, residents, students, and others related to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Soon after the attack, thousands of people returned to their homes, offices, and

schools after the federal government said that the air was safe to breathe. Some of these people are now becoming sick and it is the federal government's responsibility to provide for them.

In order to provide monitoring and treatment these populations experiencing 9/11-related illnesses, we urge you to provide \$55 million to NIOSH for the World Trade Center Monitoring and Treatment Program, as well as the general statutory provision language including residents, office workers, and school children, in the final FY08 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill, as recommended in the Senate bill.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Schumer


Hillary Rodham Clinton


Frank R. Lautenberg


Robert Menendez