

D/Cdr. JEFFREY L. ENDEAN Ret.

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To: Chairman Kennedy, Ranking Member Enzi, Senator Clinton and other members of the HELP Committee.

I am Jeffrey L. Endean of Succasunna, New Jersey. Former Division Commander with the Morris County Sheriff's Office with 20 years assigned to the Special (Emergency) Services Division.

I would like to thank Senator Clinton and the members of the HELP Committee for the opportunity to testify today regarding the health care of 911 responders. There are many responders who would like to have had this opportunity and I wish to recognize them, and do my best to represent them honorably.

On the morning of 11 September 2001 I responded with personnel under my command to carry out mutual aid to the N.J., NY Port Authority Police Dept. at the site of the attacks against America at the World Trade Center site.

The scene was very sad, to see my country ripped open, and just imagining the body count. The smoke was acrid and irritating, it was hard to see your hand in front of your face. The sound of the firefighters' "mayday" alarms sounded like a million crickets. After the 11th I was assigned to the Port Authority as I am certified in Critical Incident Stress Management. My assignment was at the pile. The pile as it was called looked like a war zone or a peek into hell. The fire, smoke, smell of burning flesh. The devastation and parts of the skeleton of what was the WTC was surreal at best and terrifying at worst. Only someone who has seen such devastation and death can understand how this affects one. The faces of the responders told many sad stories. I worked along and watched out for personnel experiencing emotional issues. I would speak to them about their fears and feelings and guide them to a mental health professional if necessary. I kept this up as a volunteer responding after my shifts in Morris County until 22 November 2001. I retired 1 August 2002 after using sick time from 22 November 2001. During October 2001 I developed a chronic cough and was wheezing and just not feeling well. The coughing would be violent with my eyes bulging and not getting a breath. I was having difficulties breathing, wheezing and trouble sleeping. I was developing upper and lower respiratory infections on a regular basis. I received a letter from the PBA to contact Mt. Sinai Hospital for a screening. I did so post haste and in Jan 2003 had my first screening. The initial screening revealed scarring on my lungs, plural thickening of my lungs, wheezing, asthma and the chronic cough, and rhinitis. There was no treatment program available and I would later find that I had been misdiagnosed and treated for colds and allergies. My health continued to deteriorate, and the medical bills were mounting even though I had 80-20 medical insurance. They paid a set amount for services and I was stuck with ill health and mounting medical and prescription bills. I was called for a second screening in 2005 which revealed the same issues. I was placed into the new treatment program at Mt. Sinai. I was then in addition diagnosed with rad's, gerd, asthma, chronic headaches, joint aches, and trouble sleeping and PTSD. I was assigned to Dr. Laura Bienenfeld who made diagnoses and initial treatment. She then referred me to specialists.

I was seen by the specialists at Mt. Sinai who corroborated the initial diagnosis with MRI, X Ray, camera up sinuses, down the throat, Endoscopy and visual. Dr. Genden ETN told me I was the 7,000th person he had seen and that particulate was encapsulated in the cells of my sinuses and my sinuses were like bloody sponges.

Specialist Dr. Christie learned from endoscopy that after a year of Nexium my esophageal erosion was not healing so dose was doubled. I also had a PET scan as it was believed a mass in my lung may have been cancerous. I awake to take three inhalers, one breathing pill, and other meds. I now need a nebulizer treatment three times per day and I still wheeze and cough and get severe headaches. My worker responders claim was accepted and all mentioned illnesses accepted in court. I am receiving good care, but will it remain? I am not getting well, just holding ground and will I lose ground? I am 57 and hope to live to 87 but I don't know how long I will live.

I am now getting the proper treatment from those who know the illnesses best. Their care has made the quality of life better. The WTC treatment program at Mt. Sinai is the most knowledgeable group of doctors in the world regarding the toxins and illnesses from a disaster like 911. No other doctors have ever seen and documented the symptoms and designed treatments and continue to innovate and adapt to the worsening illnesses. To move this treatment away from Mt. Sinai would be a human disaster equal to 911 itself. The misdiagnoses and poor treatment would start all over again. We could not stop the attacks, death and continued casualties of 11 September. You have the ability to stop the human disaster. Creating a department or program by the government would be costly and cumbersome and it is not necessary. The Mt. Sinai program exists and to change it would result in the aforementioned human disaster. I ask the committee to take a long hard look at the success of the existing program and to subsidize it. This will save dollars and lives. This legacy of illness and suffering will continue for my lifetime and way beyond.

The responders need to be taken care of. They ran down West Street not away from the attack. This was an attack on America. President Bush termed it an act of War. Those who responded deserve nothing less than the best of care. FDR said "Any man who sheds his blood for his country deserves a fair deal." This applies now in 2007 as it did then. I cannot believe that every Senator and Congress person does not champion this cause. America's sons and daughters came to her aid as it is our duty. Now it's the duty of our federal government to care for those who served.

Thank You

God Bless America

D/Cdr. Jeffrey L. Endean Ret.