

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2008

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2314 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Walsh,  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh,

We thank you for your work in obtaining \$108 million in FY08 and \$50 million in FY07 for World Trade Center (WTC) health needs. This funding was important for the continued growth of programs providing medical monitoring and treatment to thousands who are sick because of exposure to the toxic dust and fumes at the World Trade Center site. As you know, some of the no-year money appropriated in FY08 and FY07 will remain available in FY09, and we ask you to take that into account when determining how much new money will need to be appropriated in FY09. In the coming months, we hope it will become clearer how much FY08 and FY07 money will remain and how much new FY09 money will be needed to continue to expand the program.

Money left unspent does not indicate a lack of need, but rather a lack of an effective mechanism to administer the programs' day-to-day operations at their full capacity. The ability on the part of the Administration to run a nation-wide program has been greatly hindered by the recent cancellation of the Request for Contracts for the WTC Business Processing Center. Unspent money is also a result of only preliminary outreach to those who are in need of services but do not know that help is available. A number of problems with spending the funds were discussed at your subcommittee hearing on March 13, 2008 on the WTC Health Programs.

Since your hearing, we are pleased that the Administration has taken preliminary steps toward issuing a new request for proposals to run a nation-wide program. However, the administration still needs to take steps to provide funding for the medical care for the downtown residents, students, and workers whose health has been jeopardized by their exposures after 9/11. The funding of both the national program and the program for community residents will affect the amount of funding actually needed for FY 2009.

As your subcommittee begins work on the Fiscal Year 2009 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill, we respectfully request that you ensure that \$254 million is available in FY09 to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for World Trade Center Health programs that provide 9/11 health-related services for all populations exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero. Specifically, the World Trade Center Responder Monitoring and Treatment Program, which includes responders in the New York/New Jersey area and responders nation wide, will require

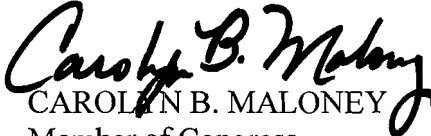
\$225 million. According to the City of New York, the Residential program at the WTC Environmental Health Centers will need to have \$18 million available and the World Trade Center Health Registry will need access to a total of \$11 million in FY09.


Based on what we know, the demand for monitoring and treatment is increasing, not decreasing as some had hoped this long after 9/11. However, in order to have better information about program costs, we also request that you include report language requiring the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to provide the Committee with quarterly reporting data on cost estimates and budget obligations for each contract or grant associated with the World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program. Having this additional information will allow the Committee and Congress to make better decisions about funding in the future, allowing the programs to build the capacity needed to provide care for the heroes and heroines who served our nation in its time of need.

In summary, we request that \$254 million be made available for World Trade Center Health programs in FY09. Through your hard work, some of this funding is already available as remaining no-year money appropriated in FY08 and FY07. We also request report language on quarterly cost and budget data reporting. We thank you again for your dedication to this issue and we look forward to working closely with you to meet these challenging needs.

Sincerely,

  
JERROLD NADLER  
Member of Congress

  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress

  
VITO FOSSELLA  
Member of Congress