

Coalition of 9/11 Responders

July 21, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are Ground Zero workers writing to you on behalf of all responders to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks who put their lives and health on the line in order to save lives and restore Ground Zero. We are grateful for your concern and generosity towards the recovery effort. We have traveled to Washington D.C. today seeking your continued support for those of us who have suffered injuries and developed illnesses as a result of response efforts after 9/11.

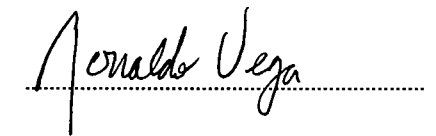
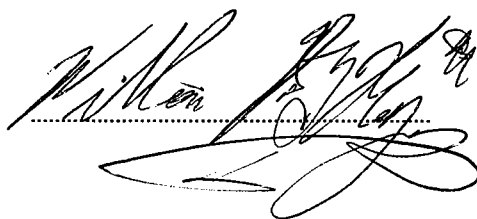
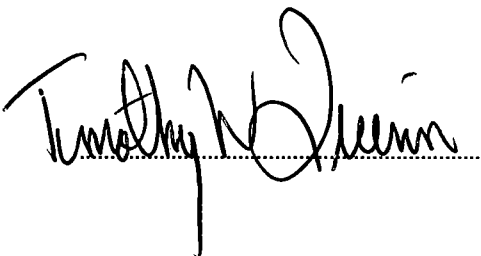
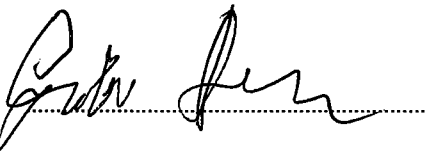
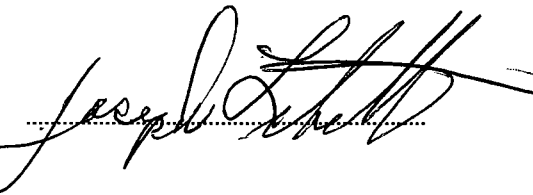
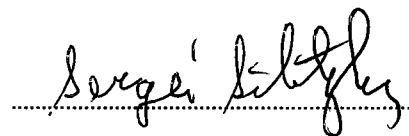
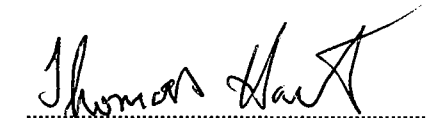
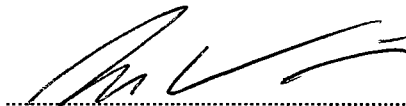
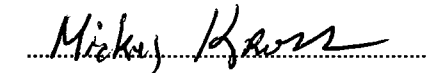
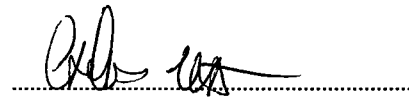
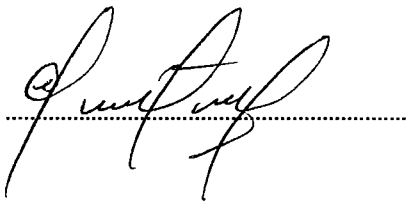
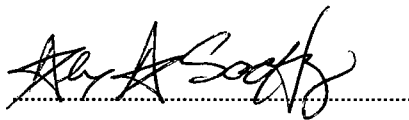
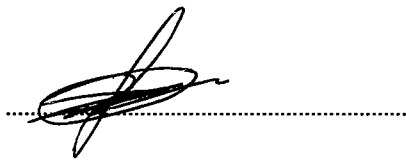
Included in your 2006 budget proposal to Congress is a \$120 million rescission of 9/11 workers compensation aid. It also rescinds an additional \$5 million in funds from the worker retraining program established to help New Yorkers who became unemployed because of 9/11. We are all personally and deeply concerned about any rescission of these funds and ask you respectfully to withdraw this request that your administration made to Congress.

You may not be aware that your administration has argued these funds are not needed, but we have come to Washington to show you that our situation and those of countless other responders are truly serious and regrettably, that this aid is still very much needed. Some of us are construction workers who dug through the ruins and toxic dust of Ground Zero and as a result lost our breathing and lung capacity. We are also medics, electricians, and trained emergency responders who are still fighting to overcome physical injuries caused by the extreme conditions of Ground Zero. As hard as it is for many of us to discuss or make public, countless numbers of us are dealing with emotional and stress disorders as a result of our unparalleled experiences at Ground Zero.

We face a second level of frustration from the fact that our applications for help have often been denied or delayed indefinitely. But let us be clear. If faced with 9/11 again or an equivalent emergency, we would all respond immediately to the best of our ability and with the same sense of urgency for our fellow men and women as we did after the September 11th attacks. It is just that we feel confused and disheartened by the struggles we continue to face to obtain even basic levels of help for our medical care and for compensation for lost income caused by injuries during the rescue and recovery effort. We may not be speaking up about this, if it were not for the fact that we know so many of our fellow 9/11 responders face the same challenges, but are less about to stand and be heard.

Mr. President, we are asking you to prevent the rescission of this \$125 million in aid, especially since no study has been done of the funds necessary for 9/11 compensation claims. We urge you to publicly recognize the depth and gravity of 9/11 health impacts and to continue your administration's assistance in our recovery. We thank you sincerely for considering our important request. Your attention to our own circumstances and to those of our struggling fellow 9/11 responders is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Long David Prescott, FDNY

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