



# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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## **COUNCIL MEMBERS & ADVOCATES RALLY BEFORE VOTE ON RESOLUTION CALLING ON CONGRESS TO RENEW THE JAMES ZADROGA 9/11 HEALTH & COMPENSATION ACT**

**Zadroga Act's WTC Health Program Expires October 2015, and Victim Compensation Fund Expires October 2016, Leaving Thousands of 9/11 First Responders & Survivors at Risk of Losing Desperately Needed Health Benefits**

**City Council's Vote on Resolution Comes Days after Federal Elected Officials Introduced Legislation to Renew and Permanently Extend the Zadroga Act**

Today, the New York City Council will vote on a resolution ([Res. 533-A](#)) by Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Council Members Paul Vallone and I. Daneek Miller, calling on Congress to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act. The resolution is expected to pass.

Before the vote, Council Members Chin, Vallone and Miller rallied alongside advocates, Lower Manhattan community leaders and FDNY, NYPD and other union representatives to celebrate the vote and continue to call on Congress to pass legislation to reauthorize the Zadroga Act.

The Zadroga Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in January 2011, provides desperately needed healthcare and compensation to 9/11 survivors and first responders who suffer from 9/11-related illnesses such as respiratory diseases, various types of cancers, post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions. More than 33,000 survivors and first responders are still suffering from those 9/11-related illness or injuries, including many NYPD and FDNY services members and Lower Manhattan residents and workers.

Unfortunately, the Zadroga Act's two critical components—the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund—are currently set to expire in October 2015 and October 2016, respectively. The expiration of these programs would leave those many thousands of 9/11 survivors and first responders and their families without the treatment they need, as well as the compensation they need for medical bills and to support themselves if they are permanently disabled and unable to work.

On April 14, Congressmembers Carolyn Maloney and Jerrold Nadler and Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer, along with a bi-partisan coalition from both the House and Senate, introduced the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Reauthorization Act, which would permanently extend both the WTC Health Program and the September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund.

Today's City Council vote will send a strong message to all members of Congress that they must pass that federal legislation in order to protect and support the thousands of 9/11 survivors and first responders who are still suffering.

**Council Member Margaret Chin said:** “Today we’re sending a strong message to every member of Congress: The Zadroga Act must be reauthorized, because 9/11 survivors and first responders deserve nothing less. NYPD and FDNY service members are still suffering from 9/11-related illnesses, along with thousands of other first responders and survivors. Our nation must continue to fulfill its moral obligation to support these brave men and women and their families. Earlier this week, our New York representatives in Congress once again led the way by introducing the Zadroga Act reauthorization — and now we need to make sure everyone in Washington hears the call.”

**Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito said:** “With today’s vote and imminent passage of the Council’s resolution that calls on Congress to renew the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act, we honor many of our brave first responders and survivors of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. They still live with debilitating physical and mental health complications from their heroic work at Ground Zero and long-term exposure to toxins in the aftermath. It is our moral obligation to honor and care for these courageous men and women—who include firefighters, police officers, and medical personnel—and to provide them support and compensation they need and deserve. I thank Council Member Margaret Chin, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand for their staunch efforts to renew the Zadroga Act and pay tribute to our country’s heroes.”

**Council Member Paul Vallone said:** “Almost fourteen years later, our City continues to face the consequences of the tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup>. We as a City, and furthermore as a Nation, need to fulfill our commitment to our first responders and all those who continue to have health problems as a result of September 11<sup>th</sup>. I am proud to stand with my colleagues as we call upon Congress to recognize this commitment and reauthorize the Zadroga Act so that we can continue protecting and providing assistance to those who need it.”

**Council Member I. Daneek Miller, Chair of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor, said:** “I am extremely proud to stand with my colleagues as a sponsor of this resolution in support of the Zadroga Act. It is essential that Congress and the President reauthorize the federal government to continue to provide medical benefits and survivor programs to those most directly impacted by the 9/11 attacks, including our first responders. When tragedy struck, these brave men and women were present on the front line. Now, we must be present for them. I thank Council Members Chin and Vallone, along with Speaker Mark-Viverito for their leadership on this issue.”

**Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, who authored the Zadroga Act, said:** “Protecting those who risked their lives and their health during 9/11 is of the utmost importance. We have a moral obligation to assist those who are still suffering. I want to thank Council Member Chin and the entire New York City Council for urging Congress to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. This resolution is a clear statement on how important this legislation is to the city.”

**Congressman Jerrold Nadler said:** “We will never forget those we lost on September 11<sup>th</sup>, and we will never forget the strength, bravery, and resilience our country demonstrated that morning. And we must never abandon the brave first responders and survivors who risked everything in the days, weeks, and months following the attacks to rebuild our city and their lives. Just as they did not hesitate to answer our call 14 years ago, we cannot turn our back on them now. We must reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. I want to thank Council Member Margaret Chin and the entire City Council for their continued support for this essential legislation. ”

**Joe Zadroga, father of James Zadroga, said:** “Five years after my son Jimmy’s death, a bi-partisan Congress did something wonderful to help those who had been stricken with 9/11 illnesses. It fulfilled a promise to provide health care and compensation to those who needed it. There is no greater way to honor the memory of my son, and the hundreds of other first responders who have passed away as a result of their toxic exposure, than by extending the law which bears his name.”

**Joe Zadroga continued:** “While the Victim Compensation Fund is supposed to close in October 2016, sick first responders and local residents will, no doubt, continue to need life-sustaining medical treatment and compensation for their lost income. NIOSH believes that people will be diagnosed with WTC-related cancers well after the 2016 deadline. Because private health insurance doesn't pay for work-related illnesses, those with 9/11-related illnesses do not get coverage. For thousands of people who have lost their livelihood, failure to receive full payment of their VCF awards will result in bankruptcy. Failure to fund the WTC health program will result in unnecessary suffering for thousands, as well as hundreds of unnecessary deaths. In sum, the VCF is a life-line for the 9/11 community.”

**Joe Zadroga continued:** “On behalf of my wife Linda and Jimmy’s daughter Tyler-Ann, I would like to pass on my sincere gratitude to Council Member Chin and her colleagues in the City Council for their support of this week’s efforts in Congress to extend the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation act. While nothing can bring Jimmy back to us, it gives us comfort to know that his sacrifice has not been forgotten, and his memory is helping to alleviate the suffering of others.”

**Terry Miles, Executive Director of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation's (HHC) World Trade Center Environmental Health Center, the federal program designated to care for community residents, area workers, students and passers-by affected by the environmental effects of 9/11, said:** "We have almost 8,300 patients enrolled in HHC's program, including pediatric patients, with more coming forward each month. They share conditions similar to first responders such as respiratory diseases, gastrointestinal disorders and cancers, that will require care and treatment for the rest of their lives. We strongly support the efforts of the City Council to promote the reauthorization of the Zadroga Act."

**State Senator Daniel Squadron said:** "In lower Manhattan and across the region, survivors, first responders and volunteers still face illnesses related to the 9/11 attacks. The Zadroga Act must be reauthorized again this year to acknowledge their ongoing struggle and provide for their healthcare needs. I thank Councilmember Chin for this resolution and Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, Congressmembers Maloney and Nadler, Community Board 1, and my colleagues for the ongoing push to reauthorize the Zadroga Act."

**State Assembly Member Sheldon Silver said:** “It is absolutely crucial that Congress reauthorize the Zadroga Act, so that first responders and local residents and workers continue to receive urgently needed monitoring and treatment for 9/11 related illnesses. The negative health impacts of the 9/11 attack continue and we as a nation have a moral obligation to the brave first responders who put themselves in harm’s way. The law has also been enormously important for many of my Lower Manhattan neighbors who were sickened by the toxic dust from the World Trade Center. I strongly join with Council Member Chin and my fellow local elected officials as well as Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, Congress Members Jerrold Nadler, Carolyn Maloney and our entire New York City delegation in calling for the reauthorization of this life saving law.”

**John Feal, founder and president of the FealGood Foundation, said:** “I want to personally thank the New York City Council & my good friend Margaret Chin for passing this resolution urging Congress to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act. Today's passage speaks louder than words and only validates that 14 years later our city government still cares about those affected by 9/11 and its aftermath. I am humbled by the City Council's compassion, and I am blessed to know that so many still care!”

**Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (PBA) President Patrick J. Lynch said:** “It is imperative that the Zadroga 9/11 Reauthorization Act be passed. The horrendous impact on the health of NYC police officers from toxic exposure is still reverberating through our ranks and, sadly, will continue for years to come. America cannot abandon the heroic men and women who are suffering and dying today. They unquestionably answered this city’s and nation’s call for help and now their call for help must be answered.”

**Detectives’ Endowment Association (DEA) President Michael J. Palladino said:** “The Detectives’ Endowment Association (DEA) supports the New York City Council’s resolution calling on Congress to renew the Zadroga 9/11 Act. Each year, members of the NYPD succumb to their 9/11-related illnesses as others are newly diagnosed with no real end in sight for the near future.”

**Uniformed Firefighters Association (UFA) President Steve Cassidy said:** “On behalf of thousands of sick New York City Firefighters and 104 now deceased, who answered the call on 9/11 and spent weeks and months at the World Trade Center site, renewing the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act is not a question, it is a must. The life and career threatening dangers our firefighters face daily is exactly why all New York City Firefighters need real disability protections.”

**Uniformed Fire Officers Association (UFOA) President James Lemonda said:** “The Uniformed Fire Officers Association thanks the City Council for its strong support for further funding of the Zadroga Act. Already the Zadroga funds have been of immense assistance for so many people who worked at Ground Zero in highly toxic conditions, while the illnesses and deaths continue to mount.”

**Henry Garrido, Executive Director of District Council 37, said:** “Today, the New York City Council sends a strong message to Congress that we must not forget the workers who valiantly endured hazardous conditions to rescue and recover victims of the 9/11 attacks. Reauthorization of the Zadroga Act ensures that tens of thousands of these brave men and women will continue to be monitored and treated medically.”

**Catherine McVay Hughes, chair of Manhattan Community Board 1, said:** “The responders and survivors were there for the country, and now it is time for the country to be there for them. That is not only fair, but also the right thing to do for our future, so that the next time that regular Americans are called on to take a risk and make sacrifices for public safety, they will know that the richest country in the world will take care of them. It is time for those in Congress to reauthorize the Zadroga Act, and take care of the 9/11 survivors and first responders. Community Board 1 thanks the New York City Council for passing its resolution calling on Congress to renew the Zadroga Act.”

**Kimberly Flynn, chair of the WTC Health Program Survivors Steering Committee, said:** “More than 8,000 Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn residents, area workers and children with 9/11-related physical and mental health impacts have come to depend on the expert and compassionate care they receive from the WTC Health Program. After all the good this program has done, after saving the lives of so many, it would be unthinkable for the federal government to simply cut off that care. We thank the City Council for taking a strong stand to protect the health of affected New Yorkers and so many others suffering from 9/11-related illnesses all across the nation.”

**Richard Alles, Board Member of Citizens for the Extension of the James Zadroga Act and Deputy Chief, Uniformed Fire Officers Association, said:** “On behalf of Citizens for the Extension of the James Zadroga Act, I want to thank Council Member Chin and her colleagues for taking this step today to call attention to fight in Washington to renew the Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. It is steps like today’s that will help us make sure that Congress does not forget the thousands of injured and ill 9/11 responders and survivors.”

**Charlene Obernauer, Executive Director of the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH), said:** “The reauthorization of the Zadroga Act is critical for responders, volunteers, and community members alike.”

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