

*(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Rush Holt (NJ-12) joined a majority of the House in passing H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. The bill provides funding for a health program to monitor and treat responders and community residents for health conditions related to the terrorist attacks. It also reopens the September 11, 2011 Victim Compensation Fund to provide monetary compensation for those physically injured by the attacks or by response activities and debris removal. Below is Holt's statement in support of the bill.*

As a cosponsor of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010, I urge passage of this important bill.

Today the House has the opportunity to honor the rescue and recovery workers who served our nation after the devastating attacks at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and, more important than empty honor, to provide for their care. My district suffered casualties that day and nine years later, the memory of that terrible day is still fresh in our minds.

Along with the victims of 9/11, there were thousands of rescue and recovery workers who came to the aid of our nation that day. These brave women and men rushed to Ground Zero to help the fallen and to participate in the clean-up effort without thinking about their health or safety. These workers were exposed to environmental hazards and have developed significant respiratory illnesses, chronic infections, and other medical conditions. Further, many first responders are only now being diagnosed with illnesses that are related to their exposure at Ground Zero.

The Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 would create the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP). The program would provide medical monitoring and treatment benefits to first responders and workers who were directly affected by the attacks. Additionally, the program would establish education and outreach programs and conduct research on physical and mental health conditions related to the 9/11 attacks. The program would continue until 2020 and the total federal spending would be capped at \$4.6 billion. The WTCHP program would serve more than 75,000 survivors, recovery workers, and members of the affected communities.

This bill provides long-term health care and compensation for thousands of responders and survivors. By passing this bill, we will be paying tribute to the sacrifice and courage of these women and men and we will be paying a debt. This bill will be paid for with a partnership with New York City and by closing tax loopholes.

When this bill was considered by the House before, some in the minority party put politics over these brave first responders. Today, we get a second chance to approve this important piece of legislation. We cannot let our first responders down.

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