



Mario Cilento  
President

Terrence L. Melvin  
Secretary-Treasurer

September 9, 2024

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the New York State AFL-CIO's 3000 local union affiliates and their 2.5 million members, retirees, and families, I write to ask for your support for **S.4724/H.R.9101, the "9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2024,"** sponsored by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Representative Andrew Garbarino.

Recognizing the continuing health crisis resulting from exposure to 9/11 toxins, Congress created the World Trade Center Health Program to monitor and treat those developing 9/11 illnesses. In 2015, Congress reauthorized the program until 2090 as its need became only more urgent and the program's efficacy undisputed.

Currently the program serves 132,000 responders and survivors from the World Trade Center and lower Manhattan, the Pentagon, and the Shanksville crash site, who live in every state and 434 out of 435 Congressional Districts.

As a result of rising costs and cancer rates outpacing projections, the program faces a funding shortfall in the coming years. Although there have been stopgap funding infusions in recent years, they have been insufficient and have not addressed the underlying formula for subsequent years.

Unfortunately, this means care for the Heroes of 9/11, many suffering from 9/11-associated cancers caused by their toxic exposures, is once again in danger. Service cuts and a bar to new enrollees loom without further action.

The bipartisan "9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2024" would ensure there is adequate funding for the World Trade Center Health Program to deal with the projected shortfall both in the short-term and for years to come.

The bill would also make minor technical changes to the statute to improve its operations, and provide additional resources for research and data collection on 9/11 conditions, which is critical. Recent research, for example, has shown that 9/11 responders who worked at Ground Zero have a higher risk of developing dementia than the general population, and that the risk is linked to the amount of toxic exposure.

Thank you for your consideration, and should you have any questions, please have your staff contact Ryan Delgado at [rdelgado@nysaflcio.org](mailto:rdelgado@nysaflcio.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mario Cilento".

Mario Cilento  
President

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