

Dr. John Howard  
Program Administrator  
World Trade Center Health Program  
400 7th Street SW, Suite 5W  
Washington, DC 20024

September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Dear Dr. Howard,

We, the representatives of labor, volunteers, and organizations that represent 9/11 responders and survivors who are Committee members of the World Trade Center Health Program Responder Steering Committee are writing in strong support of the petition filed by the all the Directors of the World Trade Center Health Program Clinical Centers of Excellence to add cardiovascular diseases including stroke to the list of WTC-covered conditions.

Specifically, we are writing in support of their petition asking for the addition of myocardial infarction, unstable angina, obstructive coronary artery disease, ischemic cardiomyopathy, ischemic congestive heart failure, arrhythmias (due to any of the above), stroke, and peripheral vascular disease.

To date, cardiovascular conditions have only been covered if associated with a WTC-certified condition such as pulmonary sarcoidosis or end-stage lung disease (ex. pulmonary hypertension / Cor Pulmonale from severe emphysema, COPD or pulmonary fibrosis).

The petition filed by the WTCHP Clinic Center Directors strictly follows the guidelines of your recently finalized policy for adding non-cancers to the list of WTC-covered conditions. It is based on numerous high-quality, WTC-cohort epidemiologic studies that demonstrate statistically significant associations between WTC exposure and cardiovascular disorders (including stroke). The petition is further supported by peer-reviewed studies in non-WTC cohorts, some from the Environmental Protection Agency, that clearly demonstrate biological plausibility.

We believe the petition has presented strong scientific evidence for the addition of cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, to the list of WTC-covered conditions. We know that the process laid out in the Zadroga statute takes time and requires a

series of detailed reviews. We are urging you and your staff to work expeditiously to review the petition as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Micki Siegel de Hernandez  
Chair of WTC Health Program Responder Steering Committee  
National Deputy Director  
Occupational Safety and Health  
Communications Workers of America (CWA)

Benjamin Chevat  
Executive Director  
911 Health Watch Inc.

Dan Doyle  
Ironworkers Local 40

Capt. Steven Goldstein  
Uniformed EMS Officers Association (Local 3621)

Michael Schreiber  
Ladder 116  
Health and Safety Officer  
Uniformed Firefighters Association  
IAFF Local 94

Chris McGrath  
on behalf of Patrick Hendry, President  
Police Benevolent Association of the City of New York, Inc.

Sean Michael  
UFOA Chiefs Pension Representative  
Uniformed Fire Officers Association  
IAFF Local 854

Gary Smiley  
FDNY Local 2507  
Uniformed EMTS Paramedics and Fire Inspectors  
WTC Liaison

Rhonda Villamia  
Disaster Relief Volunteer

Deborah Williams  
Director for Safety and Health  
District Council 37  
AFSCME