

Prepared Remarks by Benjamin Chevat, Executive Director of 911 Health Watch announcing agreement with City of New York September 8, 2026.

“Thank you, Steve,

I want to thank you Mayor Mamdani for being the mayor who, after 25 years, begins to answer the question:

‘What did the City know about the dangers from the toxic cloud at Ground Zero and when did it know it?’

Steve Banks, who has changed the Law Department, getting it to do something revolutionary, to resolve our lawsuit and comply with NY public records laws.

Since 9/11, four different Mayoral administrations worked to keep that answer from the public—even as City officials at the time continued to say the air was quote “safe and acceptable.”

But today’s announcement is not only about an online portal.

The City has also agreed to take steps that might help thousands of current and former City employees and public-school students obtain the records that they need to enroll in both the federal Health and Compensation Programs and to help promote them to public.

The mayor is going to help recruit for the new Youth Research Cohort, recruiting those who were under 21 and exposed, which will allow for real research on that population for the first time.

911 Health Watch did not reach this point alone.

I must thank the people, labor unions, including the State AFL CIO which created 911 Health Watch,

the responders, residents, workers and students, that fought for this.

Among them my mother who was living in Battery Park City when the Towers came down and who was evacuated over the seawall.

Who returned to live in her apartment in the Spring of 02.

I want to thank the families of Luis Alvarez, Charles Flickinger, Robert Klingon and Robert Fitzgibbon,

all lost to 9/11 related cancers, for joining this latest effort, some of whom are here today.

So many others like, Kimberly Flynn of 9/11 Environmental Action,

Lee Clarke of DC 37,

Micki Siegel de Hernandez, of the CWA,

Wayne Barrett of the Village Voice,

and especially columnist Juan Gonzalez, then of the Daily News, the first journalist in the beginning asking questions about the air quality and the “911 cough.”

To thank Congresswoman Maloney—full disclosure my former employer—

and Congressman Nadler for starting this most recent effort at disclosure

Council Member Brewer, who, using a provision in the City Charter for the first time ever, got the Council to pass a resolution that ordered the Department of Investigation to compile what the City knew;

Speaker Menin, who fully funded that DOI investigation, and along with Gale Brewer, raised the topic of disclosure at Steve Banks’s confirmation hearing.

And thanks also to my attorneys Andrew Carboy and Matthew McCauley.

And New York Supreme Court Justice James Clynes for his ruling that the Adams administration violated FOIL.

911 Health Watch will work with the mayor and his staff to fully implement this agreement. Thank you.