

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

October 2, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

We write regarding the Treasury Department's response of September 30th to our letter of September 18th regarding the withholding of nearly \$4 million in reimbursements to the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) for health care provided to firefighters who are sick and injured due to the toxins they encountered at Ground Zero.

While we appreciate that the Department has agreed that it is wrong to withhold funds meant for sick and injured 9/11 FDNY responders and has agreed not to withhold any additional funds, we still do not understand why you and your Department continue to withhold \$4 million intended for the health care of injured firefighters and emergency medical technicians, as part of an unrelated dispute with the City of New York over Medicare funds.

Regardless of the origins of the seizure of these funds, your Department has now acknowledged that, after investigating the matter, you have the discretion to stop the future seizure of these funds. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that you also have the discretion to release the funds that you previously withheld. Yet, you continue to hold the nearly \$4 million at issue.

Let us be clear: this funding is significant. These funds were meant to reimburse the World Trade Center Health Program for work already done by the clinic, and the lack of these funds means that the clinic cannot at this time fill 21 positions that it has open, including doctors, nurses and support staff to help provide treatment to injured 9/11 responders. Naturally, these vacancies will soon start to impact their care. It is absolutely essential that this nearly \$4 million be returned to the World Trade Center Health Program.

Therefore, we reiterate our request from September 18th that you exercise your discretion to return the almost \$4 million to the World Trade Center Health Program. We look forward to hearing from you with a confirmation that these funds will be restored.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
US Senator



Charles E. Schumer
US Senator