

**TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE JERROLD NADLER,
CHAIRMAN, HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**Before the Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on National
Parks, Forests, and Public Lands**

H.R. 5230, the “9/11 Memorial and Museum Act”

Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

1324 Longworth House Office Building

Thank you, Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and Members of the Committee for inviting me to testify regarding H.R. 5230, the “9/11 Memorial and Museum Act.” I am grateful to Homeland Security Committee Ranking Member Katko and Chairman Thompson for leading this important legislation. I was proud to join them in introducing this bill ahead of the 20th anniversary of the attacks on September 11th.

We have endeavored, as a nation, to ensure that the 9/11 Memorials continue to stand as places of reflection and remembrance for every American. Every generation should know the tragic events of that Tuesday morning, and the heroism of those who rushed back to the burning Pentagon and on to the pile at Ground Zero to put out fires, search for survivors, clear debris, and rebuild for months and years.

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum is a tribute of remembrance and honor to the nearly 2,983 people killed in the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, at the World Trade Center site, near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon, as well as the six people killed in the World Trade Center bombing in February 1993. Since its dedication in 2011, the 9/11 Memorial has welcomed more than 51 million visitors, including 9/11 victim family members, first responders, veterans, and the public from all 50 states and 190 countries. The memorial is a place of national and international significance for

learning, grieving, and reflecting. Its collection, exhibits, and programming serve as powerful reminders of the largest loss of life resulting from a foreign attack on American soil and the greatest single loss of rescue personnel in American history.

Like many nonprofit cultural institutions across the nation, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum has suffered substantial revenue loss due to pandemic-related closures and restrictions. Over 90% of the Memorial & Museum's operating budget comes from ticket sales. Ticket sales dropped nearly \$45 million last year, and today, the museum's attendance numbers are at only 30% of pre-pandemic numbers as COVID-19 has kept many Americans from traveling to New York. The revenue loss has threatened necessary programming and forced the museum to lay off a large number of staff members and close its doors to visitors twice a week.

The revenue loss has also threatened the Memorial & Museum's security budget. New York City, specifically the One World Trade building, remains a top target for terror threats. The fact that access to the memorial is free and available seven days a week further emphasizes the importance of security funding for one of our nation's most solemn memorials.

Twenty years after the most significant terrorist attack in our nation's history, we must ensure that the Memorial & Museum can continue to serve as a solemn reflection that will continue to hold the memories of that day, those we lost, and how we rebuilt.

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum Act will provide critical funding to ensure the Memorial & Museum can safely remain open and accessible for visitors despite the economic hardships it has experienced during the

COVID-19 pandemic. I urge the Committee to support this vital piece of legislation.

Again, I thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify on this vital piece of legislation.