

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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July 7, 2015

Dr. John Howard
Director
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
396 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Howard:

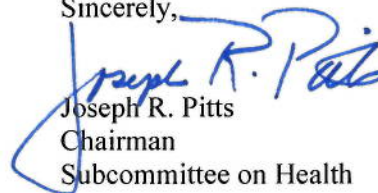
Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Health on June 11, 2015, to testify at the hearing entitled "Examining H.R. 1786, James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on July 21, 2015. Your responses should be mailed to Graham Pittman, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to graham.pittman@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,


Joseph R. Pitts
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health

cc: The Honorable Gene Green, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health

Attachment

Attachment — Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Representative Pallone

1. What advantages do FECA rates provide the WTC Health Program that paying Medicare rates would not?
2. How does the Clinical Center of Excellence model benefit the patient population over a private provider model?
3. How does the WTC Health Program create equity/consistency for members seen through the Nationwide Provider Network versus a Clinical Centers of Excellence?
4. What challenges has the WTC Health Program faced implementing the workers' compensation recoupment provisions of the Zadroga Act?
5. The GAO stated that the inclusion of an independent peer review process is important to ensure that future decisions related to the addition of conditions to the list are equitable and credible. In the Program's view, how might the statute be changed to allow the WTC Health Program to incorporate a credible peer review process when adding conditions to the list of covered conditions?
6. In the future, should the WTC Health Program focus more on retention of current members? How can the Program balance the need for retention of current members with outreach to potential new members?

The Honorable Representative Capps

1. Dr. John Howard, can you describe how the program has influenced the way that we keep track of everyone in communities impacted by large-scale disasters like 9/11?

The Honorable Representative Lujan

Thank you to our witnesses for taking the time to provide testimony today. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our service men and women who answer the call of duty every day and serve our communities, throughout the country and in my home state of New Mexico. As first responders you are on the front lines protecting our neighbors, friends, and family members. This was abundantly clear on September 11th, 2001 in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. In the aftermath of the attacks, during the rescue and recovery, the men and women on the front lines rose to the challenge. The collapse of the World Trade Centers tested the limits of our law enforcement and first responders. So many worked tirelessly day after day under difficult and dangerous conditions, and for that we thank you. We have the responsibility to ensure that their heroic work is not forgotten and that they receive the very best care for 9/11 related illnesses. It is imperative that we reauthorize the World Trade Center Program and Victims Compensation Fund for survivors and responders through this legislation.

1. In your testimony you noted that members from the World Trade Center's Health Program are represented in every state and many districts. Can you provide the numbers for New Mexico and the impact the program is having on my district, New Mexico's third Congressional district?
2. Can you speak to the importance of having this program, particularly about how healthcare providers have emerged as experts in diagnosis and treatment of 9/11 related illnesses as a result of this program?
3. Lastly you mentioned that this program focuses on understanding the long term health effects of 9/11. Can you comment on what trends are emerging from that research and what we can expect from the program moving forward?