

# [IAVA Calls on Congress to Extend and Fully Fund the Zadroga Act in 2015](#)

*Continued Congressional inaction threatens critical health care and compensation for tens of thousands of 9/11 first responders and survivors*

**Washington (December 2, 2015)** – On Thurs., Dec. 3, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) will join the Citizens for the Extension of the James Zadroga Act, 9/11 advocate John Feal and first responders and survivors on Capitol Hill to call on Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) to extend and fully fund the bipartisan James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act by year's end.

As Congress wraps-up its work for the year, time is running out to renew and fully-fund programs that provide health care and compensation to 9/11 first responders and survivors. Despite widespread bipartisan support, including 259 sponsors in the House and 66 in the Senate, Congressional leaders have failed to bring the reauthorization bill to a vote. As a result of their inaction, tens of thousands of men and women from all 50 states and 433 of 435 congressional districts have been forced to live in fear that the programs on which their lives depend will be torn away from them and their families.

The time for words is over; it's time for Senator McConnell and Speaker Ryan to act and ensure that 9/11 responders and survivors receive the care and support their sacrifice deserves.

**What:** [9/11 First Responders and Survivors Press Conference](#)

**When:** December 3, 12:00 p.m.

**Where:** U.S. Capitol, West Lawn

**Who:**

IAVA Chief Policy Officer Matt Miller  
John Feal, The FealGood Foundation  
Citizens for the Extension of the James Zadroga Act

IAVA members are encouraged to attend the press conference and can sign up [here](#).

**Background on the 9/11 Health Crisis**

After 9/11, Americans from all 50 states rushed to Ground Zero to assist with the rescue and recovery effort. Thousands of brave men and women risked their lives to help others, working in extremely hazardous conditions often without proper protective equipment while the Federal Government assured them that the air was safe. Many were injured in the course of this work. Rescue and recovery workers breathed in a toxic stew of chemicals, asbestos, pulverized cement, and other health hazards released into the air when the towers fell,

and as the site smoldered for months.

Today, more than [33,000 9/11 responders and survivors](#) are struggling with illnesses or injuries caused by the attacks. They live in [every state](#) and [433 out of 435 Congressional districts](#) nationwide. Many are disabled and can no longer work. They are suffering from a host of chronic diseases: asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease, and gastroesophageal reflux disease, to name but a few. Medical research has identified more than 50 types of cancer caused by 9/11 toxins. At least 4,166 people have been diagnosed with cancers caused or made worse by 9/11 – a number that is sure to grow in the years to come.

To date over [94 NYPD police officers](#) have reportedly died from their 9/11 injuries since 9/11, more than were killed on 9/11 and more than 110 FDNY firefighters have also died with in the years since, with more deaths expected among all the responders and survivors.