

August 20, 2018

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling  
Chairman,  
Committee on Financial Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
Ranking Member,  
Committee on Financial Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Representative Waters:

We are writing to you regarding our support for H.R. 3834, the “9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor Act of 2017,” and to respectfully request that the full Committee schedule this legislation for a markup at the earliest possible opportunity. This important legislation would reestablish the original 9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor to be provided by the President to the families of those police officers, firefighters, and EMTs who have died as a result of their exposure to toxic chemicals during the rescue and recovery efforts following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

We all know of the immense sacrifice that so many in our Nation made on that fateful day almost 17 years ago. Nearly 3,000 men, women, and children gave their lives in New York City, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. This includes the more than 400 public safety officers who ran into harm’s way in a valiant effort to save the lives of their fellow citizens. It was in recognition of their sacrifice that in 2004 Congress established the 9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor to be presented by the President to the families of those law enforcement officers, firefighters, and paramedics who fell on September 11, 2001.

Yet the casualty list continues to rise, as thousands of first responders who performed rescue and recovery operations have developed and died from 9/11-related cancers and other serious health conditions. This was on full display just a few months ago during National Police Week, when more than 20,000 law enforcement officers from across the country traveled to Washington, D.C. to honor their fallen colleagues. At both the Candlelight Vigil held on the National Mall on May 13<sup>th</sup> and the National Peace Officers Memorial Service on the West Front of the Capitol on May 15<sup>th</sup>, more than 50 of the brave men and women who were recognized as fallen heroes this year died as the result of 9/11-related health conditions. Unfortunately, that number is not expected to abate any time soon.

The “9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor Act” appropriately recognizes the heroism of the thousands of first responders from around the Nation who willingly placed themselves in harm’s way in response to the 9/11 attacks. It likewise affords Congress and the Administration an opportunity to fully honor those first responders who have since made the ultimate sacrifice and the families they have left behind. That is why we hope that you will join us in supporting this important legislation and will work with us to see it enacted into law this year.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

Congressional Fire Services Institute  
International Association of Fire Chiefs  
Major County Sheriffs of America  
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation  
National Volunteer Fire Council

Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association  
International Association of Fire Fighters  
National Association of Police Organizations  
National Sheriffs’ Association  
Sergeants Benevolent Association NYPD

CC: Members, Committee on Financial Services, U.S. House of Representatives