



STATE OF HAWAI'I
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAI'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

ANNE LOPEZ
ATTORNEY GENERAL
LOIO KUHINA

**ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNE LOPEZ AND 38 ATTORNEYS GENERAL
URGE CONGRESS TO PRESERVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR
9/11 RESPONDERS AND SURVIVORS**

*Bipartisan Coalition Calls on Congressional Leadership to Take Immediate Action to
Protect World Trade Center Health Program Ahead of Imminent Funding Shortfall*

News Release 2025-65

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 21, 2025

HONOLULU – Attorney General Anne Lopez today joined a bipartisan coalition of 38 attorneys general in urging Congress to take immediate action to address the impending funding crisis threatening the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP). It serves as a lifeline for more than 135,000 first responders, survivors and families impacted by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. In a [letter to congressional leadership](#), Attorney General Lopez and the coalition called for urgent legislative action to ensure the long-term financial stability of the WTCHP, which is projected to face a devastating funding shortfall as early as next year.

“The World Trade Center Health Program is a lifeline for thousands who suffer with physical and emotional scars from that tragic day,” said Attorney General Lopez. “I urge

Congress to continue supporting these heroes and survivors by fully funding and protecting this critical program.”

Established by Congress under the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010, WTCHP provides free medical care, monitoring and treatment to more than 132,000 Americans living with 9/11-related health conditions. Patients served by WTCHP include survivors, first responders and people who lived or worked near the crash sites, as well as those who participated in rescue, recovery and cleanup efforts.

In the letter, the coalition writes that WTCHP has been an essential resource for 15 years for the more than 135,000 Americans exposed to toxic dust and debris following the collapse of the Twin Towers. The attorneys general note that patients include firefighters, law enforcement officers, EMTs, construction workers, volunteers and community members who were present in the aftermath – many of whom are now suffering from chronic respiratory illnesses, cancers, mental health conditions and other serious illnesses directly linked to their exposure.

The attorneys general argue that despite being reauthorized in 2015 and 2019 with overwhelming bipartisan support, the program now faces a severe funding shortfall that could result in the denial of care to thousands of current and future enrollees. The program is authorized to run until 2090, but the attorneys general contend that the far-off date is essentially meaningless if the program is not funded during that period.

In the letter, Attorney General Lopez and the coalition argue that WTCHP funding gap is driven by increasing demand for specialized care, as more survivors and first responders are diagnosed with 9/11-related illnesses each year. They note that approximately 400,000 people were exposed to the toxic air around Ground Zero, and though only a third of that group are currently enrolled in the program, many first responders and survivors are still getting sick at an alarming rate.

The attorneys general contend that increased demand for services and treatment means that current funding levels are simply not enough for this country to keep its commitment to 9/11 heroes. Without additional funding, waitlists could grow, medical providers may be forced to cut back services, and the program could be unable to accept new enrollees, many of whom are only now receiving diagnoses for conditions directly linked to their exposure.

Attorney General Lopez and the coalition are calling on Congress to act swiftly and decisively to ensure WTCHP has the full funding it needs. The attorneys general strongly urge Congress to enact legislation that will both address the WTCHP funding

shortfall and provide the financial stability necessary for the program to serve current and future enrollees.

Joining Attorney General Lopez in sending this letter are the attorneys general of American Samoa, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, U.S. Virgin Islands, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

#

Media contacts:

Dave Day
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Office: 808-586-1284
Email: david.d.day@hawaii.gov
Web: <http://ag.hawaii.gov>

Toni Schwartz
Public Information Officer
Hawai'i Department of the Attorney General
Office: 808-586-1252
Cell: 808-379-9249
Email: Toni.E.Schwartz@hawaii.gov