

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 21, 2018

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
The White House Office of Management & Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

We write today to express our concern regarding the President's FY 2019 Budget proposal to move the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Under this proposal, the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) would be left as a freestanding entity within the CDC, removing the program from NIOSH management and supervision as intended by the bi-partisan legislation passed by Congress three years ago to reauthorize the program for 75 years. Without the institutional support provided by NIOSH management, we believe that many of the first responders who suffer from 9/11-related illnesses and disabilities will be put at unnecessary risk.

NIOSH is the leading federal agency responsible for developing and implementing recommendations for the prevention of work-related illness and injury, and supports programs to improve the health and safety of workers. NIOSH's expertise in responding to occupational health and safety concerns allowed them to develop the first monitoring and treatment program for 9/11 first responders exposed to dangerous toxins, and to oversee the first WTCHP as authorized by the original James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010. Since then, NIOSH has made tremendous progress in providing medical monitoring and treatment to the more than 83,000 9/11 first responders and survivors who face disabling injuries and illness caused by their exposure to the toxins at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the Shanksville Crash site.

The strength of the WTCHP comes from its full integration within NIOSH, and its ability to utilize the expertise of the Institute's shared staff. We are extremely concerned by the President's FY19 Budget request to separate the WTCHP from NIOSH, and do not believe that your office fully understands the important role that NIOSH Director, Dr. John Howard, who has overseen the many iterations of the WTCHP since its inception, plays in ensuring the health and well-being of the 9/11 health community. We are extremely concerned that the success of the program will be unable to continue if it is separated from NIOSH.

Separating the WTCHP from NIOSH, and moving NIOSH to NIH, is not only disruptive to the administration of the program, but will also have a direct adverse effect on the health and emotional well-being of the 9/11 community, many of whom spent countless hours working for Congress to reauthorize the program in 2015. We urge your office to immediately withdraw this proposal and ensure that those battling illness and living with disabling injuries caused by 9/11 toxin exposure do

not have to live with the added burden of fear and uncertainty that this proposal will disrupt their care.

Sincerely,



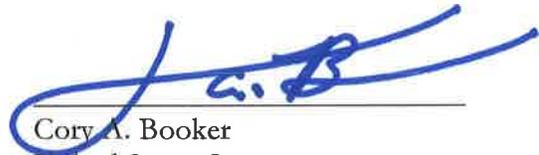
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



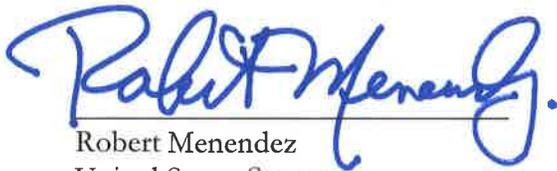
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator