



Special Report

From Congressman
Bob Menendez

13th Congressional District ❖ New Jersey

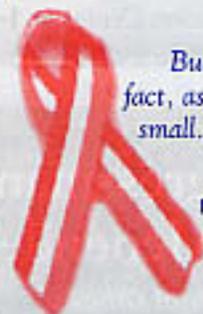
An American Tragedy

September 11, 2001

Dear Friend:

I doubt there is anyone reading this letter who has not been deeply affected by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. We have families missing loved ones; children who have lost a parent; breadwinners without their jobs; businesses in danger of going under; and many, many people having a tough time just putting the daily routines of their lives back together. We should all understand that feelings of grief, loss, anger, and sadness are normal reactions to what has happened.

But with all the tragedy we are facing, there is also hope. Our community has come together — in fact, as a life-long resident, I have never seen such community spirit expressed in so many ways, big and small.



That's why even though our community is facing some big challenges, working together — being there for each other — we will overcome them. Inside this newsletter, there is contact and assistance information for those in need of help. Please also don't hesitate to call my office if you have other concerns.

I have just been appointed to Chair the Democratic Caucus Congressional Task Force on Homeland Security, and am going to work very hard in that capacity to try to make sure we never again have a tragedy like the one we all experienced on September 11th.

In fact, since the day of the attacks, I have been working to make sure our nation has all the resources it needs to wage the war against terrorism and to assist all those who have been affected. The Congress passed \$40 billion in funding both to fight terrorism and to provide economic relief to affected families and communities. I voted for a Victim Compensation Fund, funding to increase airline and airport security, and to authorize the President to use military force to respond to the attacks, and to prevent future attacks. I am co-sponsoring legislation to provide benefits to airline and airport workers — as well as those in related industries — who lost their jobs as a result of this tragedy. And I am working on legislation to provide health care coverage to affected families.

These measures are not the end of our work; they are just a beginning. I have dedicated myself to helping all of our cities, and all of our families, fully recover from this tragedy; and to commit all the resources necessary to make sure we win this war against terrorism. As we move forward, please let my office know if there is anything we can do to help. We're in this together. We will succeed.

Sincerely,

New Jersey Receives Emergency Declaration

In the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the emergency response effort from New Jersey communities was overwhelming. Many emergency personnel — firefighters, police, and emergency medical personnel — put their lives on the line to help with rescue efforts. I know that our entire community joins me in expressing our utmost appreciation and gratitude for their efforts.

We can all be very proud of the work our local hospitals did in treat-

ing victims who were evacuated to New Jersey. Approximately 5,000 people injured in the World Trade Center attacks were triaged at centers in Liberty State Park and Hoboken. Of the 500 patients sent to hospitals in New Jersey, roughly 175 of them were sent to Jersey City Medical Center. A second triage area was set up in Hoboken where roughly 3,500 individuals from lower Manhattan were evaluated. About 195 of them were transported to Christ Hospital, St. Francis Hospital and St. Mary Hospital.

Because of the key role our emergency agencies played in responding to the devastating attacks, the State of New Jersey received an emergency declaration from the President on September 19, 2001. This declaration allows local agencies to receive reimbursement for their personnel costs involved in responding to the attacks. This assistance is very important for restoring our local resources and ensuring that local agencies remain fully prepared to protect all residents and respond to emergency needs in the community.

Individual Assistance for New Jersey Victims and Families

Unfortunately, New Jersey residents have experienced a significant share of the loss and suffering as a result of the World Trade Center attacks. For those individuals and families, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is coordinating emergency response efforts on behalf of the federal government. A range of individual assistance is available for victims of the attack and their families, including mortgage and rental assistance, medical assistance, loss of earnings and loss of support assistance, and assistance with funeral expenses. Victims or victims' families should register with FEMA as soon as possible by calling **1-800-462-9029**.

Helping Adults and Children Cope With Tragedy

As adults, we are struggling to comprehend the events of September 11th – how something like this could happen to us, and why it happened here. For children, it's even more difficult to understand, and they rely on us to restore their sense of safety and security. In response, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey is providing free counseling to New Jersey residents affected by the attacks. Those services can be obtained by calling **1-800-969-5300**. In addition, helpful information is available at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/violence.cfm> to help parents and other adults talk to children in the aftermath of the attacks.

Most individual assistance for New Jersey residents impacted by the World Trade Center attack will be provided through the New York Crime Victims Compensation Board, although the New Jersey Crime Victims Compensation Board will be assisting New Jersey residents with the application process. New Jersey residents can contact the New Jersey Crime Victims Compensation Board by calling **1-800-242-0804**. If you are not sure what your legal rights are, you can contact Disaster Legal Services at **1-866-606-0626**.

New Jersey Family Assistance Center

In addition, New Jersey has established a Family Assistance Center at Liberty State Park's Central Railroad Terminal. The Center will have representatives from state and federal agencies to provide information ranging from crisis counseling, to unemployment and insurance benefits. New Jersey's Victims and Families Hotline is **1-866-NJCRISIS**.

Unemployment Assistance

The jobs of thousands of New Jerseyans have been lost in the destruction of buildings and businesses in the disaster area. Many will be eligible for state unemployment assistance, but special disaster unemployment assistance is also available for affected workers who may not otherwise qualify for unemployment assistance. For disaster-related unemployment assistance, New Jersey residents should call **1-888-864-9920**.

Assistance For Businesses

The devastation of this attack goes well beyond the physical "ground zero" destruction. Many businesses have been negatively impacted in the outlying areas. That's why the Small Business Administration (SBA) has included four New Jersey counties in their emergency declaration. These counties include: Bergen, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union. Small businesses located in these counties that are impacted by the World Trade Center tragedy may be eligible for low-interest loans from the SBA. These loans are intended to protect businesses from economic injury that could put them at risk of going under. New Jersey businesses can contact the FEMA Registration Center at **1-800-462-9029** to apply for a SBA loan.

Congressman Bob Menendez

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This mailing was prepared, published, and mailed at taxpayer expense.