



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Craig M. Johnson

Senator Johnson on the 8th Anniversary of Sept. 11

CRAIG M. JOHNSON September 11, 2009



I remember the disbelief that I felt in the moments after I first heard about the attacks on September 11, 2001. That was quickly followed by a sense of dread that overtook me as I tried to reach my wife, Liz, who was in Manhattan that day. Amid the chaos, which was exacerbated by the lack of cell phone service for several hours after the towers fell, we also saw the very best in each of us.

Volunteer firefighters, public safety officers, and EMTs, a great many of which were from our own neighborhoods, dropped everything and ran to Ground Zero in order to help with the rescue, recovery, and clean-up operations.

The selflessness displayed by our first responders, and the deaths of 480 Long Islanders that day should never be forgotten.

Memories of September 11th came flooding back after Scottish authorities recently released the only terrorist convicted of the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. That attack, which took the lives of 270 people, 10 of them

Long Islanders, was the deadliest terrorist attack on American citizens until the events of September 11th. I, along with every American, was incensed by the release of this convicted mass murderer and the subsequent “hero's welcome” he received when returning to his native Libya. I was even more disgusted by information that suggests the release was somehow tied to economic interests between The United Kingdom and Libya. As a direct response to this repugnant situation, I made a formal request to Comptroller DiNapoli to divest the state pension funds from U.K.-based companies that conduct business with the Libyan government. Additionally, I sponsor legislation (S.5538) that prohibits the state from contracting with companies that also do business with nations that sponsor terrorist activities. It is critically important that none of these nations directly, or indirectly, receive financial support from us, that they will in-turn use to attack us. The memories of September 11th have made that fact crystal clear.