



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## SENATE PASSES BILL TO CONTINUE HELPING GROUND ZERO WORKERS SUFFERING FROM SEPTEMBER 11th RELATED HEALTH ISSUES

MARTIN J. GOLDEN May 13, 2015

The New York State Senate today passed a bill to continue the September 11th Worker Protection Task Force Act for another five years and help those who have been afflicted with a disability as a result of working at the World Trade Center and other sites. The bill (S4711), sponsored by Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn), would enable the Task Force to continue its work past the current authorization date of June 10, 2015.

Senator Golden, a former New York City Police Officer, stated, "Extending the opportunity for our state to care for those who responded in the wake of the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, has been approved by the New York State Senate. The Task Force has played a critical role, having helped many of those who were exposed to hazards at Ground Zero, and we must keep it operating to make sure that we assist all those appropriately in need."

Many public employees, including police, fire, correction, sanitation and civilians provided rescue, recovery and cleanup at the former World Trade Center site and other designated locations. Early statistics indicate that these workers were exposed to numerous hazards which may have, and may continue to impact their health in the years to come.

If any public employee was exposed to these hazards and can no longer perform their jobs, even after retirement, this legislation would allow for an additional five years for the employee to apply for an accidental disability retirement. The application would be subject to the respective Retirement System review process by proving, by competent evidence, that the illness or injury was caused in connection with exposure to any elements at the World Trade Center site.

In continuing the Task Force for another five years, this bill would also continue the Task Force's successful work in identifying additional issues that have arisen from the rescue, recovery, and cleanup of the former World Trade Center site.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.