



The millions of Americans on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19—doctors, nurses, first responders, grocery store workers, police officers, EMTs, and so many more—are putting themselves in harm’s way to keep the rest of us healthy and safe. They deserve more than just our gratitude; they deserve to know that they’ll be provided for should they contract COVID. That’s why I joined Rep. Maloney, Rep. King, and Sen. Duckworth in introducing the Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act, which provides funds for essential workers who get sick with or die from COVID-19. It’s the right thing to do.

Watch our press conference introducing the bill [here](#) and read my press release below.

Reps. Nadler, Maloney, King and Sen. Duckworth Unveil Legislation to Create Compensation Fund for Essential Workers

NEW YORK, N.Y. – Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), Congressman Peter King (R-NY), and Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today announced the introduction of the bipartisan Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act.

Modeled after the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF), this new fund would provide compensation for injuries to any individual, or their families, who are deemed an essential worker and required to leave their home to perform services and who have become ill or died as a result of COVID-19.

The Members joined today in a virtual event with the Uniformed Fire Officers Association (UFOA), Uniformed Firefighters Association (UFA), National Rural Letter Carriers Association (NRLCA), and SMART, the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers; to discuss the legislation and its importance to essential workers in all industries.

“Right now, workers all over this country are putting their lives on the line to help their sick neighbors, keep people fed, and keep our essential services running. Just as they are here for us, we need to be there for them if they get sick,” **said Congressman Nadler.** “I’m proud to join my friends, Reps. Maloney and King and Senator

Duckworth to support those brave Americans who are risking it all for us by creating the Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act. We are using the lessons we learned through our decades working on the VCF to create this new fund and ensure that we get resources and support out to those essential workers as quickly as possible to support their families in their moment of need.”

“On September 11th, it was the firefighters and officers who ran into the burning buildings to save lives. Today, it is hospital workers – nurses, doctors, EMS, janitorial staff, pharmacists, technicians and all essential workers. We owe them more than applause at 7pm,” **said Congresswoman Maloney.** “In this fight against the Coronavirus, it is the first responders, retail workers, transit workers, grocery store clerks, delivery workers, janitorial staff, sanitation workers, mail carriers, hospitality workers, and federal, state and local employees who are on the frontlines, walking in to the fire every day as they risk their health to make sure we are safe, fed, and healthy.”

“America will be forever indebted to the first responders and essential workers who put their lives on the line throughout this pandemic,” **said Congressman King.** “It is morally essential that Congress pass the Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act for these heroes and their families.”

“Our nation’s dedicated health care workers, first responders, letter carriers and legions of other vital essential workers are serving on the front lines to care for patients battling COVID-19 infections and keep our country running during a deadly pandemic that has already killed more than 80,000 Americans,” **said Senator Duckworth.** “While we have to do much more to protect these men and women as they take on greater risks during this pandemic, we also need to recognize the sad reality that our nation has a responsibility to take care for the loved ones of those essential workers who perish as a result of their decision to go back to work to help others.”

“The men and women on the front lines are putting themselves and their families lives at risk for the safety of others. While these essential employees put themselves in harm’s way, it is only right that they are supported the way we all were after September 11, 2001. Once again, this is not a New York issue – it’s a global pandemic which has placed our lives in the crosshairs. We stand with our Members of Congress and fellow Labor leaders to get the front line workers what they have earned in this battle against COVID-19,” **said Jake Lemonda, President, FDNY-Uniformed Fire Officers Association.**

“Another national crisis has been brought upon New York and it has been our first responders who have born the weight of this battle once more. Thousands of firefighters have been stricken with the virus and thousands more when you include our fellow essential workers. We are behind our New York Delegation as they push

for fair and just compensation for those develop chronic illness or pass as a result of the coronavirus pandemic,” said **Gerard Fitzgerald, President, FDNY-Uniformed Firefighters Association.**

“On behalf of the LIRR/MTA employees, we want to thank Congresswoman Maloney, Congressman King, Congressman Nadler and Senator Duckworth for their leadership. Our members are heroes moving heroes and we walk into harm’s way everyday. We take pride in our jobs and our country. The Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act shows that our NY delegation is not only about the words, it is about action,” said **Anthony Simon, General Chairman/ Alt International VP, SMART Transportation Division.** “All of these first responders and essential workers and their families deserve to be taken care of. Thank you on behalf of SMART Transportation Division and all essential workers.”

“The NRLCA is pleased to support this bill to compensate essential workers harmed in the line of duty. Rural letter carriers, as well as other postal employees, are part of the backbone of America and provide an essential service to Americans at every address, something that is even more crucial now that so many people must stay home,” said **Ronnie Stutts, President, National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association (NRLCA).** “USPS employees perform their duties day in and day out and risk the health of themselves and their families to keep America running. The USPS delivers over 1 billion packages of medication each year and a large percentage of these medications go to our veterans in rural America. Each and every time the country has faced a crisis such as Anthrax, SARS, 9/11, and now the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Postal Service has come to the call. To date, 949 postal employees have tested positive for COVID-19 and 59 have died from this virus. We applaud Chairwoman Maloney, Representatives Nadler and King, and Senator Duckworth for recognizing the sacrifice that rural letter carriers and every other essential worker have been making every day so that we can continue to be united as a nation and battle this pandemic together. We urge all lawmakers to support and quickly pass this important piece of legislation.”

“We applaud Congresswoman Maloney for recognizing the sacrifices hotel workers have made throughout this crisis, and we are grateful to her for seeking to remedy some of the hardship they and their families have suffered,” said **Peter Ward, President of the New York Hotel Trades Council.** “Our union has lost over 50 members to this virus, thousands more have been infected, and sadly, we expect these numbers to rise. Establishing the compensation fund proposed in Congresswoman Maloney’s bill is, quite simply, the right thing to do. Our union strongly supports the Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act.”

“Congresswoman Maloney has dedicated her entire career to fighting for New Yorkers. I want to thank her for introducing the Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act so that our essential workers have the assurance that their government will support

them and their families,” said **NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Our essential workers are putting their lives on the line to help their fellow New Yorkers, this is the least we can do to show them our gratitude,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio.

In addition to those listed above, the legislation has also been endorsed by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and DC37.

Background:

Pandemic Heroes Compensation Act

- The legislation would:
 - establish a compensation fund for all essential workers, personnel, and their families, across all industries, that were required to leave their homes to perform their services and became ill or died as a result of COVID-19;
 - support essential workers affected by COVID-19 across the country in their recovery by providing critical financial assistance to help with medical costs, loss of employment, loss of business, replacement services, and burial costs;
 - authorize appropriated funds as needed for 5 years with the fund permanently closing one fiscal year after the Special Master determines that no additional claims can be filed;
 - create a new website and office developed and administered by a Special Master to assist in the application process;
 - maximize compensation for essential workers and their families by simplifying the application process to get those affected back on their feet.
- Family members who share homes with essential workers and became sick through contact with the essential worker would also be eligible to file a claim.
- The compensation application would allow claimants to provide information regarding the extent of their loss for consideration. Eligible individuals would receive compensation no later than 20 days after approval.

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Jerrod Nadler has served in Congress since 1992. He represents New York's 10th Congressional District, which includes parts of Manhattan and Brooklyn.