



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

APR - 5 2007

Assistant Secretary for Health  
Office of Public Health and Science  
Washington D.C. 20201

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Maloney:

Thank you for your March 6, 2007 letter regarding my testimony in the hearing on "9/11 Health Effects: Federal Monitoring and Treatment of Residents and Responders" before the House Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee on Government Management. I have sent similar responses to those who co-signed your letter.

Immediately, following the tragic events of Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 the US Department of Health and Human Services sent teams to help provide care to affected individuals. The initial deployment of HHS personnel and medical supplies was followed over the next two years by the provision of more than \$513 million to help pay for medical care. Since then, HHS has provided more than \$40 million for mental health services, over \$105 million for medical monitoring and over \$50 million to treat responders. The Administration's support has been consistent and comprehensive and Congress has been generous in providing resources.

On September 11, 2006, Secretary Leavitt asked Dr John Howard and me to co-chair a HHS Task Force to conduct a review of the evolving science and ongoing medical and mental health needs in order to better advise him. This internal advisory group comprised entirely of senior and expert HHS staff conducted its review over the course of the last 5 months. The Task Force briefed the Secretary on April 3, 2007.

Although this Task Force was asked to focus specifically on the needs of the affected responder community the Department continues to monitor evolving science and data related to other potentially exposed populations.

The Administration looks forward to working with Congress to provide compassionate and appropriate support to responders affected by World Trade Center exposures following the attacks. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John O. Agwunobi", written over a horizontal line.

John O. Agwunobi  
Assistant Secretary for Health