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July 17, 2006

The Honorable George Pataki
Governor
The Executive Chamber, Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

I write on behalf of Joseph Picurro of Toms River, New Jersey. Mr. Picurro, an ironworker by trade, assisted rescue and recovery efforts at the former World Trade Center site and is now sick as a result. Last week, Mr. Picurro received word that after a nearly two-year deliberation, the State of New York finally approved his claim for workers' compensation. This was most welcome news, since Mr. Picurro has been living on food stamps for some time and, he tells me, was literally "down to his last nickel."

I was therefore extremely dismayed to learn that on Friday the State summoned Mr. Picurro to a hearing in August to evaluate the period and extent of his disability, his lost work time due to injury and his average weekly wages. I understand that Mr. Picurro has provided the State with extensive documentation of the above and that the State Workers' Compensation Board has already held four hearings on Mr. Picurro's claim.

Mr. Picurro needs to feed and clothe his child, not attend another hearing. I find it absolutely unconscionable that the State of New York has allowed Mr. Picurro and so many other "heroes of 9/11" to remain without compensation for their injuries and access to proper medical care. I urge you in the strongest possible terms to personally intercede in this matter and ensure that our state will help alleviate, rather than add to, Mr. Picurro's suffering.

Sincerely,

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

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