

*9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC Victims*

February 2, 2012

Dear Senator Coburn,

Re: **\*Senate Bill: S.1537: National September 11 Memorial and Museum Act of 2011.\***

Recently, bills were introduced into the US Senate and House to provide an *annual* \$20 million payout to the foundation representing the National September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial and Museum. The bill currently allows for the Department of the Interior (National Park Service) to accept a “gift” of the property of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in return for the \$20m annual stipend, which would continue for an unlimited period of time into future decades. In addition, the existing foundation (*with its' incredibly highly paid staff*) would continue to run the Memorial and Museum, with no strings attached, regarding fiscal responsibility.

**Many 9/11 families are opposed to the current version of this plan** – they do not feel the federal government should pay for an enormously expensive memorial and museum in which the federal government – as well as the families of the victims - had virtually no role in the nearly \$1 billion design and planning. Taking ownership of the memorial & museum and annually funding a large portion of its operating costs – with no strings attached - will be a permanent albatross around the neck of the American taxpayer *unless the highly respected and experienced stewardship of the National Parks Service is mandated.*

We oppose any bailout without fiscal responsibility. Therefore, we ask you **consider amending this Bill so that the National Park Service can assume complete stewardship & operation of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum – as they do for the outstanding Pearl Harbor Memorial and numerous other National Memorials across this country.**

**If this is indeed intended to be a “National Memorial” which deserves federal funding, then it is essential that it be given the honor, respect, patriotism and time-honored stewardship of the National Park Service.** If you would be so kind as to contact me on behalf of our organization, *9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC Victims* at your earliest possible convenience, it would be greatly appreciated. Again, thank you for your service and devotion to this country.

Sincerely,

Rita and Jim Riches, FDNY (ret.)  
*Chairman, 9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters  
and WTC Victims*  
Parents of FF Jimmy Riches, E4  
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*Vice Chair, 9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters  
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Parents of FF Christian M.O. Regenhard, L 131

Rosaleen Tallon, Ed. D.  
Family Liaison,  
*Advocates for a 9/11 Fallen Heroes Memorial*  
Sister of FF Sean Tallon, Ladder 10

Jim McCaffrey LT/FDNY  
Co-chair, *Advocates for a 9/11 Fallen Heroes Memorial*  
Bother-in-law of FDNY Battalion Chief Orio Palmer,  
Batt 7

Rosemary Cain  
*9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC  
Victims*  
Mother of George Cain, L-7

Maureen and Al Santora (DC/FDNY-ret)  
*9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC  
Victims*  
Parents of Christopher Santora, E-54

Joyce and Russell Mercer and Christine Mercer  
*9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC  
Victims*  
Parents and Sister of Scott Kopytko, L-15