

July 21, 2015



**Michael McAuliff** [Become a fan](#)  
[mike.mcauliff@huffingtonpost.com](mailto:mike.mcauliff@huffingtonpost.com)

## 9/11 Responders To Be Warned They Will Be Screened By FBI's Terrorism Watch List (EXCLUSIVE)

Posted: 04/21/2011 4:24 pm EDT | Updated: 06/21/2011 5:12 am EDT

WASHINGTON -- A provision in the new 9/11 health bill may be adding insult to injury for people who fell sick after their service in the aftermath of the 2001 Al Qaeda attacks, The Huffington Post has learned.

The tens of thousands of cops, firefighters, construction workers and others who survived the worst terrorist assault in U.S. history and risked their lives in its wake will soon be informed that their names must be run through the FBI's terrorism watch list, according to a letter obtained by HuffPost.

Any of the responders who are not compared to the database of suspected terrorists would be barred from getting treatment for the numerous, worsening ailments that the James Zadroga 9/11 Health And Compensation Law was passed to address.

It's a requirement that was tacked onto the law during the bitter debates over it last year.

The letter from Dr. John Howard, director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, informs medical providers and administrators that they should begin letting patients know before the new program kicks in this July.

"This is absurd," said Glen Kline, a former NYPD emergency services officer. "It's silly. It's stupid. It's asinine."

"It's comical at best, and I think it's an insult to everyone who worked on The Pile and is sick and suffering from 9/11," said John Feal, a former construction worker who lost half a foot at Ground Zero and runs the advocacy group Fealgood Foundation.

The provision was added in [an amendment by Rep. Cliff Stearns](#) (R-Fla.) during the heated debate over the bill in the House Energy and Commerce Committee last May.

Sept. 11 responders in the committee room at the time mostly [shook their heads at the move](#), which Democrats accepted on a voice vote after battling to bar other amendments on abortion and immigration that might have killed the bill.

But suddenly the point is no longer just a strategic concession to get a law passed.

As doctors and administrators begin acting on the federal instructions, participants in the 9/11 treatment and monitoring programs will soon be told that their names, places of birth, addresses, government ID numbers and other personal data will be provided to the FBI to ensure they are not terrorists.

Howard's instructions include a sample letter to responders designed to minimize alarm.

"Although neither we nor [the Centers for Disease Control]/NIOSH anticipate the name of any individual in the current Programs will be on the list, CDC/NIOSH is expressly required by law to implement this particular requirement of the Act," it says.

"Thank you for your understanding. We look forward to working with you and ensuring that you continue to receive uninterrupted services under the new WTC Health Program," it concludes.

Feal, who counts hundreds of first responders in his foundation's membership, predicted the letters would not go over well.

"When cops and firefighters get this at home, they're going to hit the roof," he said.

Kline, who sits on the Fealgood Foundation's board, said he personally wasn't offended, but couldn't think of a good reason for cops and firefighters to be screened by the FBI in order to keep getting treatment.

"I mean, who are we even talking about -- the undocumented workers who cleaned the office buildings?" wondered Kline Thursday. "We know who all the cops, firefighters and construction workers were. They're all documented.

"Is the idea that a terrorist stayed to help clean up? And then stayed all these years to try and get benefits?" he asked. "In all the things I've seen out of Washington, this probably takes the cake."

Some are more understanding.

"Do we want terrorists getting money? No," said Anthony Flammia, a former NYPD Highway Patrol officer and Sept. 11 responder. "How do you know if there were any terrorists there? Were they there as observers, watching? Probably."

9/11 Responders To Be Warned They Will Be Screened By FBI's - http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/21/911-responders-scre...  
But he noted that his perspective likely would not be shared, especially if people whose names are similar to actual terror suspects get flagged, as happens with air travelers.

"I've got nothing to hide, so it's no big deal for me, but there's got to be safeguards in place to protect the people who are innocent," Flammia said. "It's going to be controversial," he added. "It's probably going to create an uproar, but I think it will dissipate. I hope they're ready to answer people's questions."

Congressman Stearns said in a statement that his intent was to answer exactly the questions raised by Flammia.

"This amendment was adopted in the full Energy and Commerce Committee without opposition and it merely requires that the names of those receiving health benefits be cross-checked with the terrorist watch list to ensure that no terrorists get these benefits," Stearns said.

"These benefits are not just for our first responders; nearly anyone who was in the vicinity or worked on a cleanup crew afterward is eligible," he noted.

The prohibition is included in two parts of the bill. One specifically covers responders, while the other deals with all survivors, including office workers, bystanders and residents.

Feal acknowledged that the terrorist screening has to be done because it is the law, and that the letters have to go out.

But he holds Stearns responsible, as well as several other Republicans who were hostile to the 9/11 bill, and tried to tack all manner of amendments onto it.

"I think Congressman Stearns is stabbing at pettiness. He's a buffoon," Feal said. "We get sicker and die, and they're going to disseminate a letter wondering whether we're terrorists or not. ... I think everybody needs to start showing a little more compassion."

**MORE: [9/11 First Responders](#) [9/11 First Responders](#) [Cliff Stearns](#) [Terrorism Sept. 11](#) [9/11 Zadroga Zadroga Bill](#) [James Zadroga Health Bill](#) [September 11th](#) [Terrorism Watch List](#)**

Huffington Post Search

[Advertise](#) | [Log In](#) | [Make HuffPost Your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Careers](#) | [FAQ](#)

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [About Our Ads](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©2015 TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | "The Huffington Post" is a registered trademark of TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. All rights reserved.

Part of **HPMG News**