

## Maloney Seeks Meeting With Bush On 1st Responder Health Problems

BY JOHN TOSCANO

Congressmember Carolyn Maloney and advocates for improved healthcare service for Ground Zero 9/11 first responders called on President George W. Bush last week to meet with the Ground Zero responders and members of Congress to discuss how the federal government can better assist those who became sick cleaning up the World Trade Center site after the 9/11 attack.

Maloney also reinforced the verbal plea with a follow-up letter to the president which was also signed by United States Senators Charles Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton and Congressmembers Vito Fossella (R-C, Staten Island) and Gary Ackerman, Joseph Crowley, Anthony Weiner and Gregory Meeks, all Queens Democrats.

At the rally at Ground Zero, Maloney, Fossella and supporters called for a more comprehensive response from the federal government to the health impacts of the 9/11 terrorist attack.

Maloney declared: "The heroes of 9/11 are America at its best, but the way they've been treated is shameful. We're asking the president himself to step into the fight against this growing health crisis. Our goal is simple: health monitoring for everyone exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero and treatment for everyone who's sick. We owe it to future generations of heroes to make sure that in America we take care of those who take care of us."

Among those appearing with Maloney (D-Queens/Manhattan) were hundreds of Ground Zero rescue and recovery workers



**The heroes of 9/11 are America at its best, but the way they've been treated is shameful. We're asking the president himself to step into the fight against this growing health crisis.**

organized by the New York State AFL-CIO, the New York City Central Labor Council, the Unsung Heroes Helping Heroes Foundation and the Sierra Club.

Maloney noted that thousands of first responders, government employees and Lower Manhattan residents and workers are suffering from illnesses related to their exposure to a variety of toxins at or near the World Trade Center site. Many of these individuals lack health insurance, have not had access to proper health monitoring and treatment and have had significant difficulty obtaining Workers' Compensation benefits.

Maloney said the recent appointment of Dr. John Howard, director of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, as the federal coordinator

of 9/11 health issues is a promising step forward, "but much more work remains".

The lawmaker pointed out that she and the others "believe that we are in the middle of a gathering health crisis as doctors report that each month "more and more Ground Zero responders are seeking treatment for the first time and that the illnesses of responders already in treatment are proving to be unexpectedly severe and persistent.

"Most ominously," Maloney said, "at least three but perhaps dozens more 9/11 responders have died as a direct result of illnesses that in all likelihood were sustained at Ground Zero."

She closed by asking for a meeting with the president to discuss the serious problem.

## City May Subsidize Day Labor Centers

Day laborers many of them immigrants, gathering on street corners in business districts seeking day jobs have aroused antipathy in some quarters. The street corner meeting places, however, may be replaced by subsidized job centers under a plan before a New York City panel.

Guillermo Linares, the mayor's commissioner of immigrant affairs is the panel chairman. The panel's goal is to look into both the job centers and subsidizing them.

Linares, whose panel just completed its first hearing on the question, stated, "As the demand for day laborers continues in New York City, we must address the issues that arise, including day laborers' need for safe and

healthy work conditions.

"To address these issues, other jurisdictions have created day-labor job centers with public and private support. For the past 10 years, cities throughout our nation have found these centers to be viable long-term solutions."

The centers would bring some control and regulation to what is now an unorganized gathering of job seekers. Some laborers, for example, now gather in front of a paint store where paint contractors or those in private business come to pick up paint and supplies. The workers, knowing this, come there too to meet the employers.

The gatherings, whether unregulated or happening in a government subsidized center,

have drawn opposition on grounds that they foster more illegal operation.

The centers generally co-ordinate job assignments, help to inform workers of their rights and advise them how to file complaints and lawsuits if there is a need.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg wants the federal government to set up a database to verify the immigration status of job applicants. This would also be the basis for dealing with businesses who fail to check the database, leaving them open to fines and other penalties. He has also called for giving some 11 million illegal immigrants permanent status.

—John Toscano

## Ronald McDonald House Awards \$20,000 To Queens Child Guidance Center

Ronald McDonald House Charities of the New York Tri-State Area (RMHC-NYTSA) recently awarded \$20,000 to the Queens Child Guidance Center for the center's efforts to provide services to children from low-income families. Ronald McDonald House Charities grants are awarded throughout the year to organizations that benefit and improve the wellness of children. This year, RMHC-NYTSA has awarded 51 grants totaling almost \$650,000.

The Queens Child Guidance Center provides treatment as well as social and educational services to children with severe emotional disturbances who live at home. Funding from RMHC-NYTSA will be used by the Queens Child Guidance Center to develop a new program that provides social and cultural opportunities to more than 250 children with severe emotional disturbances.

"We are so excited about all of the worthwhile programs that we are able to fund this year," Gerald McCoy, RMHC president of the New York Tri-State Area, said. "It's wonderful to partner with not-for-profit organizations working to better the community and to support programs that benefit children. Through RMHC, McDonald's is able to fulfill its commitment to lending a helping hand to aid and strengthen the communities that our restaurants serve."

Organizations are welcome to submit proposals to receive grants from RMHC-NYTSA. The next deadline for grants to be submitted is August 1, 2006. Applications can be sent to 105 Eisenhower Pkwy., 3rd Floor, Roseland, New Jersey 07068. For more information on how to apply for a local RMHC grant, call 973-403-0390 or visit [www.rmhcnyj.org](http://www.rmhcnyj.org).

Ronald McDonald House Charities of the New York Tri-State Area (RMHC-NYTSA) is working to better the lives of children and their families in local communities by creating and supporting programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children in the areas of health, education, the arts, and civic and social services. Since 1992, RMHC-NYTSA has provided more than \$5 million to local non-profit organizations whose programs improve the well-being of children and their families. For more information on the Ronald McDonald House Charities, visit [www.rmhcnyj.org](http://www.rmhcnyj.org).

## Douglaston Manor Celebrates 100th



State Senator Frank Padavan joined members of the Anniversary Committee of the Douglaston Manor Association on Saturday, June 10 at the association's anniversary celebration. Douglaston Manor, development of which began in 1906, was among the first suburban communities to be built within easy commuting distance of Manhattan. Senator Padavan, at right, presents Douglaston Manor Association President Bernie Haber with a Legislative Resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of Douglaston Manor as Association member DeRose looks on.