

Heroes as Propaganda

An Expose of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010

Rep. Anthony Wiener's outburst against his republican colleagues on Thursday (July 29, 2010) has been all over the news this weekend. He accuses republicans of denying health care to those brave men and women who responded to the attack on the World Trade Center, but is that really what happened? Are we really supposed to believe that the republicans are ungrateful for the sacrifices made by those great heroes? What exactly was in this bill that the republicans voted so strongly against? These are the questions that flooded my mind as I listened to Rep. Weiner's outrage, and I would like to have just a few moments of your time to share with you the answers that I was able to find.

The bill which incited these strong feelings was H.R. 847, also known as the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010. You can read and download the [text of this bill](#) at the THOMAS legislative information system of the Library of Congress. It is relatively short bill of 248 pages and fairly easy to understand. As I read through this bill, I searched for the answers to three simple questions: Who is covered by the terms of this bill? What limitations are provided on this coverage? And what services are provided by this bill? Here are the answers to those questions:

1. Who is covered (pg 69-70 of HR 847)?
 - a. Anyone who responded to the 9/11 attack.
 - b. Anyone who was in the New York City disaster area on Sept. 11, 2001.
 - i. The disaster area is defined by [Department of Labor notice 2001-61](#) as including all five counties of New York City.
 - ii. This means that every time this bill mentions the New York City disaster area it is actually referring to the entire city of New York.
 - c. Anyone who worked, lived or attended school or daycare in New York City for a total of 4 days between Sept. 11, 2001 and Jan. 10, 2002 or for a total of 30 days between Sept. 11, 2001 and July 31, 2002.
 - d. Anyone who did any cleaning or performed any maintenance in New York City between Sept. 11, 2001 and Jan. 10, 2002.
 - e. Anyone who resided in New York City on any given day between Sept. 11, 2001 and May 31, 2003 who was eligible to receive a grant from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation Residential Grant Program regardless of whether or not that grant was applied for.
 - f. Anyone who worked for a company that was eligible for any form of government incentive program, including tax breaks, in New York City between Sept. 11, 2001 and May 31, 2003 regardless of whether or not that incentive was ever sought.

In essence, this bill would have provided coverage to New York City's entire population of over 8 million people (that's more people than the populations of Alabama and Mississippi combined) as well as anyone who travelled to the city for business within nearly two years of the 9/11 attack. This would include the entire cast and crew of more than 20 movies that were filmed in New York City during that time. Obviously, there is a lot more in this bill than just health care for the 9/11 responders.

2. What limitations are placed on this bill (pg 71 of HR 847)?

- a. On page 74, there is a superficial limitation of 25,000 recipients other than 9/11 responders. However:
- b. All applicants are considered approved unless the Administrator expressly determines otherwise within 60 days of the application.
- c. Any individual denied coverage can appeal that decision.
- d. The appellate process and the criteria for granting appeals are to be determined by the Administrator.

Although there is a limitation placed on the number of people that would be covered under this bill, that limitation can only be enforced by the Administrator of this new bureaucracy. In other words, unless the administrator himself personally reviews your application and determines that you are not qualified, then you would be able to receive coverage under this bill.

3. What services are provided (pg 20-28 and 78-79 of HR 847)?
 - a. A nationwide network of Clinical Centers of Excellence to provide “integrated, centralized health care” which is freely accessible to all those enrolled in the program.
 - b. A national network of data centers to provide research and analysis for the Clinical Centers of Excellence.
 - c. Reimbursement of all infrastructure costs accrued by the Clinical Centers of Excellence in providing treatment to those enrolled in the program.
 - d. Free healthcare for those enrolled in the program who may be suffering from any one of 12 common pulmonary or gastrointestinal disorders.
 - e. Free healthcare for those who may be suffering from any one of 9 common mental health syndromes (including the dubious “Adjustment Disorder”).
 - f. Free health care for those who may be suffering from substance abuse.
 - g. Free healthcare for those who may be suffering from cancer.
 - h. Free healthcare for those who may be suffering from any other condition which may be added to the list at some later date.

In other words, this bill would have created a single payer national health care system.

So, after reading the bill itself, I’ve discovered that this was no mere request for congressional aid. This bill was a glaringly, almost insultingly, obvious attempt to force Americans into a single payer health care system. No republican with half a brain would ever have voted in favor of this bill, so why was Rep. Weiner so riled up by its failure? The only answer that I can think of is that this entire situation was manufactured by the democrats to provide them with a phony talking point during the November elections.

Let’s keep them from succeeding. Whenever we hear this bill mentioned in the upcoming elections, let’s take the opportunity to inform those around us of the truth of the situation. Let’s take the facts about this bill and make them so well known that this talking point will be turned into a political death knoll for any democrat who dares to use it.