

**Press Release
September 26, 2006**

**EPA AND BACK-DOOR POLITICS JEOPARDIZE PUBLIC HEALTH AND IGNORE HUMAN
REMAINS AT THE WTC SITE**

Once more, expediency has become more important than insuring the safety of the public near the WTC site. We are extremely dismayed to learn that decisions concerning the impending demolition of 130 Liberty Street (Deutsche Bank Building) were handled "behind closed doors" and without input from local EPA representatives or the residents whose health issues are legitimate. Additionally, there was no consideration given to the continued discovery of human remains at 130 Liberty Street or at any of the other surrounding contaminated buildings adjacent to Ground Zero.

According to reports, Governor Pataki's concern was, "about the need for the project to move forward quickly," and to get rid of, "a blight on downtown." We can only echo Dave Newman of the New York Commission on Occupational Safety and Health as he remarked, "These kind of back-room meetings out of the public eye are not reassuring."

The Medical Examiner's office sent the 9/11 families the following statement: "We are currently working with DASNY to set up protocols to coordinate our involvement in the decontamination/deconstruction of Fiterman Hall. We will keep you advised."

Our Family Groups have asked to sit in on meetings to monitor the proper treatment of the human remains, which still remain at WTC perimeter five years after the deaths on September 11, 2001. Our request has not been answered. We can only surmise that the same back-room tactics used to get the OK for the demolition at 130 Liberty Street will be used as precedent for Fiterman Hall and all the other contaminated buildings. We reiterate our right to be part of the ongoing process which deals with the reclamation of human remains at and near the WTC site, and we once again request that an expert liaison, chosen by the families, be permitted to remain on site during this painful process. We expect something more from the City of New York than the deadly silence we have consistently received regarding the entire human remains issue at the WTC site.

And so, to the health concerns of workers and residents and to the concerns about the proper treatment of human remains, the response seems to be, perennially, "no comment." The EPA should remember what happened to the health of so many first responders, volunteers and downtown residents the last time expediency was put ahead of health concerns, and the last time a dollar amount was put ahead of human decency.

We insist that the EPA reconsider its over-ride of local concerns and protect the population as it is mandated to do. We insist that our elected officials and those running for City and State public office intervene in this matter immediately. This is further evidence of the need for a Congressional Hearing into such issues as toxic air, public health and the retrieval of human remains in the areas surrounding the World Trade Center site.

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