

9.11 Dust Victim's Sister Leona Hull to Pitch for Health Bill

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Joe Kemp

It's been two months since the city medical examiner ruled Leon Heyward died as a result of toxins he breathed in at Ground Zero.

Now Leona Hull, Heyward's sister, hopes his story will help others who are sick as a result of 9/11.

After reading about Heyward in the Daily News, Rep. Carolyn Maloney asked Hull to go to Washington for tomorrow's committee hearing on the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

The bill, if passed, will offer medical help and compensation for everyone affected by the attacks on the World Trade Center.

"It's not just about my brother anymore," Hull said. "I'm hoping this can open up doors for other people whose loved ones are sick due to Sept. 11."

Heyward, a father of two, was across the street when the towers went down on 9/11.

He had just clocked in for his shift as an inspector for the Consumer Affairs Department. After he saw the second plane hit, Heyward was told by his supervisor to stay where he was. When the buildings collapsed, he was covered in dust.

He went on to help evacuate handicapped co-workers from his nearby office.

"The final years of Leon's life were one long struggle to get proper care - and just to get by. It was a blessing that Leon had help from his sister, but he should have had much more help from his government," said Maloney (D-Manhattan, Queens).

After years of suffering seizures and delusions, Heyward, 45, died in October. In January, the city medical examiner blamed his death on the 9/11 dust.

"I'm praying in my heart that they will pass this," Hull said. "It's the right thing to do."