



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## SENATOR GOLDEN STATEMENT ON PASSING OF 9/11 ANIMAL RESCUER DIANE DIGIACOMO

MARTIN J. GOLDEN November 20, 2015

Brooklyn – State Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn), a former New York City Police Officer and member of the New York State Senate Veterans, Homeland Security, and Military Affairs Committee, has issued the following statement on the passing of Diane DiGiacomo, an ASPCA animal rescuer due to cancer related illness caused by her service in and around Ground Zero, in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001:

“This afternoon, New York City learned of the passing of another hero who stood tall in the face of terrorism, when evil struck our City and the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11, 2001. Diane was one a few who were tasked with saving pets who were left behind by their owners, and her service made her ill.

It was just a few days ago that Diane reiterated her call for Congress to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. Diane, who was covered under the Zadroga Act, knew that failure to extend this legislation would jeopardize so many of the ailing first-responders and their families.

I stood with Joseph Zadroga, September 11th rescuers, Congressmen Peter King and Dan

Donovan, Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis and many of our union leaders, in calling for a permanent re-authorization of this bill last week. We continue to hear of those falling ill due to their exposure to the air and environment at Ground Zero in the days, weeks and months following the terrorist attacks. There are many who are facing deteriorating health, fourteen years later, because they were not afraid to put their own life in jeopardy for the sake of all.

Now with the passing of Diane DiGiacomo, the first animal responder to die from 9/11 health related illness, I again urge my colleagues in government, both the United States House of Representatives and Senate, to care for those who answered the call. We cannot abandon them now and we never should. My heartfelt and deepest sympathies to the DiGiacomo family, and to Diane's friends and colleagues. May she rest in peace."