



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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***Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition Salutes
The Response of Municipal Workers to the First Ebola Case in New York City***

It was only a matter of time before New York City, a gateway City for international travelers, would experience a case of Ebola. When Dr. Craig Spencer had to be transported to Bellevue Hospital because of Ebola symptoms, it was a New York City EMT crew that swiftly swung into action and, employing the training that they had received, safely transported Dr. Spencer to the hospital. Once at the hospital, Dr. Spencer was entrusted to the care of the staff of one of the finest public hospitals in the United States. There he remains under treatment as the municipal employees of Bellevue Hospital provide for his care and contain any potential risk of infection. The case of Dr. Spencer is a reminder to all New Yorkers, and citizens across our nation, of the dedication of our municipal workers and what they are able to accomplish when given the professional training they deserve.

At this time when it remains fashionable to denigrate public-sector employees and praise the private sector, all of us need to remember how much we depend on public-sector employees to respond to medical and other emergencies, provide health care for all who need it, provide environmental services, and sustain the work of public agencies that make possible the efficient functioning of our government at every level. Every day we depend on public-sector employees to do the work that makes it possible for our society to function. The private sector could not do what it does were it not for the dedicated men and women of the public-sector work force.

The Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition offers our thanks to the dedicated municipal workers who have handled the first case of Ebola with such skill and care. We ask all of our fellow New Yorkers to acknowledge the work done by municipal-sector employees and to support them as they seek the training, wages and benefits that will allow them to continue to provide the services upon which all of us depend.

The Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition also urges our public officials to speak out more strongly against all forms of discrimination and harassment directed toward those who are responding to the Ebola crisis and to persons from West African nations. We are hearing too many disturbing reports of harassment in schools, boycotts of businesses, community opprobrium directed against health care workers responding to the Ebola case, and general hostility directed toward members of the West African community. Government leaders should join with community and faith leaders to speak out with one voice against all such forms of harassment and discrimination. Government, faith and community leaders should work together to better educate the public about the realities of Ebola and the limited means of its transmission. Together government, community and faith leaders should help dispel fear and build public trust.

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