

Washington, D.C. - On Sunday, Rep. David Price (D-NC), the ranking democrat on the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, gave brief remarks at a memorial observance marking the 10th Anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001. The observance was hosted by the Chapel Hill Fire Department, the Chapel Hill Police Department and the Chapel Hill Firefighters Association. The text of Rep. Price's remarks is below.

Remarks by Congressman David Price

10th Anniversary of September 11, 2001

Chapel Hill Fire Department's Public Safety Education Center

Meadowmont Village, Chapel Hill, NC

On behalf of our entire community, thanks to the Chapel Hill Fire and Police Departments and the Chapel Hill Firefighters Association for organizing this service to remember those who perished ten years ago in New York, Washington, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

It is fitting that this observance be in a fire station setting with first responders in lead roles, for 9/11 will forever live in memory as an occasion when 343 firefighters, 60 police officers, and 8 emergency medical technicians lost their lives. As an occasion when firefighters and police officers, first on the scene, rushed into burning buildings to save lives. And they did save lives—but hundreds were lost in the inferno, both responders and those they were trying to save. So we honor those first responders, who modeled selfless service for their colleagues and whose sacrifice reminds the broader community of the debt we owe to those who are on the front lines of our community's and our country's defense every day.

In the aftermath of 9/11 the Department of Homeland Security was formed and I assumed an unanticipated role as chairman—and now ranking minority member—of the Appropriations Subcommittee writing the Department's budget. One of the pleasures of that role has been a

close working relationship with first responders in this and other North Carolina communities, with the organizations representing them, and with state and federal organizers of our response capacity—visible even as we speak, hard at work up and down the eastern seaboard in the wake of Hurricane Irene and last week's severe storms. 9/11 is a special day for our first responders, and it should also be a day when the wider community expresses its recognition and gratitude.

The 9/11 memorials are being dedicated in New York today. They feature sunken walls and waterfalls in the footprints of the buildings. The names of the 2,997 victims are inscribed in bronze on parapets surrounding the pools. But they are not merely listed; they are placed next to each other in clusters to reflect their relationships. For the responders that is especially appropriate: the names from Engine 10 are listed together. Names from Rescue Squad 5 are listed together.

Today is a day of solemn remembrance when we recall our personal memories—everyone here can remember where we were when we first heard of the attacks—and our collective memories as well. Our nation came together in shock, sorrow, solidarity and resolve, and we can still draw strength from the remembrance of those days. But it is not just about remembering: we also reflect on how our country has reacted and responded over the last ten years. We have strengthened our defenses in important ways and have provided our first responders with training and equipment to deal with new perils they may face, both natural and man-made.

This work must be ongoing, and it must take place amid a broader awareness of what it means for a country truly to be strong and secure. I've often said that I take no comfort in a robust homeland security budget in isolation. We should be equally concerned about what we are investing in education, housing, infrastructure, research—the building blocks of a healthy economy, where people can fully exercise their productive capacity.

So let us today remember those who were lost ten years ago. Let us be grateful for selfless men and women who, then and now, rise to the defense of our communities and our country. Let us remember the sense of community, of common purpose, of responsibility for one another that inspired us in the aftermath. And let us resolve to think broadly and creatively about what it means to bring our country to full strength—so that all may contribute to the commonwealth and that out of tragedy may arise a renewed commitment to a "more perfect union" with "liberty and justice for all."

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