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<http://www.laborpress.org/sectors/building-trades/7649-this-week-s-buzz-wtc-health-watch-farm-worker-wage-board-and-more>

## **This Week's Buzz: WTC Health Watch, Farm Worker Wage Board and More!**

*By Joe Maniscalco*

New York, NY - On this week's episode of LaborPress' "Blue Collar Buzz" airing Sunday night at 9 p.m. on AM970 The Answer, we're looking at the Empire State through a wide lens. First up, NY Building Congress President Richard Anderson talks about the current building boom gripping New York City and what makes it so different from others in the past. Next, Dr. Jacqueline Moline and Patrick Hewes of the World Trade Center Health Program discuss ongoing efforts to treat and monitor those directly affected by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. And finally, we check in with Assembly Member Walter Mosley to find out how Albany is responding to the plight of farm workers and faculty and staff at the City University of New York.

New York City's construction industry has come a long way since the dark days of September 11, and the Great Recession of 2008. But on this week's episode of LaborPress' "Blue Collar Buzz," NY Building Congress President Richard Anderson says the biggest challenge facing the industry now is how to "keep the good times rolling."

"The construction industry is booming," Anderson tells "Blue Collar Buzz" Hosts Neal Tepel and Bill Hohlfeld.

Much of the activity is owed to developers rushing in to file new building permits ahead of the demise of New York's 421-a tax abatement program. An unprecedented number of permits — mostly in Brooklyn — have been filed. Still, an entrenched Real Estate Board remains deadlocked with members of the Building Trades about what comes after 421-a. Despite the intransigence, an upbeat Anderson says, "we are all optimistic" an agreement will soon be reached.

New York's aging infrastructure, however, is another cause for concern.

"Infrastructure is not able to keep up with development," Anderson warns. "No one thought that there would be eight-and-a-half million people living in New York City in 2016."

While it courageously faces the future, the Empire State must continue to cope with the past. For the last 14 years, the World Trade Center Health Program has been treating and monitoring those who rushed to Ground



Richard Anderson joins hosts Neal Tepel and Bill Hohlfeld.

Zero on September 11, 2001, as well as others who lived and worked in the area. And that effort will now continue for at least another 75 years thanks to a renewed [Zadroga Act](#) which helps fund the program.

“More diseases are now being covered and we are constantly looking out for trends,” Dr. Moline tells LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz.” One of those benefitting from the World Trade Center Health Program is “Blue Collar Buzz” Co-host Bill Hohlfeld. On this week’s show, Bill attests to the program’s comprehensive and compassionate approach to health care, and encourages others to take full advantage of the help being offered.

“It’s important for more people to come in,” Dr. Moline says.

Expanding on the issue of development and 421-a, Assembly Member Walter Mosley tells LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz” that whatever comes next must include prevailing wages and benefits for working men and women.

“The working class won’t be able to live in this city,” Assembly Member Mosley warns. While the Real Estate lobby and Building Trades remain deadlocked, Assembly Member Mosley is advocating a plan that incorporates a “sliding scale provision” which would differentiate between large- and small-scale developers.

“One size does not fit all,” Assembly Member Mosley says. “I believe we will get a solution before the end of the session.”

The Brooklyn legislator also has a couple of bold statements concerning New York State farm workers and faculty and staff at the City University of New York. CUNY faculty and staff haven’t had a raise in six years, while farm workers have historically been excluded from the normal protections extended to virtually every other worker in the state.

Assembly Member Mosley, however, tells LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz” that Albany not only needs to act now to secure a fair contract for CUNY faculty and staff — but that Governor Andrew Cuomo also needs to convene a wage board to help improve the lives of farm workers.

“We have to deal with this now,” Assembly Member Mosley says.

This week’s episode of LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz” once again concludes with a lively discussion between the hosts, as well as another intriguing installment of Bill Hohlfeld’s Labor History Minute.

***LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz” airs every Sunday night on AM970 The Answer from 9 to 10 p.m. This week’s episode, as well as every other episode of LaborPress’ “Blue Collar Buzz” is also available on demand at [www.am970theanswer.com](http://www.am970theanswer.com).***