



FIGHT FOR 9/11 PENSION

State lawmakers join cop's widow vs. city

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State lawmakers have joined the fight of a 9/11 responder's widow who says her husband died from Lou Gehrig's disease he contracted working at Ground Zero.

A Manhattan Supreme Court judge has ruled that Cathy Hanson is entitled to the same compensation received by others whose loved ones died from 9/11-related illnesses, but the city's appeal of the ruling has put her claim on hold.

The city and the NYPD Police Pension Board have maintained that amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, a fatal neurological disease that weakens muscles and is known for killing New York Yankee great Lou Gehrig, is not on the list of illnesses and cancers linked to Ground Zero.

Retired NYPD Detective Michael Hanson, 60, died from the disease in 2018.

In a letter to Mayor Adams this week, more than a dozen state senators asked the city to drop its appeal.

"It is our understanding that the city has six months to pursue an appeal or drop the case," the



Cathy Hanson, whose husband Michael Hanson (both above) died of ALS after working at Ground Zero, is in fight with city for his pension.

letter says.

"We strongly urge the city, in consideration of Michael's decades of selfless dedication to his city, his heroism in the aftermath of 9/11, and his ultimate sacrifice, toward the latter."

Some of the lawmakers who signed the letter served side-by-side with Adams when he was in the state Senate.

After hijacked planes tore into the World Trade Center towers, Hanson, a detective with the

city's Emergency Service Unit, rushed to Lower Manhattan to assist in rescue and recovery efforts.

He worked at the pile for eight months straight.

Hanson retired from the NYPD in 2006. He was meticulous at protecting himself on the pile and was constantly screened for 9/11 illnesses and cancers, according to his wife's lawsuit.

But in 2017, he began experiencing neurological problems

that restricted his movement.

Hanson filed for a 9/11 disability pension, but was repeatedly denied. A year later, Hanson, a father of three, was dead.

A private autopsy showed that massive traces of antimony, a heavy metal that was found at site of the twin towers, was found in Hanson's brain tissue and spinal fluid, creating a link between his ALS and his time at the World Trade Center.

On Jan. 24, Manhattan Supreme Court Judge Lynn Kotler determined Detective Hanson's death was linked to his time on the pile, allowing Cathy Hanson to collect a tax free 9/11 disability pension, which would amount to three-quarters of his last year's salary when he retired.

But the city appealed the ruling.

"While we are sympathetic with the family's loss, we believe the court inappropriately substituted its judgment for the city's medical board, which determined that there is no connection between the test results and this individual's tragic death," said a spokesman for Mayor Adams. "The appellate court will decide."