

Congress of the United States

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

September 21, 2012

Crystal Gajewski
16 Gina Avenue
Holbrook, NY 11741

Dear Crystal,

I was privileged to bring your father's construction helmet with me to the September 20th First Nail Ceremony marking the beginning of the construction of the platform on which the next U.S. president will be inaugurated. I want to thank you for allowing me that privilege and for sharing your father's story with me.

Reading your heartfelt letter, I got a sense for what your father was like and what his service meant to you and his country. The life of a United States Marine and a dedicated volunteer represents what is best about this country. In no other place do we see others arriving at the scene of tragedies, however dangerous, ready to help without any hesitation. I remember so clearly the days following 9/11 and I still marvel at the many people like your father who came to help and stayed until the job was done. That he did the same thing again after Hurricane Katrina only shows how heroic and giving he was. Your father and the people like him make this country great.

Thank you for introducing the story of your father to me and lending me his helmet. He was clearly blessed with a loving daughter and I am sure he is proud of your tribute to him. I wish that I could have known him and thanked him personally for his service—to his country, his community and his family.

Please pass my regards to your mother and brother as well.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
Chairman