

9/11 Families Force Biden to Release More Documents

President Biden directed the Justice Department to review declassification of 9/11 Commission documents Friday in response to victims' families, who have long sought the declassification of these documents, multiple outlets report. In an Aug. 6 letter, the families asked that the president not attend 9/11 memorial events if the documents remain classified.

The president issued an executive order requiring Attorney General Merrick Garland to review the declassification process, declassify and release more documents over the next six months. Biden said he is fulfilling a campaign promise to the 9/11 families.

Family members believe unreleased documents will implicate Saudi officials. The 9/11 Commission determined no one in the Saudi government was involved in the terrorist attacks. However, various Saudi citizens did provide support to militant terrorist group al-Qaida over several years. The Saudi government failed to discover those connections.

"We must never forget the enduring pain of the families and loved ones of the 2,977 innocent people who were killed during the worst terrorist attack on America in our history," Biden said. "My heart confines to be with the 9/11 families who are suffering, and my administration will continue to engage respectfully with members of this community. I welcome their voices and insight as we chart a way forward."

Biden will now visit all three 9/11 memorial sites on the 20th anniversary of the tragedy, including ground zero in New York City; the Shanksville, Pennsylvania, crash site of Flight 93; and the Pentagon. Vice President Kamala Harris will also visit

Shanksville, the White House said Saturday.

Over 2,000 members of the 9/11 families community signed the 57-page letter. The victims involved include New York City first responders, employees of Cantor-Fitzgerald, passengers on the other airline flights on 9/11 and victims of health conditions resulting from ground zero cleanup and recovery operations.

“We understand President Biden’s desire to mark the solemn occasion of the 20th anniversary at ground zero. However, we cannot in good faith, and with veneration to those lost, sick and injured, welcome the president to our hallowed grounds until he fulfills his commitment,” the letter says.

“As we approach the 20th anniversary of 9/11, and having been used as a political bargaining chip for two decades, our patience has expired.” {eo}

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