

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 17, 2016

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Collins and Ranking Member Reed:

As you consider the fiscal year 2017 funding bill for the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), we urge your support for \$230 million for HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes, including \$35 million for the Healthy Homes Program and \$6 million for the Lead Technical Studies Program.

Across the country, more than 6 million families are living in untenable housing conditions, including broken heating and plumbing systems and damaged and leaking walls and roofs, not to mention the millions living in housing with dire health and safety concerns from mold, exposed wiring, and toxic chemicals.

As you know, HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes has directly addressed lead and other health hazards in nearly 420,000 homes over the last two decades. These highly effective programs treat individual units for lead hazards, improve lead safety with enforcement action, and upgrade substandard housing with healthy homes interventions.

The devastating crisis facing Flint, Michigan, should serve as a wakeup call to the serious dangers of exposure to lead and other toxic substances in the home. It's crucial that we make a strong investment in national programs that help prevent and respond to lead contaminations before more families are forced to suffer.

By providing the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes with \$230 million, as recommended by the President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, we ensure this critical initiative will continue protecting families from these easily preventable health hazards. Addressing housing-related health hazards also makes economic sense, as every \$1 spent to reduce home lead hazards provides a benefit of at least \$17.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Hakeen
L. King

August King
Chuck Sch

Elizabeth Ham
John Ham

Robert Manning

Benjamin F. Cardin

Richard Blumenthal

Dech Dech

Ray C. Pitt

Tom Beldin

Rebbie Starnow

Bob Sanders

Edward J. Markey

James Brown

Kirsten Gillibrand

Patrick Leahy

Bob Carey, Jr.

Barbara Fox