



National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

May 1, 2020

Dear Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

On behalf of the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition, we would like to express our appreciation and thanks for the support lead poisoning prevention and healthy homes received in the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bill. In particular, we applaud the level funding for the radon program and the lead categorical grant program.

The current COVID-19 crisis has wreaked a heavy social and financial toll on the U.S. The significance of these programs is more important than ever as millions of Americans are currently homebound in response to the ongoing pandemic. As you consider the Fiscal Year 2021 funding bill, we urge you to continue to support the vital work of these programs and increase funding to a total of \$77 million. This includes \$34 million for EPA's Categorical Grants for lead and radon, \$16 million for the Lead Risk Reduction Program, \$4 million for the Indoor Air Radon Program, \$15 million for the Reduce Risk from Indoor Air Program, and \$8 million for the Children and Other Sensitive Populations Program.

EPA's Lead Categorical Grant and Lead Risk Reduction Program are key to the nation's childhood lead poisoning prevention efforts. Through funding for states and EPA regional offices, these programs support science-based standards used to define what lead hazards are in order to protect pregnant women and vulnerable children; they require lead-safe work practices during renovation, repair, and painting work; and they ensure that consumers seeking lead inspection, abatement, and risk assessment services can find qualified, trained individuals to perform the work properly. Communities will require more resources to address the needs of lead poisoned children. We urge Congress to increase funding of these programs to \$17 million and \$16 million, respectively.

EPA's Radon Categorical Grant, Indoor Air: Radon, and Reduce Risk from Indoor Air programs work to protect residents from health risks associated with indoor air, including radon, the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S.; asthma triggers located in the home; and mold, which is a particular concern in the aftermath of flooding. As awareness of radon as a public

health issue has increased, the demand for radon mitigation services is also expected to increase. We urge Congress to increase the funding of these programs at \$17 million, \$4 million, and \$15 million, respectively.

EPA's Children and Other Sensitive Populations: Agency Coordination effort ensures that agency programs protect children's environmental health, including work on developing regulations, improving science policy, implementing programs at the community level, and measuring progress on children's health. The incidence of asthma and a number of other chronic diseases is increasing nationwide. Therefore, more resources are needed to address the needs of these sensitive populations. We urge Congress to increase funding of this program to \$8 million.

The National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition is a broad, voluntary coalition of over 400 organizations working to improve housing conditions nationwide. The coalition promotes policies for safe and healthy housing in the United States, with special emphasis on those who are disproportionately impacted. Congress should protect the most vulnerable citizens, children, and the elderly. This funding will help to accomplish that aim. These vital programs must be funded in order to support healthy housing for all.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and for your continued support of lead poisoning prevention and healthy homes. The nation's children will benefit enormously from your leadership.

Please contact Sarah Goodwin at sarah@nshhcoalition.org if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,

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