



## National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition

---

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

June 30, 2021

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

On behalf of the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition, we would like to express our appreciation and thanks for the wonderful support lead poisoning prevention and healthy homes received in the Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations bill. We would also like to acknowledge the President's budget request and its support for these programs at CDC, specifically its funding increase to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, which is a step in the right direction towards the needed funding for these programs.

The devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have further demonstrated the connection between housing quality and health outcomes, how these impacts disproportionately affect specific populations including communities of color and low-income communities, and the necessity of investing in addressing healthy housing hazards and poor housing quality. As the country invests in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, significant funding is needed to increase housing affordability and stability, fix substandard housing, and provide innovative, flexible, and equitable services to those impacted by healthy housing hazards. As you consider the Fiscal Year 2022 funding bill, we urge you to continue to support the vital work of the Center for Environmental Health at CDC. We know the CDC effectively responds to a wide variety of crises, as we are seeing now; however, lead is its own tragic decades-long crisis. In response to this, we recommend increased funding for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program from \$39 million to \$100 million, increased funding for the National Environmental Health Tracking Network from \$34 million to \$40 million, and increased funding for the National Asthma Control Program from \$30 million to \$35 million. All of these programs work to protect children and others from housing-related health hazards.

Across the country, millions of families are living in unhealthy housing conditions, struggling with issues like broken heating and plumbing systems, damaged or leaking roofs, mold, exposed wiring, and toxic chemicals. Overall, 40% of U.S. homes have at least one significant health or safety risk that places American families at risk.

While the percentage of children tested with high blood lead has decreased over 90% in the past 20 years, 270,000 children still have blood lead levels above the CDC reference value. The

CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program currently provides grants to 53 states, cities, and counties. It conducts needed surveillance of children exposed to lead, provides national data on childhood lead poisoning, ensures that children receive necessary case management, and enables local jurisdictions to act before children are exposed to lead instead of reacting only after they have been harmed. Screening and surveillance data currently provide the foundation for targeting community prevention activities to areas where the risk is highest, and increasing funding for this program to \$100 million will allow this program to offer increased surveillance grants to all 50 states and additional local programs.

CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program supports environmental public health tracking and data networks in 25 states and one city. This program has 20 datasets, 107 indicators, and 419 health measures ranging from asthma to drinking water quality to carbon monoxide exposure, which are used by state and local health officials to prevent sickness and death. Increased funding for this program from \$34 to \$40 million would fund at least three additional states and should be viewed as a down payment on funding all 50 states and DC.

CDC's National Asthma Control Program funds states, localities, and other organizations to improve asthma surveillance, awareness, and education. The program currently supports asthma control programs in 25 states and jurisdictions. Asthma death rates have decreased by 27%, and costs due to asthma illness and death have decreased by \$23.1 billion. Increased funding to this program of \$35 million will allow the CDC to continue this important work and allow additional funding for state grants. The NSHHC will be asking for a more significant increase in FY23 to better address the extremely high cost of asthma (estimated at \$81.9 billion) in the U.S.

The National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition is a broad 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 goal. 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.

Please contact Sarah Goodwin at [sarah@nshhcoalition.org](mailto:sarah@nshhcoalition.org) if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,

Gillian Mittelstaedt  
Co-Chair  
National Safe and Healthy Housing  
Coalition  
Issaquah, WA

Amanda Reddy  
Co-Chair  
National Safe and Healthy Housing  
Coalition  
Columbia, MD

## **Organizational Signatures**

### **National Organizations**

Allergy & Asthma Network  
American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology  
Association of Asthma Educators  
Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Families USA  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
Health Resources in Action  
Lead and Environmental Hazard Association  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Housing Trust  
National NeighborWorks Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)  
ReFrame Foundation  
Trust for America's Health

### **State and Local Organizations**

Boston Public Health Commission  
EnviroPlan LLC  
Holistic Health Educators, PMA  
KeyUrban  
Lincoln Westmoreland Housing  
Metropolitan Tenants Organization  
Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition  
QA Lead Environmental Inc  
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention  
Reinvestment Partners  
Tohn Environmental Strategies LLC  
Tribal Healthy Homes Network  
Yachad

**Individual Signatures**  
**Organization May Be Listed for Identification Purposes Only**

John Adams  
Program Leader - Outcome Broker  
Cornell Cooperative Ext. Oneida Co.  
& Lead-Free Mohawk Valley  
Utica, NY

Stephanie Beebe  
Lead Safe Coordinator  
City of Toledo, Department of  
Neighborhoods  
Toledo, OH

Larissa Benjamin  
Project Policy Analyst  
UC Berkeley School of Public Health  
Berkeley, CA

Carla Campbell, MD  
Pediatrician (Retired)  
Glenside, PA

Betty Cantley  
Parent Advocate  
Grafton, OH

Clifton Dennis  
Pediatric Respiratory Therapist/Asthma  
Educator  
Children's Hospital of Georgia  
Augusta, GA

Terry A. Greene, MS  
Senior Environmental Health Consultant  
John Snow, Inc.  
Cambridge, MA

Paul Kowalski  
Environmental Health Director (Retired)  
New Haven, CT

Natalia Macias Correa  
Content Creator Coordinator  
Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance  
Omaha, NE

Johanna Miller  
St. Cloud, MN

Amy Murphy, MPH  
Public Health Consultant  
Amy Murphy Consulting  
Milwaukee, WI

Prof. Donovan F. Robertson  
CEO  
CCSI Group  
Brentwood, TN

Don Ryan  
Director of Partnerships  
Rebuilding Together Arlington/Fairfax/  
Falls Church  
Arlington, VA

Lynn Tait, PhD  
Retired  
ERC Lead  
Tampa, FL

Pati Tomsits  
Irvine, CA

David Turcotte  
Research Professor  
UMass Lowell & Asthma Coalition  
of Greater Lowell  
Lowell, MA