



National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition

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

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

May 6, 2022

Dear Chair Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

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 2022 appropriations bill. In particular, we applaud the increased funding for the radon program and the lead categorical grant program. We would also like to acknowledge the president's budget request and its support for these programs at EPA, which is a step in the right direction toward 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 continues to invest in COVID-19 recovery, significant funding is still 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 2023 funding bill, we urge you to continue to support the vital work of these programs and increase funding to a total of \$119.5 million. This includes \$67 million for EPA's Categorical Grants for lead and radon, \$16 million for the Lead Risk Reduction Program, \$5 million for the Indoor Air Radon Program, \$23.5 million for the Reduce Risk from Indoor Air Program, and \$8 million for the Children and Other Sensitive Populations program.

EPA's Categorical Grant: Lead and Lead Risk Reduction programs 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 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 require more resources to address the needs of lead-poisoned children, especially a fully trained workforce to carry out lead abatement and lead-safe work practices. We urge Congress to increase funding of these programs to \$50 million and \$16 million, respectively.

EPA's Categorical Grant: Radon, Indoor Air: Radon, and Reduce Risk from Indoor Air programs work to protect residents from health risks associated with indoor air, including asthma triggers located in the home, mold (a particular concern in the aftermath of flooding), and radon. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. 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, \$5 million, and \$23.5 million, respectively

EPA's Children and Other Sensitive Populations: Agency coordination 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.

EPA's Environmental Justice Small Grants Program provides funding to over 1,500 community-based organizations, tribal governments, and Native American organizations to support and empower communities working on solutions to local environmental and public health issues. The National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition applauds FY22 funding of \$94 million as it represents a good step forward in supporting healthy housing and environmental justice priorities. We support President Biden's proposed budget of \$294.9 million for this program in FY23 and encourage Congress to adopt that proposed increase and support the five proposed and existing grant programs—the Environmental Justice Competitive Grant Program, the Environmental Justice Community Grants Program, the Environmental Justice State Grant Program, the Tribal Environmental Justice Grant Program, and the Participatory Research Grant Program.

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. 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,

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

Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Clean Water Action
Earthjustice
Ecology Center
Elevate
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Lead and Environmental Hazards Association
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium

Regional, State, and Local Organizations

Alameda County Healthy Homes Department
California Safe Schools
Children First
EnviroPlan, LLC
Healthy Housing Omaha
Learning Disabilities Association of Arkansas
Learning Disabilities Association of Connecticut
Learning Disabilities Association of Delaware
Learning Disabilities Association of Georgia
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois
Learning Disabilities Association of Indiana
Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey

Learning Disabilities Association of New York State
Learning Disabilities Association of Ohio
Learning Disabilities Association of South Carolina
Learning Disabilities Association of Texas
Learning Disabilities Association of Utah
Learning Disabilities Association of Virginia
Learning Disabilities Association of Wisconsin
Learning Disabilities Association of Alabama
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan
Lincoln Westmoreland Housing, Inc.
Metropolitan Tenants Organization
Ohio Lead-Free Kids Coalition
Partnership for Air Matters
Rebuilding Together Sacramento
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
Revitalize Community Development Corporation
Sullivan County, NH, Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes Program
Women for a Healthy Environment

Individual Signatures – Organization May Be Listed for Identification Purposes Only

Vicki Hanrahan Ainslie
Senior Research Scientist
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA

Jennifer D. Becker, MPH
Health Project Coordinator
Rochester, NY

Mary Jean Brown
Adjunct Faculty
Harvard Chan School of Public Health
Hamden, CT

Carla Campbell, MD
Pediatrician and Public Health Professor
(Retired)
Glenside, PA

Betty and Jason Cantley
Advocates
Ohio Lead-Free Kids Coalition
Grafton, OH

Sallie Chaney
Teacher (Retired)
San Diego, CA

Elaine G. Chottiner, MD
Plymouth, MI

Joan Cleary
Community Volunteer
St. Paul, MN

Cady Dannemiller
Mechanical Engineer
Redmond, WA

Joan Davis
Teacher (Retired)
Oak Park, IL

Frederic G. Dewalt
Senior Scientist
QuanTech, Inc.
Livingston, MT

Julie Dickerson
Chesterfield, VA

Samika Douglas
Senior Community Liaison
LINC UP
Grand Rapids, MI

Geraldine Drake
Interior Designer
AECOM
Ann Arbor, MI

Sharon Gadoth-Goodman, RN
Farmington Hills, MI

Paul Haan
Grand Rapids, MI

Taniccia Henry
Advocate
DLEAD
Detroit, MI

Amanda Holm
Senior Project Manager
Henry Ford Health
Livonia, MI

Abby Jacobs
Permitting Director
Boston, MA

Robin Jacobs
Baltimore, MD

Dennis Jordan
Certified Industrial Hygienist (Retired)
Jordan Consulting
San Leandro, CA

Minnie Lester
(Retired)
Southeast Waterfront Neighborhood Assn.
Detroit, MI

Armand Magnelli
Senior Consultant and Trainer
Livable Housing, Inc
York, PA

Hana Mamnoon
Program Associate
Causewave Community Partners
Rochester, NY

Amy Murphy
Public Health Consultant
Amy Murphy Consulting
Milwaukee, WI

Keith Piner
Project Director
Barr & Clark
Huntington Beach, CA

Melissa L. Skinner, MPH
Washington Township, MI

Pati Tomsits
Irvine, CA

Cecilia Trudeau
(Retired)
Ecology Center, A2ZERO
Ann Arbor, MI

Howard Varner
Lab Director/General Manager
EHS Laboratories
North Chesterfield, VA