Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Collins, and Ranking Member Reed:

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Price, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Dear Members of Congress:

As organizations committed to protecting the health of children and adults and preserving safe, decent and affordable housing, we ask you today to support full federal funding for the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes and the CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention program in the FY2017 appropriations bill. As a leader and a legislator, your support makes good business sense: studies show a return of $17-$221 per dollar invested in lead hazard control and a net savings of $181-269 billion.

To achieve these savings for our nation, and to protect our children, we ask that you provide:

- $35 million for CDC’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention program, which would allow the program to expand its surveillance of childhood lead poisoning nationally, and ask you to return the name of the program to “Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention”.
- $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 Grant Program.

Who will you be helping with your support?

There are 24 million homes in the U.S. with significant lead-based paint hazards jeopardizing the health and development of millions of children. We know how to address this problem. The Presidential Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children developed a national strategy fifteen years ago to address lead-based paint hazards, which cause the great majority of lead poisoning cases in
the U.S. Specifically, they called for $230 million in funding annually for HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes over ten years to provide lead hazard screening and lead hazard control of pre-1960 housing occupied by low-income families.

This call to action was over a decade ago, and yet CDC estimates that 535,000 children in the U.S. from one to five years old have blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL). Childhood lead exposure at these levels can lead to lifelong consequences, including decreased cognitive function, developmental delays, and behavior problems; very high levels can cause seizures, coma, and even death. Children exposed to lead at any level can lose I.Q. points, and at high blood lead levels are seven times more likely to drop out of school than children without harmful lead levels. The annual economic costs to society of lead poisoning alone are over $50 billion. There is no “safe” level of lead for a child.

What evidence is there that the preventive funds are used wisely?

HUD estimates that *without its programs’ actions to control hazards in over 370,000 housing units, an additional 265,000 children would have been lead poisoned* and included in CDC’s estimate of the number of young children with blood lead levels above 5 µg/dL.

Since its inception in 1991, HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes has successfully developed programs that directly created over 208,000 lead-safe units, ensured that over 186,000 additional units are lead-safe, and addressed health and safety conditions in over 20,000 substandard housing units. It has improved many more by working with other HUD and federal housing programs. Additionally, HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes activities to reduce health and safety hazards in housing units save billions of dollars by increasing productivity and decreasing medical and special education costs. Educational system costs alone are estimated at $38,000 over three years per child impacted by lead poisoning.

Full funding for HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes at $230 million in FY 2017 will reduce preventable medical and education costs, strengthen the economy, preserve our housing, and keep children healthy and able to learn. Within this office, the Lead Technical Studies Grant Program has helped achieve major breakthroughs such as identifying improved methods of hazard identification and control. A $6 million appropriation to the Lead Technical Studies Grant Program will continue increasing the already high return on investment provided by this HUD office.

Providing the CDC’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention program with $35 million in FY 2017 (its FY10 funding level) will allow lead poisoning surveillance to be conducted nationally. Unfortunately, current surveillance is limited to 29 states and the District of Columbia due to severe funding cuts. CDC is the only agency that houses the information about where and when children are poisoned, maintaining it through a surveillance system that monitors blood test results for four million children each year. HUD as well as state and local health and housing agencies rely on this surveillance system to best target funds and enforcement to the highest risk areas. The recent funding cuts have geographically restricted the surveillance effort and hurt local health departments in their prevention and case management efforts. Restoring funding to $35 million and surveillance nationally would enable communities to identify lead poisoning outbreaks in places like Flint early on.

Furthermore, returning the name of this program to “Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention” will allow for a more holistic approach when conducting home assessments. Other hazards in the home, such as radon, mold, carbon monoxide poisoning, and pests, can cause injury and disease. Allowing for programs to inspect, collect data, and perform interventions on a broad array of home health hazards in a single visit makes practical sense and is more cost efficient.
Finally, we urge Congress to restore a *National Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention*. CDC disbanded this committee in FY12, which was the federal government’s only committee devoted solely to preventing childhood lead poisoning. It led the way to analyze the science to support improvements in identifying the risk of lower blood lead levels. It also served as the main conduit for all federal agencies to coordinate their lead activities, address existing threats and more quickly identify emerging threats such as the situation in Flint.

Thank you very much for your consideration and for protecting America’s children.

Sincerely,

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists  
American Public Health Association  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Children’s Environmental Health Network  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Environmental Health Watch  
Global Green USA  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
Habitat for Humanity International  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
March of Dimes  
NAHRO  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Association for State Community Services Programs  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Center for Healthy Housing  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Housing Law Project  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
National Network of Public Health Institutes  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
Operation Paydirt  
Rebuilding Together  
Rural LISC  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Justice Team  
Society for Public Health Education  
Union for Reform Judaism  

**ARIZONA**

West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition  

Sun City
CALIFORNIA
Alameda County Healthy Homes Department  Oakland
Barr & Clark, Inc.  Huntington Beach
Center for Environmental Health  Oakland
ChangeLab Solutions  Oakland
City of Chino  Chino
Environmental Lead Detect Inc.  San Francisco
Esperanza Community Housing Corporation  Los Angeles
FRJ and Associates  Riverside
Healthy Homes Collaborative  Los Angeles
Huntington Harbour Real Estate  Sunset Beach
Marshall's Farm Honey  Napa and American Canyon
Mutual Housing California  Sacramento
Occupational Knowledge International  San Francisco
Prevention Institute  Oakland
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention  Oakland
So Cal Construction Services  La Mirada
The Phase One Group  Diamond Bar

CONNECTICUT
Bridgeport Health Department Lead Poisoning Prevention Program  Bridgeport
Connecticut Children's Healthy Homes Program  Hartford
EnviroPlan LLC  West Hartford
West Haven Health Department  West Haven

IDAHO
Gary E. Hanes & Associates, LLC  Boise

ILLINOIS
Allied Radon Services, Inc.  Mt. Vernon
Civitas ChildLaw Center, Loyola University Chicago School of Law  Chicago
Chicago Department of Public Health  Chicago
Cook County Dept. Public Health  Chicago
Health Justice Project  Chicago
Metropolitan Tenants Organization  Chicago
Northwestern Pritzker Law School  Chicago

INDIANA
Environmental Management Institute  Indianapolis
Improving Kids' Environment  Indianapolis

IOWA
IPAL-IOWA PARENTS AGAINST LEAD POISONING  Independence

KANSAS
Freedom Healthy Choices Community Development Corporation  Kansas City

...
KENTUCKY
LockUpLead Louisville

LOUISIANA
A Community Voice - Louisiana New Orleans
Louisiana Roundtable for the Environment New Orleans

MASSACHUSETTS
Alpine Environmental Inc. Chelmsford
ASAP Environmental Dorchester
Asthma Regional Council of New England Boston
Dr. David Bellinger, Harvard Medical School, Boston Children’s Hospital, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (Citizen) Boston
Boston Public Health Commission Boston
Health Resources in Action Boston
Lead and Environmental Hazards Association Chelmsford
Marissa Hauptman (Citizen) Boston
Massachusetts Asthma Action Partnership (MAAP) Boston
UMass Lowell New England Healthy Homes Training Center Lowell

MICHIGAN
CLEARCorps Detroit Detroit
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative Detroit-Wayne County Detroit
Habitat for Humanity Detroit Detroit
Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan Grand Rapids
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health Lansing
Michigan Environmental Council Lansing
Siena Heights University Adrian
Steven Leggat (Citizen) Detroit
The Arc Michigan Lansing

MINNESOTA
CLEARCorps USA Saint Paul
Sustainable Resources Center Minneapolis

MISSISSIPPI
FM-CONSULT-CREATE Jackson

NEBRASKA
Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance Omaha

NEVADA
UNLV-SEPA Las Vegas

NEW HAMPSHIRE
New Hampshire Public Health Assn Goffstown
NEW YORK
Able Safety Consulting LLC
Burnette AirFarm
City Of Rochester
Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning
LEADSAFE Erie County
Lergent Corp.
ProsperRochester, Inc.
Queens Sickle Cell Advocacy Network, Inc.
Rochester City School District
Schuyler County Public Health Department
United Way of Long Island
Western New York Lead Poisoning Resource Center

Massapequa Park
Rochester
Rochester
Rochester
Buffalo
Massapequa Park
Rochester
St. Albans
Rochester
Watkins Glen
Deer Park
Rochester

NORTH CAROLINA
Greensboro Housing Coalition
Partnership Effort for the Advancement of Children's Health (PEACH)
Reinvestment Partners

Greensboro
Durham
Durham

OHIO
Brenda Elliott (Citizen)
CCOAL - Concerned Citizens Organized Against Lead
James and Betty Cantley, Parents of a lead poisoned child (Citizens)
Lorain County General Health District
Ohio Healthy Homes Network
Ohio Public Health Association
Rebuilding Together Central Ohio
Toledo Lead Poisoning Prevention Coalition

Toledo
Cleveland
Grafton
Elyria
Columbus
Columbus
Columbus
Toledo

PENNSYLVANIA
Kynett Foundation
PinnacleHealth Lead and Healthy Homes Program
Temple University Beasley School of Law
Widener University

Philadelphia
Harrisburg
Philadelphia
Chester

RHODE ISLAND
Childhood Lead Action Project

Providence

TEXAS
Brenda M. Reyes Consulting
Houston Health Department

Houston

VERMONT
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Burlington
Montpelier
VIRGINIA
Environmental Dynamics Inc. Sterling
Environmental Hazards Services Richmond
INLOGIX Enterprises LLC Fairfax

WASHINGTON
City of Federal Way Federal Way
INND Seattle
Tenants Union of Washington Seattle

WISCONSIN
Amy Murphy Consulting Milwaukee
Lead Safe Milwaukee Milwaukee