

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2013

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Murray and Harkin and Ranking Members Collins and Moran:

As you consider the fiscal year (FY) 2014 funding bills for the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we urge your support for \$120 million for HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control, including \$25 million for the healthy homes program, and \$29 million to restore the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention program.

Nearly six million families in America live in housing that rivals developing countries, with broken heating, inoperable plumbing, holes in walls, and leaking roofs. Millions more live in housing with serious health and safety hazards from mold, exposed wiring, and toxic chemicals. Over the past two decades, HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control has developed programs to address these hazards and successfully treated over 195,000 units for lead hazards, improved the lead safety of over 200,000 units through enforcement actions, and upgraded over 24,000 substandard housing units with healthy homes interventions. Providing the Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control with \$120 million in FY14, including \$25 million within the total for the healthy homes program is critical to continuing this progress.

The CDC Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention program is instrumental to the success of these HUD remediation programs by supporting state and local health departments in the collection and dissemination of data on the prevalence of lead poisoning. This information helps HUD target resources for housing remediation. And, due to a recent decision by the CDC to lower the blood lead level for diagnosing lead poisoning in children, experts expect approximately 535,000 children to be at risk for serious health problems and cognitive delays due to lead exposure. Restoring funding for this critical program will help identify these children and ensure the goals of the HUD programs are met.

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. We greatly appreciate your leadership and consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed

Col Levin

Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Kay R. Hagan

Ben Rayburn

Debbie Stabenow

Bob Casey

Al Franken

Shirley

Rahit Menon

Ben Cardin

Jeanne Shaheen

Chuck Schumer

Shirley Brown

Richard Blumenthal Elizabeth Warren