

JACK REED  
RHODE ISLAND

COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS  
ARMED SERVICES

BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3903

March 19, 2013

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Washington, DC:

728 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-3903  
(202) 224-4642

Rhode Island:

1000 Chapel View Boulevard, Suite 290  
Cranston, RI 02920 3074  
(401) 943-3100

One Exchange Terrace, Room 408  
Providence, RI 02903-1773  
(401) 528-5200

1 (800) 284-4200

TDD Relay Rhode Island  
1 (800) 745-5555

<http://reed.senate.gov>

Dear Madam Secretary:

I write to urge you to use your discretion to fund the Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with \$8 million, for a total of \$10 million, for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2013.

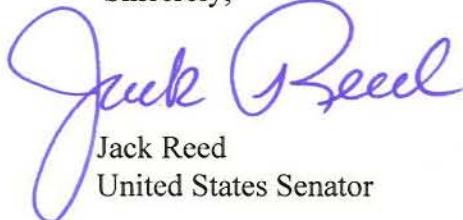
As you may know, Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program was reduced from \$29 million to \$2 million in FY 2012. It has remained at this level since then. I was pleased to author an amendment, which was unanimously agreed to by the Senate Appropriations Committee and would have funded the program with \$10 million. This funding level would enable CDC to restore core surveillance, environmental assessments, and education and outreach efforts across the country.

While I am disappointed that this additional funding for this program will not be included in the Continuing Resolution for FY 2013 as a result of the Republicans blocking the inclusion of the Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education Appropriations Act for FY 2013, this public health program is critical to protecting the health of children and supporting their cognitive development. Lead poisoning remains a significant environmental public health threat. Indeed, the same year that the funding was nearly eliminated for this program, CDC lowered the blood lead level reference value that determines when a child needs services. Thus, while funding for this program has been cut, the number of children in need of services has increased nearly six fold.

Allowing this program to continue to operate, even on a limited basis, would ensure that at least some of our nation's children are protected from the harmful effects of lead poisoning.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request to support this critical public health program. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

  
Jack Reed  
United States Senator