

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 29, 2012

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 Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, 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 Richard Shelby
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 Shelby:

As you consider the fiscal year (FY) 2013 appropriations bills for the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Labor, Health and Human Services and Education respectively, we urge your support for \$120 million for HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control, including \$30 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 6 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 168,000 units for lead hazards, improved the lead safety of 185,000 units through enforcement actions, and upgraded 20,000 substandard housing units with healthy homes interventions. Providing the Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control with \$120 million in FY13 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. The CDC's funding has helped state and local health departments maintain a system for the collection and dissemination of data on lead poisoning, which helps HUD target resources for housing remediation. In addition, CDC grants have provided services to families with lead poisoned children, which have helped prevent costly emergency room and physician office visits for diseases and conditions like lead poisoning, asthma, and cancer. Restoring funding for this critical program will ensure the goals of HUD programs are met, as well improve the health and cognitive potential of children.

Addressing housing-related health hazards also makes economic sense, as every \$1 spent to reduce home lead hazards there is a benefit of at least \$17. We greatly appreciate your leadership and consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Jack Brant

Barbara Nickali

Robert M. Merendy

Whitmore

Rebekah Stetson

Paul Linn

Ben Cardin

Olympic Smorg

Mike Johnson

Bayle Dyer

John L. Kenny

Kirsten E. Lillibrand

B. J. Sanders

Herb Kohl

Kay R. Hagan