

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 4, 2014

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) 2015 funding bills for the Departments of Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (HUD), and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we urge your support for \$120 million for HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes, including \$25 million for the healthy homes program, and \$29 million to fully 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 problems such as 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. Indeed, 40 percent of metropolitan homes have at least one health or safety hazard. Over the past two decades, HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes has developed programs to treat units for lead hazards, improve lead safety through enforcement actions, and upgrade substandard housing units with healthy homes interventions. These programs have addressed lead and other health hazards in 376,000 homes. Providing the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes with \$120 million in FY 2015, including \$25 million within the total for the healthy homes program is critical to continuing this progress.

Further, 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. Approximately 535,000 children are at risk

for serious health problems and cognitive delays due to lead exposure. Restoring full funding for this critical program will help identify these children, ensure the goals of the HUD programs are met, and support community-based and state-wide prevention activities.

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 Beal

Carol Ann

Kirsten Hillbrand

Bert Sanders

Debbie Estess

Barbara Box

Elizabeth Ham

Chuck Sch

Benjamin L. Cardin

Shirley Brown

Deanne Shaheen

Richard Blumenthal