

House Health Policy Committee
Room 519, House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48909

Letter in support of House Bills 5413-5421 and HB 5423 (Lead Bill Package)

December 9, 2021

Dear Chairwoman Kahle and Members of the Health Policy Committee,

We are writing to express our support for the Lead Bill Package of House Bills 5413-5421 and HB 5423 introduced by Representatives Anthony, Young, Witwer, Neeley, Wendzel, Rodgers, Calley, Beson, Lily, and Hood.

The Lead Impacted Families Training (LIFT) group is made up of a diverse group of people from across the state of Michigan. Each of us has been directly impacted by lead poisoning, whether by having a child who is lead poisoned, living and working in lead-impacted communities, or having been lead-poisoned ourselves. Over the past eight months, our group has met monthly for training sessions to develop a deeper understanding of lead poisoning and how to foster change in our communities. Through these sessions, our group has developed the Parents' Platform to End Lead Poisoning. We understand the impacts of lead poisoning firsthand. Living with lead poisoning is a reality for too many Michigan families already; a reality that no additional families should have to experience. We must change our laws in order to help people exposed to lead access crucial health services and mitigate future lead poisoning.

The proposed bill package would go a long way towards protecting our children from the horrors of lead poisoning. The main components of this package update the Public Health Code so the definition of "elevated blood lead level" is in line with the current CDC definition. Currently, Michigan's level stands at 10 micrograms per deciliter, significantly higher than recent CDC guidance for an elevated blood lead level of only 3.5 micrograms per deciliter. Updating this definition will allow many more lead-poisoned children to be identified and access the services they need.

This package also requires a lead paint inspection to be completed before the sale of any home that was built before 1978. This is a top priority of our group due to lead poisoning being an urban and a rural problem with over 70% of Michigan's housing stock built before 1978. Ensuring homes are inspected and lead-safe is a vital primary prevention step to take to ensure families are not exposed to lead. The package also expands blood lead testing by requiring children up to age 6 enrolled in MICHild and Medicaid to have coverage for blood lead tests. This is an important first step towards universal testing of children in the state of Michigan, another one of our top priorities.

The bill package also adopts the Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) Rule from the EPA, allowing the State of Michigan to regulate RRP activities, another top priority of our group. In addition, the bills define safer abatement practices, add interim controls such as lead dust cleaning and lead paint stabilization, and ensure lead abatements are performed by qualified professionals. These measures will provide increased protection for Michigan families from the dangers of lead-based paint hazards.

If these policies had already been in place, our own children and families may not have experienced the difficulties and pain associated with lead poisoning. Now, we have an opportunity to protect other families. This bill package would ensure a healthier future for all children in Michigan and we urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

The Lead Impacted Families Training (LIFT) group

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Early Head Start
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Parents' Platform to End Lead Poisoning in Michigan

The Lead Impacted Families Training (LIFT) group is made up of a diverse group of people from across the state of Michigan. LIFT participants have a family member who has been lead poisoned, live with someone who has been lead poisoned, are concerned about lead poisoning in their community, and/or have been lead poisoned themselves. Participants--including parents of lead poisoned children, health professionals, and local advocates--are passionate about creating better policies for a safe and healthy community.

The group partakes in monthly training sessions to develop a deeper understanding of lead poisoning and how to foster change in their communities. Through these sessions, the group has developed the Parents' Platform to End Lead Poisoning. In their continued efforts to create safer communities, LIFT participants are advocating for the following policies to help end childhood lead poisoning in Michigan:

- **Require that homes are tested for lead prior to sale or transfer of lease, and lead hazards are abated if found.**
- **Require universal blood lead testing for ALL Michigan children aged 1 and 2.**
- **Ensure sustainable funding for lead poisoning prevention and lead abatement programs.**
- **Have the state of Michigan assume responsibility for the federal Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) Rule enforcement, which requires contractors to have a lead safe certification to do work on pre-1978 homes.**

