

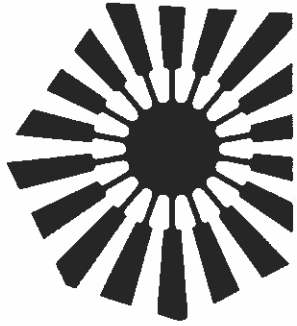
MICHIGAN Environmental Council

Dear Chair Rogers and members of the House Health Policy Committee,

I'm Samantha Pickering, the Public & Environmental Health Policy Coordinator at Michigan Environmental Council (MEC) and an MPH candidate at Wayne State University. I'm writing to you today to emphasize the ongoing dangers of lead that exist within Michigan homes and measures you can take to prevent lead exposure. Not only does lead exist in our external environment, for many Michiganders it's also in our homes. Part of my work entails managing the Michigan Alliance for Lead Safe Homes (MIALSH) coalition. This coalition is made up of various members throughout the state, including health departments, lead-abatement contractors, small business owners, parents, homeowners, landlords, and other service providers. For the past 12 years, MIALSH members have been working diligently to protect our children from lead poisoning, and were instrumental in the passing of universal lead testing (PA 145 & 146 of 2023).

Lead poisoning in Michigan is still an ongoing problem, and according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) there is no safe level of lead in the human body. Thus, MEC supports House Bills 4532, 5368, and 5369. If passed, this package will ensure that entities doing work on homes built before 1978 have a certified worker on site who is trained to guarantee the safety of the other workers, and that families who live there are not adversely impacted by lead exposure. It will also align the elevated blood lead level in statute with that of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and provide a referral for Early On educational program services to children with an elevated blood lead level to help prepare them for a successful future in Michigan.

Preventing lead exposure results in long-term cost savings related to healthcare, special education needs, and other societal costs, such as missed days of work to take a child to doctors appointments. It also improves environmental and public health. By reducing lead exposures in homes and prioritizing the health and needs of children, we promote the overall health and well-being of our communities. Children deserve a healthy and productive future and this bill package will help ensure that. While the cost savings are distant reasons to not poison children, prevention investments, like certifying workers to maintain lead-safe work environments in homes, result in a financial return in societal benefits and the future of Michigan's economy.



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I am a Hamtramck resident where the home I rent falls within the 70% of Michigan homes that was built before 1978, and it also has never been remodeled. Most of the indoor plumbing fixtures contain lead and/or galvanized pipes on top of the lead paint that exists within the home. As an adult, my body is sophisticated enough to process most of the lead that I'm exposed to. However, there are a vast number of similar homes in my city that have families with young children whose bodies are not fully developed, and when they are exposed to lead they have a high risk of experiencing negative health impacts that will impair their health in the long-term, and I worry about their well-being.

MEC believes that this lead remediation package will promote the health and well-being of all the families and young children in the State of Michigan, especially those living in areas that are disproportionately impacted by these stressors. We urge you to support HBs 4352, 5368, and 5369 as they will help us continue the work to protect Michiganders now and in the future. I truly appreciate your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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