

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 18, 2008

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Treasury, the Judiciary, and HUD
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Christopher S. Bond
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Treasury, the Judiciary, and HUD
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Murray and Ranking Member Bond:

We write to thank you for your longstanding leadership in protecting children from lead poisoning and to urge your continued support for adequate funding in Fiscal Year 2009 for initiatives to protect at-risk children from lead poisoning and other health hazards in their homes. We appreciate the difficult task you face this year in providing enough funding for the many worthy domestic programs under your jurisdiction and urge you to provide at least \$195 million in funding for HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control.

The record is clear that these funds are vitally important for helping cities and states achieve the national goal of ending childhood lead poisoning by 2010. In 2007, HUD's lead hazard control grant programs rendered 12,957 homes lead-safe, exceeding the annual goal by 23 percent. Current estimates by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, however, report that some 240,000 children under the age of six present with blood-lead levels high enough to cause irreversible neurological damage and significant learning difficulties. For FY 2009, the Administration's budget proposes just \$116 million in funding, or a \$29 million cut below FY 2008. This would be a step in the wrong direction.

Within the total appropriation of \$195 million, we respectfully request that you provide \$95 million for lead hazard control grants, at least \$50 million for the High Lead Area Removal Initiative, and \$10 million for technical assistance. We also would request at least \$20 million for the Healthy Homes Initiative, which funds efforts by cities, states, researchers, community-based organizations, and weatherization programs to find practical solutions to the multiple health risks posed by substandard housing. We request \$5 million for the Operation Lead Elimination Action Program, which would support grants to non-profit organizations for lead control, enforcement, and systems advocacy. Finally, we urge you to provide \$15 million for the Big Buy program, to enable lead inspections of the approximately 1,500 remaining pre-1978 federally subsidized properties that HUD has identified as posing the greatest likelihood of containing potentially hazardous levels of lead-based paint.


Safeguarding funding for HUD's lead control and healthy homes initiatives will help build public and private capacity to develop and disseminate cost-effective maintenance and remodeling practices. These investments in preventing disease will reap enormous benefits for America's families, schools, and economy.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests, and for your continuing support of these important goals.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Susan Collins
United States Senator

Mary Landrum

Shirley

Jim Dulin

Paul Foye

Bea Caidi

Patrick Leahy

Joe Biden

Allyson Swann

Tom Harkin

Shelley Berman

Robert A. Neuhoff

Frank R. Lautenberg

Allyson Swann

Barack

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