

# Protect Kids from Lead Poisoning

Please Support S1234/H2010, *An Act Modernizing Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention*  
Sponsored by Sen. Julian Cyr and Rep. Andy Vargas

## A PERSISTENT & PERVASIVE PROBLEM

- Between 2013-2017, there were 2,400 confirmed cases of childhood lead poisoning in Massachusetts.
- There is no safe level of exposure to lead. Lead exposure in young children can cause severe and irreversible health effects, including impairment of cognitive and physical development, and has been correlated with poor future school performance, behavioral difficulties, and learning problems.
- Lead paint is an especially serious threat to young children in Massachusetts. 71% of the housing in MA was built before 1978 (when lead paint was banned from household paint). Only about 10% of these homes have been reported to be de-lead, leaving more than 1.8 million homes likely containing lead hazards.

## DRIVEN BY & EXACERBATING INEQUITIES

- Children living in low income communities are 3x more likely to be lead poisoned than those living in high income communities. Children of color are 1.5x more likely, and black children 2.5x more likely, than their white peers to suffer from lead poisoning. Past and present discrimination in housing opportunity, cost, and quality directly contribute to these inequities.
- 54% of lead poisoned children live in the 19 highest risk communities:
  - \* Boston
  - \* Brockton
  - \* Chelsea
  - \* Chicopee
  - \* Everett
  - \* Fall River
  - \* Fitchburg
  - \* Haverhill
  - \* Holyoke
  - \* Lawrence
  - \* Lowell
  - \* Lynn
  - \* Malden
  - \* New Bedford
  - \* North Adams
  - \* Pittsfield
  - \* Southbridge
  - \* Springfield
  - \* Worcester

## GROWING NEED & DECLINING FUNDING

- State regulations were changed in 2017 to align with federal CDC standards, lowering the threshold at which a child is considered lead poisoned. As a result, 40% more families require outreach and services.
- The DPH Lead Program is fully funded by fees enacted in 1994. These fees have not been updated or adjusted for inflation in 25 years. As a result, funding does not support an adequate program of prevention and response.

## THIS BILL WILL PROTECT KIDS THROUGH PREVENTION & PROMPT RESPONSE

- Updates fees that have significantly diminished in value in the last 25 years and have never been adjusted for inflation, providing the necessary funding for the Department of Public Health to:
  - **eliminate the current backlog** of families with lead-poisoned children that are awaiting services
  - re-institute a **proactive prevention program** that will work with medical providers, landlords, housing authorities, and others to provide training on lead hazards, support testing and remediation of hazards, promote screening and reporting of blood lead levels, and combat housing discrimination
- Increases available tax credits to property owners to offset the cost of de-leading
- Increases the fines for housing discrimination against families with children due to the presence of lead paint

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**Updated Funding Structure to Support Prevention & Prompt Response**

	Current fee (per 1993 law)	Proposed fee in S12345/H2010	New fee if adjusted by inflation
those persons licensed by the board of registration of <b>real estate brokers and salesmen</b>	\$25	\$35	\$43.05
those persons licensed by the department of labor and industries to <b>perform deleading services</b>	\$25	\$35	\$43.05
those persons licensed by the department of public health to <b>perform lead inspections</b>	\$25	\$35	\$43.05
<b>property and casualty insurance brokers and property and casualty agents</b> of direct writers registered with the division of insurance	\$25	\$35	\$43.05
<b>mortgage brokers, mortgage lenders, and small loan agencies</b> registered with the division of banks	\$100	\$125	\$172.21

**Updated Fines for Housing Discrimination Against Families with Children Due to Lead Paint**

	Current	Proposed fine in S12345/H2010
1st offense	\$10,000	\$20,000
2nd offense	\$25,000	\$35,000
Subsequent offenses	\$50,000	\$60,000

**Updated Tax Credits for Lead Paint Abatement**

Category	Current	Proposed tax credit in S12345/H2010
Regular	\$1,500	\$3,000
Emergency	\$500	\$1,000