



The Maryland State Medical Society  
1211 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201-5516  
410.539.0872  
Fax: 410.547.0915  
1.800.492.1056  
www.medchi.org

American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™  
Maryland Chapter

TO: The Honorable Bobby A. Zirkin, Chair  
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
The Honorable Robbyn Lewis

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Richard A. Tabuteau

DATE: March 28, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1233 – *Environment – Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing – Elevated Blood Lead Levels and Environmental Investigations (Maryland Healthy Children Act)*

---

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 1233.

Lead poisoning in children has been a public health concern for decades. Maryland has been a national leader in addressing exposure to lead since the establishment of the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in 1994. The Program established a comprehensive plan to regulate compensation for children who are poisoned by lead paint, treat affected residential rental properties to reduce risks, and limit liability of landlords who act to reduce lead hazards in accordance with various regulatory requirements. As a result of the Program and other initiatives, Maryland has dramatically reduced lead poisoning.

Despite the State's success in reducing children's exposure to lead there remains many children at risk. Currently the protections of the program apply to children who demonstrate an elevated blood lead level of 10 micrograms per deciliter. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no safe level of lead exposure, and adverse health effects exist in children at blood lead levels less than 10 micrograms per deciliter. Since 2012, the CDC has urged health care providers and authorities to follow up on any young child with a level as low as 5 micrograms per deciliter.

House Bill 1233 proposes to change the approach that Maryland uses to determine the threshold for environmental investigation and intervention from defining a specific level of lead (currently 10 micrograms per deciliter) to incorporating the blood lead reference level as determined by the CDC into Maryland's statutory framework. By setting Maryland's standard consistent with the CDC reference level, it ensures that Maryland will always reflect the most current thresholds for investigation and intervention, thereby increasing the number of children who would be identified as having an elevated blood lead level, triggering the protections of the program.

House Bill 1233 also requires the Department of the Environment to adopt regulations for conducting environmental investigations to determine lead hazards for children under the age of 6 years and pregnant

women with elevated blood lead levels greater than the reference level. The regulations must be consistent with the guidelines for the evaluation and control of lead-based paint hazards in housing published by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and an investigation must commence upon receipt of a report of a blood lead level that exceeds the reference level.

Passage of House Bill 1233 will bring Maryland into conformity with CDC recommendations and enhance the State's commitment to aggressively identify and address elevated blood lead levels in children. Adoption of the CDC reference level combined with the development of a regulatory structure for prompt and thorough environmental investigations will significantly improve the ability to prevent the serious health consequences associated with lead poisoning. MedChi and MDAAP urge a favorable report.

**For more information call:**

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer

J. Steven Wise

Danna L. Kauffman

Richard A. Tabuteau

410-244-7000