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American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™  
Maryland Chapter

TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair  
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
The Honorable Cory V. McCray

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau  
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
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DATE: January 27, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 481 – *Environment – Drinking Water Outlets in School Buildings – Elevated Level of Lead and Grant Program*

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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 Senate Bill 481. Senate Bill 481 establishes a grant program that provides grants to local school systems to assist with the costs associated with implementing remedial measures to (1) address any findings of elevated levels of lead in drinking water outlets in school buildings or (2) upgrade drinking water systems in school buildings that do not have functioning drinking water outlets.

No safe blood lead level in children has been identified. Children can be exposed to lead from a number of sources, including tap water. Lead exposure from tap water comes from the decay of plumbing or the solder that connects pipes, and the risk is higher in older buildings. Water that remains in pipes overnight or when schools are not in session stays in contact with lead pipes or lead solder and could contain higher levels of lead. As such, it is important to identify elevated levels of lead in drinking water in schools in order to reduce or prevent a child's exposure to lead.

High levels of lead in tap water can cause health effects if the lead in the water enters the blood. A high blood lead level can cause damage to the brain and kidneys and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of the body. Children under the age of six are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning, which can affect their health and development, such as impaired mental and physical development as well as hearing problems. Therefore, MedChi and MDAAP urge the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee to give Senate Bill 481 a favorable report.

**For more information call:**

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