



Thursday, February 2, 2023

To:
Minnesota House of Representatives, Health Committee
SOB 5, St Paul, MN 55101

Dear Committee members,

I am writing to express the BlueGreen Alliance's support for HF 24, general fund appropriation of \$800 million for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to support lead service line projects in the state of Minnesota. We know that lead pipes are everywhere. In Minnesota, it is estimated that there are 260,000 lead pipes, and further inventory work is needed to discover the extent of lead pipes.

Lead is a toxic metal that harms the brain and nervous system and is especially harmful during pregnancy and infancy when it can decrease IQs, diminish academic abilities, and increase attention deficits and problem behaviors. Communities of color and lower-income communities often bear a disproportionate brunt of the hazards of lead water contamination. Even the lowest blood lead levels can affect the developing brain and central nervous system, having irreversible effects.

Investing in our water infrastructure to get the lead out is a win-win—it will boost our economy by creating and sustaining good-paying jobs and ensuring Minnesotans have safe drinking water. The federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) invests \$15 billion for lead service line replacement around the country. It is estimated that investment alone will result in the creation of 200,700 jobs over 10 years in the United States. In Minnesota, we are set to receive \$215 million from the BIL over five years for lead service line replacement. The additional funding in HF 24 will build on that investment so that more Minnesota workers and families would benefit from this bill, employing a local workforce through municipal water utilities and replacing all of the lead pipes in our state.

HF 24 would save thousands of Minnesotans from lead poisoning and would benefit local workers in the involvement of lead remediation within their own communities. We urge you to support this bill and move it forward.

Sincerely,

Abby Hornberger, Minnesota Policy Organizer, BlueGreen Alliance