May 11, 2022

RE: HHS Omnibus Bill – SF 4410/HF4706

Dear Chair Abeler, Chair Liebling, and Conference Committee Members,

We write to express our strong support for provisions to prevent childhood lead exposure in Minnesota. There is no dispute as to the toxicity of lead, and there is mounting evidence that exposure to lead is more widespread than previously thought. A recent study of 1 million U.S. children found that over half had detectable lead levels.[[1]](#footnote-1) Further, even very low levels of lead have been found to cause developmental and learning delays in children.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Minnesota is estimated to have the 10th highest number of lead pipes in the nation,[[3]](#footnote-3) and dangerous lead pipes are found in every part of Minnesota.[[4]](#footnote-4) We strongly support the following provisions in the Health Finance portion of the Omnibus bill that will make significant progress in protecting Minnesota’s children from toxic lead exposure:

* Grants to cities for lead service line inventories

 Spreadsheet Line 1246; Art. 1 Sec. 96

* Lead testing and remediation in schools and day care facilities

 Spreadsheet Line 1349, Art. I, Sec. 40; Reporting of school lead testing

 Spreadsheet Line 1354; Art. 1, Sec. 41

* Response costs for new threshold for elevated blood lead level (now 3.5 micrograms/deciliter per CDC)

Spreadsheet Line 1405, Art. I, Sec. 31

* Grants to remove lead service lines

 Spreadsheet Line 1441

Lead exposure has enormous consequences for a child’s development and it is an entirely preventable public health issue. It’s long past time to eradicate the risk of childhood lead exposure in our state. We encourage you to prioritize these critical provisions as you work towards a compromise Health and Human Services Omnibus bill.

Sincerely,

Nels Paulsen nels@conservationminnesota.org

1. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34570188/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/ehp.9994> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.nrdc.org/media/2021/210715-4> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://health.mn.gov/communities/environment/water/docs/leadreport.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)