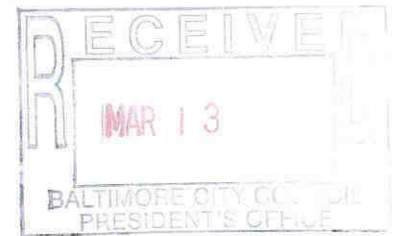




MEMORANDUM

STEPHANIE
RAWLINGS-BLAKE,
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO,
Executive Director, HAB
Commissioner, HCD



To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, *Executive Secretary*

From: Paul T. Graziano, *Commissioner*

Date: March 13, 2013

Re: **City Council Bill 13-0100R – In Support of State Action – Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 13-0100R, which was introduced for the purpose of supporting adoption of House Bill 1067, or similar legislation, to align Maryland lead poisoning prevention policies with CDC recommendations, and urging the Health Department and the Department of Housing and Community Development to improve their coordination in order to maximize the effectiveness of both current lead poisoning prevention efforts and the improvement of efforts that passage of House Bill 1067 would allow.

First, concerning the State legislation in question, Maryland House Bill 1067 (HB 1067) seeks to alter the elevated blood lead level, lowering it from 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ to 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ wherein an owner of affected property is required to satisfy the modified risk reduction standard, and at which time a local health department is required to notify specified persons.

HCD supports HB 1067 because it aligns the state with the revised guidelines for childhood lead poisoning from U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that were issued in May 2012. These guidelines lowered the recommended blood lead level at which known adverse health effects occur to a blood lead concentration of $>5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$. This was done in response to an Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention (ACCLPP) review of the science of childhood lead poisoning and the increasing body of studies providing evidence that impaired cognition, lowered IQ, and behavioral problems can occur at levels lower than the previous CDC "level of concern" of $>10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$.

Second, concerning the coordination of efforts between HCD and the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD), HCD notes the following:

- HCD has included the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) as a funded partner for home visits and lead safety education;
- HCD has also included the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning as a funded partner;
- HCD and BCHD are in regular conversation about individual cases and trends in reporting violations and reports of children testing 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ and above;
- Citistat has organized a series of "Lead Stat" meetings and developed a template that both agencies feed into for high level City Hall monitoring of our work;
- HCD and BCHD are both active participants in the State task force on lead poisoning prevention;
- HCD is using some of its Public Service Commission (PSC) resources to purchase a new XRF machine for joint use by health and housing;

- After a long wind up period, HCD began assigning cases to contractors for lead hazard reduction and is on track to complete eight (8) cases this month, which is the United States Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) target for our new grant; and
- HUD has monitored HCD's start up and first case assignments and HCD is in the "green" zone of HUD compliance on its new grant.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports this legislation and appreciates the opportunity to discuss this important issue.

PTG:nb

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson, *Mayor's Office of Government Relations*
Ms. Kaliope Parthemos, *Deputy Mayor*