

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 258

Approved June 12, 2014

WHEREAS, There is no safe level of lead exposure for children, and lead poisoning is known to cause serious, permanent problems ranging from behavioral issues to academic challenges to severe cognitive disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The children of Providence have historically borne the brunt of Rhode Island's lead poisoning burden; and

WHEREAS, One in five children eligible to enter kindergarten in Providence in 2014 had a history of lead poisoning; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's lead poisoning prevention programs are facing severe budget cuts in fiscal year 2015, including a proposed 75% reduction in State funding for lead hazard abatement in homes statewide, and a budget gap of \$600,000 that threatens the viability of the Health Department's efforts to monitor lead poisoning prevention efforts statewide and coordinate services for lead poisoned children and their families; and

WHEREAS, Lead poisoning causes significant and preventable financial costs to taxpayers, including an estimated extra \$17 million for special education services in Rhode Island in 2012 alone according to information provided by RI DataHub; and

WHEREAS, The Providence City Council; Mayor of Providence, Providence Department of Planning and Development, Providence Law Department, Providence Department of Inspection and Standards, and other City officials are actively engaged in efforts to protect local children from lead poisoning, including the Providence Lead Hazard Reduction Program and the Providence Lead Compliance Initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Health Department's Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Homes Program collects local lead poisoning statistics, which are made available to the public, and coordinates statewide lead poisoning prevention efforts; and

WHEREAS, The work of the Health Department's Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Homes Program is critically necessary to ensure that lead poisoned children in Providence and throughout Rhode Island receive immediate help.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED, That the City Council hereby urges the General Assembly to support House Bill 7803 and Senate Bill 2674, authorizing the allocation of at least a minimum level of State funding to the Housing Resources Commission's Lead Hazard Reduction Program (\$590,000) and to the Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (\$600,000).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That, upon passage, a copies of this resolution be sent to the sponsors of House Bill 7803 and Senate Bill 2674, the Speaker of the House, and the entire Providence General Assembly delegation.

IN CITY COUNCIL

JUN 05 2014

READ AND PASSED

W. Starn
PRES.
Lowell Dyer
CLERK
ACTING

I HEREBY APPROVE.

Axel Tavelin
Mayor
Date: 6/12/14

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - LEAD POISONING PREVENTION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Handy, Hull, Bennett, Valencia, and Slater

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 23-24.6-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-24.6 entitled "Lead
2 Poisoning Prevention Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 23-24.6-5. Environmental lead program. -- (a) There is established within the
4 department of health an environmental lead program which shall be responsible for creating a
5 coordinated and comprehensive program for lead poisoning prevention, including screening and
6 detection, education, lead hazard reduction, and enforcement. The program shall exercise any and
7 all authorities of the department which may be necessary and appropriate, including but not
8 limited to promulgating and enforcing regulations, which regulations shall set forth a general
9 framework for actions to be taken in response to childhood lead poisoning at different blood lead
10 levels.

11 (b) The department shall develop an educational program regarding environmental lead
12 exposures and lead poisoning.

13 (c) The department shall promulgate regulations for acceptable environmental lead levels
14 in dwellings, where a child under the age of six (6) years with environmental intervention blood
15 lead level or greater resides, and in buildings or properties frequently used by children under the
16 age of six (6) years, including standards for lead on painted surfaces and surface coatings,
17 drinking water, household dusts, and soil.

18 (d) The department shall seek federal funding for the environmental lead program;
19 provided, however, that to the extent federal funds are not available or insufficient to fund the

1 environmental lead program, the state of Rhode Island shall appropriate no less than six hundred
2 thousand dollars (\$600,000) per fiscal year, commencing with fiscal year 2015 to the department
3 of health for the support and maintenance of the environmental lead program.

4 SECTION 2. Section 42-128-8 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-128 entitled "Rhode
5 Island Housing Resources Act of 1998" is hereby amended to read as follows:

6 **42-128-8. Powers and duties.** -- In order to provide housing opportunities for all Rhode
7 Islanders, to maintain the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and to coordinate and make
8 effective the housing responsibilities of the agencies and subdivisions of the state, the
9 commission shall have the following powers and duties:

10 (1) Policy, planning and coordination of state housing functions. - The commission shall
11 have the power and duty:

12 (i) To prepare and adopt the state's plans for housing; provided, however, that this
13 provision shall not be interpreted to contravene the prerogative of the state planning council to
14 adopt a state guide plan for housing.

15 (ii) To prepare, adopt, and issue the state's housing policy.

16 (iii) To conduct research on and make reports regarding housing issues in the state.

17 (iv) To advise the governor and general assembly on housing issues and to coordinate
18 housing activities among government agencies and agencies created by state law or providing
19 housing services under government programs.

20 (2) Establish, implement, and monitor state performance measures and guidelines for
21 housing programs. - The commission shall have the power and the duty:

22 (i) To promulgate performance measures and guidelines for housing programs conducted
23 under state law.

24 (ii) To monitor and evaluate housing responsibilities established by state law, and to
25 establish a process for annual reporting on the outcomes of the programs and investments of the
26 state in housing for low and moderate income people.

27 (iii) To hear and resolve disputes pertaining to housing issues.

28 (3) Administer the programs pertaining to housing resources that may be assigned by
29 state law. - The commission shall have the power and duty to administer programs for housing,
30 housing services, and community development, including, but not limited to, programs pertaining
31 to:

32 (i) Abandoned properties and the remediation of blighting conditions.

33 (ii) Lead abatement and to manage a lead hazard abatement program in cooperation with
34 the Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance corporation. The state shall seek federal funding

1 to support the cost of the lead hazard abatement program. In addition, the state of Rhode Island
2 shall appropriate five hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$590,000) per fiscal year commencing
3 with fiscal year 2015 to provide a state match required by such federal funding.

4 (iii) Services for the homeless.

5 (iv) Rental assistance.

6 (v) Community development.

7 (vi) Outreach, education and technical assistance services.

8 (vii) Assistance, including financial support, to non-profit organizations and community
9 development corporations.

10 (viii) Tax credits that assist in the provision of housing or foster community development
11 or that result in support to non-profit organizations performing functions to accomplish the
12 purposes of this chapter.

13 (ix) The Supportive Services Program, the purpose of which is to help prevent and end
14 homelessness among those who have experienced long-term homelessness and for whom certain
15 services in addition to housing are essential. State funding for this program may leverage other
16 resources for the purpose of providing supportive services. Services provided pursuant to this
17 subsection may include, but not be limited to: assistance with budgeting and paying rent; access
18 to employment; encouraging tenant involvement in facility management and policies; medication
19 monitoring and management; daily living skills related to food, housekeeping and socialization;
20 counseling to support self-identified goals; referrals to mainstream health, mental health and
21 treatment programs; and conflict resolution.

22 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

LC004671

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
AN ACT
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - LEAD POISONING PREVENTION ACT

1 This act would provide that in the event of insufficient federal funds for the
2 environmental lead program, the General Assembly shall appropriate no less than six hundred
3 thousand dollars (\$600,000) per year for support and maintenance of the environmental lead
4 program, and five hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$590,000) per year for the state match for the
5 lead hazard abatement program.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

LC004671

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

AN ACT

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - LEAD POISONING PREVENTION ACT

Introduced By: Senator Maryellen Goodwin

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: Senate Finance

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LC004993

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BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
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