SUPPORT

HB 563: Income Tax – Lead Remediation Credit

Ways and Means Committee

February 12, 2020

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission supports state and local lead poisoning prevention strategies that help to detect and eliminate environmental lead hazards, especially when children are at risk.

The Commission submits this testimony in support of HB 563. This bill would provide additional resources to remediate lead hazards in housing to owner occupants and owners of rental property located in Baltimore City.   In Baltimore City, nearly half – 47.2% -- of the housing stock was built before 1950 and is very likely to contain lead-based paint. Baltimore children continue to be exposed to hazardous levels of lead in their homes. In 2018, 492 Baltimore City children were found to have a new blood lead level above the CDC Reference Level of 5µg/dL or higher, about 35% of such children identified state-wide. The majority of Baltimore children (89%) with blood lead levels of 10µg/dL or higher in 2018 who received case management and environmental investigation from the Baltimore City Health Department lived in housing built before 1950.

A lead remediation tax credit would add additional resources to eliminate lead hazards before children are poisoned. These resources would be particularly helpful for owner occupants with young children and small property owners. We would recommend considering restricting funding to properties built before 1950 that are more likely to contain lead hazards than properties built between 1950-1978. We would also request that the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development be asked to fund outreach efforts encouraging Baltimore City owner-occupants who might qualify to apply.

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission urges this Committee to give HB 563 a favorable report.

For more information, please contact Pat McLaine, DrPH, MPH, RN, Chair, Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission, at mclaine@umaryland.edu or 443-520-9678.