

SENATE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND MEDICAID

Chairman Hackett

Vice Chair Tavares

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Betty Cantley, Board Member, Ohio Healthy Homes Network

Written Testimony

Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Tavares, and members of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid, thank you for taking my testimony today. My name is Betty Cantley and I am from Grafton, Ohio.

Preemption of Local Lead Laws

I am opposed to language in House Bill 49 that would preempt local lead laws.

If we had lead laws that required housing to be made lead safe, my son WOULD NOT have been poisoned by lead-based paint.

Both state AND local laws are needed to protect children from lead.

Jason's Story

Our son, Jason, was a healthy baby when he was born on 1/5/94. Five days later, we had a fire on the second floor of our rental house and the landlord hired a contractor for repairs.

Since the house was pre-1978, I asked the contractor if there could be lead in the house. He said don't worry, we could move back in and all was safe if we did not go upstairs. There was at least 1" of dust everywhere in the house. We cleaned every day not knowing it was lead dust.

In first year of a baby's development, the neurons in the brain are connecting. Jason's didn't gain much weight that year, as his once healthy appetite had decreased. The whites in Jason's eyes turned gray.

Compared to his older brothers, Jason's development was way off. A nurse from Elyria Health Dept. assessed Jason. She said Jason's lead levels were above 20

micrograms per deciliter. Jason was behind and should be evaluated by the school district.

First, Jason was on a Family Service Plan. Later, he was evaluated by Elyria City Schools and qualified for an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Jason was on the IEP until his high school graduation.

Lead Study Group

In IEPs, LEAD POISONING is listed as an adverse health condition because it affects learning. If the Toledo Ordinance is struck down, thousands of Toledo children, like my son, will be at risk of lead poisoning.

Ohio's Lead law doesn't prevent poisoning. Our lead laws should do much more to protect children from Lead poisoning.

WHAT IF THIS WAS YOUR CHILD? WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Ohio Healthy Homes Network is working with Senator Lehner on amendments to remove pre-emption and instead create a Lead Study Group that will bring together interested parties to develop recommendations to improve Ohio's Lead Law. Please reject preemption and refer the issue of local vs. state lead laws to the Study Group.

CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE