

March 25, 2021

Testimony of Dr. David P. Carbone, MD, PhD
In Support of H.B. 106: Designate January as Radon Awareness Month
Before the Ohio House Health Committee

April 20, 2021

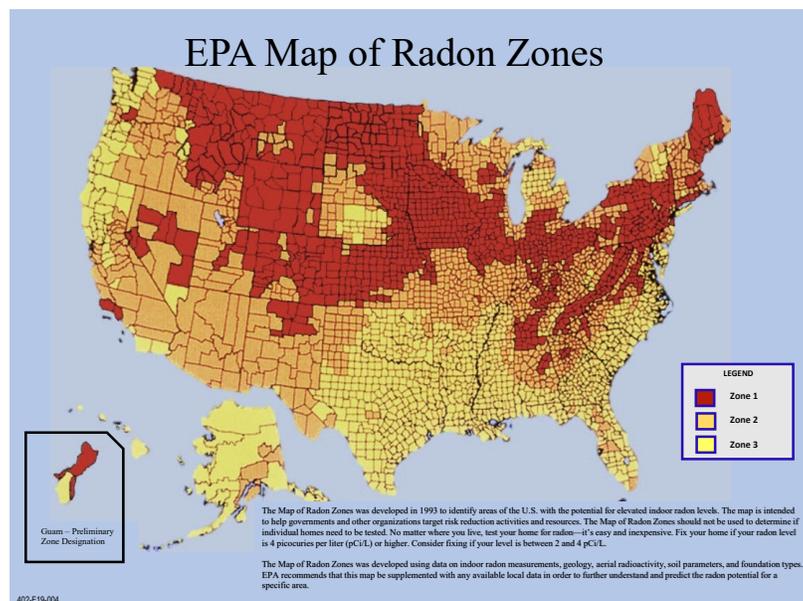
Dear Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Russo and Distinguished Members of the Committee, Lung cancer is by far the number one cause of cancer death for both men and women in the USA and around the world. Radon is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, according to EPA estimates, and the second leading cause of lung cancer. It is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year in the USA.

I am a Professor of Internal Medicine, Director of the James Thoracic Oncology Center at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, and I hold the Barbara J. Bonner Chair in Lung Cancer Research. I graduated summa cum laude from Amherst College in 1977 and received an MD and a PhD in Molecular Biology and Genetics at Johns Hopkins University in 1985, and a Medical Oncology Fellowship at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, MD. My clinical and research interests, grant support and publications have been focused on lung cancer for over 30 years, so I am well aware of the devastating impact this disease can have. It is particularly devastating for people who “do everything right” – take care of themselves, exercise, eat right, and still get lung cancer due to radon exposure. If you have lungs, you can get lung cancer.

Radon comes from the decay of tiny amounts of uranium naturally occurring in the ground. This decay generates radon gas, which percolates up through the soil into the basements of homes. When radon is breathed into your lungs, it can emit what is called an “alpha” particle that is particularly damaging to DNA and can cause cancer. Radon is colorless and odorless and can only be detected with specialized devices.

Below is the EPA map of radon zones. The state of Ohio has the 4th highest level of radon of all states, and is in the top 10 for lung cancer incidence as well.

Designation of January as Radon Awareness Month would be a good first step toward raising public awareness of this situation and reducing lung cancer suffering and deaths in Ohio.



Kind regards,



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