

Pittsburgh City Council
Standing Committee Meeting
November 9, 2021

Good morning, my name is Talor Musil. I am the Health Policy Manager at Women for a Healthy Environment, a Pittsburgh-based non-profit that addresses environmental hazards in homes, schools and early learning spaces that harm public health. I am also a resident of Observatory Hill.

Today, as a member of the Get the Lead Out, Pittsburgh campaign, I would like to speak to the recently introduced Pittsburgh Lead Safety Law. I applaud Council for prioritizing the issue of lead poisoning and taking the historical step towards preventing lead exposure at the source.

I can say that after our event Life Without Lead, that leaders on lead poisoning in our region as well as across our nation, are inspired by Pittsburgh's initiative to join the dozens of other cities in implementing a lead ordinance. And, we're admired for being so comprehensive in our approach -- addressing lead in paint, dust, soil and water.

But, as you have heard, the introduced bill falls short in its ability to protect residents.

Briefly, the key problems that must be fixed in the bill's language before a final vote are:

- **Hinging the implementation of this ordinance on a not-yet-existent rental registry and removing all inspections of child-occupied spaces.** PLI *should* inspect for lead hazards in pre-1978 rental units and child-occupied spaces *whenever* PLI inspects these properties, as originally intended.
- **Removing the provision that requires lead inspection protocols "not to exceed applicable law".** Because there *is no* "applicable law" that already requires inspection for lead hazards, the lead inspection section of the ordinance may be effectively nullified.
- **Exempting the City from federal lead-safe work practice requirements.** Language must be added to ensure that the City's renovation, repair and painting projects in older buildings are done in an EPA-certified lead-safe manner, as originally intended.
- **No general enforcement provision.** This must be added to empower the City to enforce the demolition and RRP requirements -- half of the ordinance.
- **No financial assistance or incentives to help homeowners and low-income landlords address hazards.** We recommend adding provisions for income or property tax relief OR creating a dedicated fund for lead remediation (as Cleveland has done).
- **No ban on all partial lead service replacements in the City of Pittsburgh.** While PWSA has committed to ceasing all non-emergency partials, West View, Wilksburg Penn Joint and Penn American have not. These authorities must stop this dangerous practice that can spike lead in water levels higher than before any replacement took place.

We must work together to ensure the final Pittsburgh Lead Safety Law is as preventative and protective as possible. My colleagues and I look forward to partnering with you all to solve the problem of childhood lead poisoning in our City.

Thank you,
Talor Musil
Health Policy Manager
Women for a Healthy Environment