



August 9, 2017

Brenda Fitzgerald, MD
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Dear Dr. Fitzgerald:

Congratulations on your new role as the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and as Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. We consider the CDC a key player in the government's efforts to ensure that every child receives the best possible health outcomes in the United States. We concur with your statement, "There has been a steep decline in children with abnormal blood lead levels because of screening and comprehensive lead poisoning prevention laws" for National Public Health Week in 2013, and we thank the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program of the CDC for playing a key role in achieving this outcome.

We hope you will continue to be a champion of this vital program and restore its proper place as a branch within the Center for Environmental Health. Despite the tremendous progress, there are still over 500,000 children with blood lead levels above the CDC reference value. Many children who are at high risk, especially those on Medicaid, do not receive the screening services for the lead poisoning to which they are entitled. Current CDC funding is not adequate to enable proper surveillance in all 50 states.

CDC also plays a critical role in advancing the nation's health housing efforts. We understand that housing is a key determinate of health. We emphasize the importance of primary prevention in addition to secondary prevention like the CDC's work. We are concerned about the ongoing problem of lead in old paint and contaminated soil, as well as the historically underappreciated threat of lead in water. Identification of unusual or emerging lead hazards, especially those affecting refugees, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations, remains critically important.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that all Americans have safe and healthy housing.

Sincerely,

Amanda Reddy
Chair, National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition

The National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition is a broad, voluntary coalition of over 300 [organizations](#) working to improve housing conditions nationwide through education and outreach to key national stakeholders and federal public decision-makers. The Coalition promotes policies for safe and healthy housing in the United States, with special emphasis on those who are disproportionately impacted.