

Public Hearing to Protect Kids from Lead Poisoning
Board of Alder Legislation Committee
September 12, 2019

The Room for All Coalition and concerned residents are calling for the Board of Alder's Legislation Committee to consider the following things:

**** Lead poisoning, starting at 5-micrograms per deciliter, is known to cause lifelong harm to children, if not remediated. It affects their developing brains and can cause permanent cognitive and behavioral impacts. There is no treatment for lowering lead poisoning, and the only way to decrease the effects is by eliminating the lead from the child's home.**

**** The City of New Haven has the highest levels of lead poisoned children in the state- from old, deteriorating housing with chipping and flaking lead paint.**

**** The threat of lead poisoning is a public health issue that disproportionately impacts low-income and black and lantix communities who have higher exposure to environmental contaminants and often live in renter occupied units that are owned by absentee landlords/management companies.**

Our Demands:

1. Until recently, New Haven had the most protective laws in the state, but the City is now trying to change that law so that our children have less protections. We do not support the new proposed ordinance! Here's how the new law will strip away the rights that children currently have in our city:

- The City of New Haven will provide minimal protections for children with blood poisoning. Children with blood lead levels of 20 or above get full protections under this law. Children with blood lead levels of under 20 get educational materials only.
- New Haven current law provides far greater protections. It **REQUIRES** full protections for children starting at level 5. That means all children with blood poisoning have full protections from the Health Department.
- The proposed ordinance takes away this right to full protection and instead gives the Health Department **DISCRETION** to not give full protections to children at below level 20. This is effectively TAKING AWAY the protections that children in our city have.
- **We demand that the law stay strong and continue to require the City Health Department to take full action, including inspection, abatement and enforcement, when blood lead poisoning levels are at 5 micrograms.**

2. They're bypassing the process -

- The current law requires a Lead Advisory Committee to provide expertise and input on lead policies. **This Lead Advisory Committee has not had the opportunity to review and advise on this proposed bill.** At its last meeting, the Committee asked for and was not provided the language of the proposed

ordinance. Committee members were very clear that they did not want the Health Department to change the law until the Committee had data on the issue and time to review any proposed ordinance.

- **We demand that Lead Advisory Committee be engaged in the process of making any changes to the current law.** The Committee needs: (1) to be provided the requested data, which to date never been made public at all, such information as the numbers of children impacted by lead poisoning, the number of lead abatement orders issued, and the number of homes that are fixed and at what cost; and (2) to meet with such complete information to have a meaningful conversation about what, if any, changes need to be made to the current law.