

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2016

Alex "Cash" Olszowy III
President
International Code Council
500 New Jersey Avenue, NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Olszowy,

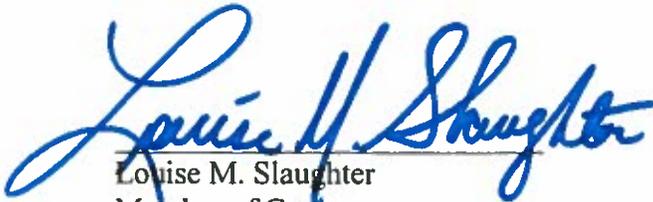
We write to commend your efforts to ensure safe and healthy communities by establishing strong building standards, and to express support for a proposal before the International Code Council (ICC) that would improve protections from lead hazards. We encourage the ICC to support this common-sense amendment to reduce lead exposure and help protect children across the country from lead poisoning.

The proposed amendment (ADM78-16) is narrowly tailored and based on effective policies already in place in communities across the country, including the City of Rochester, New York and the State of Minnesota. The proposal would require contractors seeking a building permit to conduct renovations in homes built prior to 1978 to show proof of lead safety training certification from the Environmental Protection Agency or a state approved organization. This requirement would help ensure that any lead hazards are handled appropriately by qualified contractors. Since federal guidance already requires all contractors to participate in lead safety certification, the proposal should not impose any unreasonable burdens. Rather, this amendment would help improve compliance with existing federal regulations and level the playing field with renovators who are in compliance. Adopting this amendment would in no way make code officials responsible for enforcing the existing federal regulations.

Requiring proof of lead safety certification has already been successful in encouraging contractors to participate in the federally required safety training. When the Minnesota state legislature adopted a similar policy requiring contractors to show proof of certification in order to obtain construction permits for pre-1978 buildings, the EPA saw a 40 percent increase in contractors earning their lead safety certification after the implementation of the rule in 2011. Homes built prior to 1978 are far more likely to contain lead paint because the federal government did not ban consumer use of lead paint until this time. The consequences of unsafe construction practices in homes with lead paint can be disastrous, as there is no safe level of lead exposure. In fact, children are especially at risk, since exposure has been associated with several adverse effects including behavioral and learning problems, lower IQ, hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and anemia. Despite these known risks, lead-based paint remains the primary source of lead exposure to the approximately half a million children with elevated blood lead levels.

For this reason, we ask the ICC to continue their efforts to ensure safe and healthy communities, and help prevent the adverse health risks of lead exposure by adopting the amendment requiring proof of lead-safety certification.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Al Franken
U.S. Senator



Richard J. Durbin
U.S. Senator



Elizabeth Warren
U.S. Senator



Debbie Stabenow
U.S. Senator



Ron Wyden
U.S. Senator



Gary C. Peters
U.S. Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
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Nydia Velazquez
Member of Congress


Brian Higgins
Member of Congress


Richard Hanna
Member of Congress


Keith Ellison
Member of Congress


Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

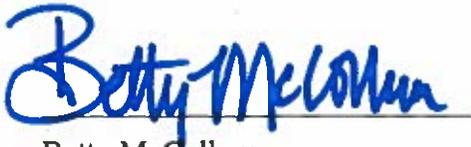

Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress


André Carson
Member of Congress

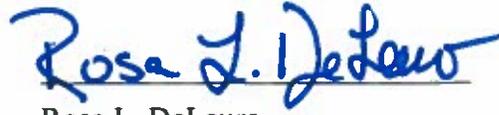

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress


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Member of Congress



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Cc: Members of the ICC Board of Directors