



2400 W 17th Street, Clash Wing, Room 1, Lower Level, Wilmington, DE 19806
lwvde@comcast.net www.lwvdelaware.org

**Testimony on Childhood Lead Poisoning
Before the Joint Finance Committee Public Health Hearing
February 24, 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity to present views of the League of Women Voters on Childhood Lead Poisoning. My name is Sandy Spence. I am currently president of the LWV of Delaware and am also honored to serve as a public member of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Advisory Committee.

As the Advisory Committee statement suggests, “no level of lead is safe.” Yet our state is one of only two in the East Coast (where lead poisoning is greatest due to the number of old housing units which are the primary source of childhood lead poisoning) that provides no state funding for childhood lead poisoning prevention or remediation.

This is a concern due to a recent decision that staffing for the Advisory Committee is an Executive rather than Legislative function. The Committee has had significant support from Nemours, the employer of our Chair, as well as the employers of members of the Committee and outstanding volunteers who support the work of the Committee and Subcommittees. In particular, the Committee has had excellent staff support from Chris Norton as legislative staff to the sponsor of the bill that reconstituted the Committee in 2019. It is unclear how the Executive branch will support our work without dedicated staff support for the ongoing work of the Committee.

In 2019 the League supported a bill in the House to require testing of Children at age 2 in addition to the current required age 1. At this Committee last year, we pointed to the need for purchase of additional machines to facilitate increased testing. We also support lowering the current level of 10 micrograms per deciliter of lead in children’s blood to 5 micrograms per deciliter, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and other recognized authorities.

Accordingly, today we urge funding that will support:

- any additional staff needed to support that increased testing and staff support for the Committee,
- the purchase of the machines that were not funded last year, and
- additional funding for recommendations that are expected out of the Advisory Committee in March.

Thank you for your consideration.