



American Bridge

Trump Policy Brief: Dismantling Lead-Based Paint Protections

4/11/17

DISMANTLING LEAD-BASED PAINT PROTECTIONS

Trump's EPA proposed cutting \$16 million from two federal programs designed to fight exposure to lead-based paint. The Trump Administration wrongly assumed that states could take over the burden, while just 14 states currently have programs in place to do so and many of the remaining states lack the resources. Programs to address lead poisoning have already faced cuts under the CDC.

Exposure to lead-based paint can have permanent neurological, physical, and behavioral effects on children, pregnant women, and the elderly. An estimated 38 million homes currently contain lead-based paint, with hundreds of thousands of children living with the effects of elevated blood-lead levels.

Poor and minority communities would be especially harmed by cuts to these programs. One study found that black children were three times more likely to have elevated blood-lead levels than white children. Eight percent of children in Detroit had elevated blood-lead levels in 2013, sixteen times the national average.

Trump's EPA Budget Slashed Programs That Protect Americans, Particularly Children, From The Dangers Of Lead-Based Paint

TRUMP PROPOSED CUTTING OVER \$16 MILLION FROM TWO FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT FIGHT EXPOSURE TO LEAD-BASED PAINT

Washington Post: Trump's EPA Has Proposed Eliminating Programs "Focused On Limiting Children's Exposure To Lead-Based Paint, Which Is Known To Cause Damage To Developing Brains And Nervous Systems." According to The Washington Post, "Environmental Protection Agency officials are proposing to eliminate two programs focused on limiting children's exposure to lead-based paint, which is known to cause damage to developing brains and nervous systems. The proposed cuts, outlined in a 64-page budget memo revealed by The Washington Post on Friday, would roll back programs aimed at reducing lead risks by \$16.61 million and more than 70 employees, in line with a broader project by the Trump administration to devolve responsibility for environmental and health protection to state and local governments." [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Trump's EPA Would Cut \$16.61 Million And More Than 70 Employees That Focus On Reducing Lead Risks. According to The Washington Post, "Environmental Protection Agency officials are proposing to eliminate two programs focused on limiting children's exposure to lead-based paint, which is known to cause damage to developing brains and nervous systems. The proposed cuts, outlined in a 64-page budget memo revealed by The Washington Post on Friday, would roll back programs aimed at reducing lead risks by \$16.61 million and more than 70 employees, in line with a broader project by the Trump administration to devolve responsibility for environmental and health protection to state and local governments." [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Trump Proposed Cutting The Lead Risk Reduction Program, A \$2.56 Million Program With 72 Full Time Employees That Certifies "Renovators Who Work In Buildings That May Contain Lead-Based Paint And Upholding Federal Safety Standards For Such Projects." According to The Washington Post, "The Lead Risk Reduction Program, which would be cut by \$ 2.56 million and 72.8 full-time equivalent employees, is charged with certifying renovators who work in buildings that may contain lead-based paint and upholding federal safety standards for such projects. Located in the agency's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, the lead risk reduction program also helps educate Americans about how to minimize

their exposure to lead in their homes. The second cut, a much deeper \$ 14.05 million, would zero out grants to state and tribal programs that also address lead-based paint risks.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Trump Proposed Cutting \$14.05 Million In Grants To State And Tribal Programs That “Address Lead-Based Paint Risks.” According to The Washington Post, “The Lead Risk Reduction Program, which would be cut by \$ 2.56 million and 72.8 full-time equivalent employees, is charged with certifying renovators who work in buildings that may contain lead-based paint and upholding federal safety standards for such projects. Located in the agency’s Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, the lead risk reduction program also helps educate Americans about how to minimize their exposure to lead in their homes. The second cut, a much deeper \$ 14.05 million, would zero out grants to state and tribal programs that also address lead-based paint risks.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

TRUMP’S CUTS WRONGFULLY ASSUMED THAT STATES COULD ADDRESS LEAD-BASED PAINT WITHOUT THESE PROGRAMS

Trump’s Policy Would Shift Responsibility Onto The States, Most Of Which Lack Their Own Programs And Resources To Deal With Lead-Based Paint Risks

Washington Post: The Cuts Were “In Line With A Broader Project By The Trump Administration To Devolve Responsibility For Environmental And Health Protection To State And Local Governments.” According to The Washington Post, “Environmental Protection Agency officials are proposing to eliminate two programs focused on limiting children’s exposure to lead-based paint, which is known to cause damage to developing brains and nervous systems. The proposed cuts, outlined in a 64-page budget memo revealed by The Washington Post on Friday, would roll back programs aimed at reducing lead risks by \$16.61 million and more than 70 employees, in line with a broader project by the Trump administration to devolve responsibility for environmental and health protection to state and local governments.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

- **Former Head Of EPA Office Of Chemical Safety And Pollution Prevention Jim Jones Criticized The Cuts For Putting Additional Burden On States Without Giving Them The Funding They Need To Carry It Out.** According to The Washington Post, “‘The basis for the EPA reduction is that states can do this work, but then we’re going to take away the money we’re going to give to states,’ said Jim Jones, who headed the EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, which administers the lead-based paint program, in the Obama years. ‘I think it’s just one of many examples in that budget of the circular thinking there that just doesn’t hold together.’” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Only 14 States Have Their Own Programs Addressing Lead-Based Paint Risks, And The Rest Have Relied On The Federal Government. According to The Washington Post, “Fourteen states — Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin — run programs to train contractors how to properly handle renovations involving lead paint, according to the EPA’s website. The rest rely on the federal government to provide training.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Director Of The Center For Urban Studies At Wayne State University Lyke Thompson: “1,500 Children Were Lead Poisoned In Detroit In 2014, But That The City Only Had Enough Money For 100 To 200 Lead Paint Abatements Each Year.” According to The Huffington Post, “‘To suggest that we should be decreasing funding is absurd,’ Lyke Thompson, a political science professor and the director of the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit told The Huffington Post. Thompson noted that more than 1,500 children were lead poisoned in Detroit in 2014, but that the city only had enough money

for 100 to 200 lead paint abatements each year. ‘It means that they don’t understand the problem — it doesn’t mean that the problem doesn’t exist,’ he said.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Bangor Environmental Health Strategy Center Deputy Director Patrick MacRoy: With Trump’s Cuts, “I Expect Maine And Many Other States Would Really Struggle To Find The Resources To Continue These Programs And As A Result We Would See More Children Exposed To Lead And Less Housing Made Safe.” According to the Portland Press Herald, “‘This is hundredths of a percent of the federal budget, but by making these cuts we’re potentially returning to those days when we used to sandblast or burn lead paint off walls, creating messes that could actually poison children worse than if nothing had been done at all,’ said Patrick MacRoy, a former director of Chicago’s lead poisoning prevention program who is now deputy director at the Portland- and Bangor-based Environmental Health Strategy Center. ‘I expect Maine and many other states would really struggle to find the resources to continue these programs and as a result we would see more children exposed to lead and less housing made safe.’” [Portland Press Herald, [4/9/17](#)]

Funding For Programs Addressing Lead Poisoning Have Already Suffered Under CDC Cuts. According to The Huffington Post, “Funding for programs fighting lead poisoning has already suffered. In Chicago, where more than 10,300 kids under the age of six suffer from elevated levels of lead in their blood, officials were already spending less on combating lead paint due to reduced federal funding from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Cuts to EPA programs could exacerbate the situation via a \$14.05 million reduction in grants devoted to state and local programs addressing lead poisoning.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Trump’s Cuts To The EPA Would Be Devastating To Public Health, Particularly In Marginalized Communities

LEAD-BASED PAINT REMAINS IN MILLIONS OF HOMES NATIONWIDE, POISONING CHILDREN BY THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS

Lead-Based Paint Is “One Of The Most Common Causes Of Lead Poisoning.” According to Think Progress, “Lead-based paint, including lead-contaminated dust, is one of the most common causes of lead poisoning, according to the EPA. A 2011 national housing survey estimated that more than a third of housing units across the nation (37 million of 106 million units) contain lead-based paint, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.” [Think Progress, [4/6/17](#)]

Washington Post: The EPA Had Estimated That “38 Million U.S. Homes Contain Lead-Based Paint.” According to The Washington Post, “According to The Washington Post, “Old housing stock is the biggest risk for lead exposure — and the EPA estimates that 38 million U.S. homes contain lead-based paint.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

CNN: “Lead-Based Paint Is The Most Widespread And Dangerous High-Dose Source Of Lead Exposure For Young Children.” According to CNN, “Although there are several exposure sources -- air, food, water, dust and soil, among them -- lead-based paint is the most widespread and dangerous high-dose source of lead exposure for young children.” [CNN, [1/29/16](#)]

In 2014, The Centers For Disease Control And Prevention Found That 243,000 Children Had Lead Blood Lead Levels Above The Danger Threshold. According to The Washington Post, “In a 2014 report, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 243,000 children had blood lead levels above the

danger threshold — and that permanent neurological damage and behavior disorders had been associated at even lower levels of lead exposure.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

2.6 Percent Of Preschool Children In The U.S. Have Unsafe Levels Of Lead In Their Blood.

According to Think Progress, “Research has shown that the neurotoxic effects of lead on a child’s developing brain can be devastating and irreversible. An estimated 2.6 percent of preschool children in the U.S. have a blood lead concentration greater than 5 micrograms per deciliter, the level at which the federal government recommends public health intervention.” [Think Progress, [4/6/17](#)]

LEAD EXPOSURE CAN HAVE PERMANENT PHYSICAL, NEUROLOGICAL, AND BEHAVIORAL EFFECTS ON CHILDREN, PREGNANT WOMEN, AND THE ELDERLY, EVEN IN SMALL AMOUNTS

Washington Post: “Lead Is A Potent Neurotoxin, And Particularly Harmful To Children And The Elderly.” According to The Washington Post, “Lead is a potent neurotoxin, and particularly harmful to children and the elderly. Its dangers in gasoline, paint and drinking water have been scientifically documented over many decades, which has led to stronger regulatory protections.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

Lead Exposure Can Cause Permanent Neurological Damage And Behavior Disorders, Even At Low Levels. According to The Washington Post, “In a 2014 report, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 243,000 children had blood lead levels above the danger threshold — and that permanent neurological damage and behavior disorders had been associated at even lower levels of lead exposure.” [Washington Post, [4/5/17](#)]

World Health Organization: Lead Can Cause “Long-Term Harm In Adults, Including Increased Risk Of High Blood Pressure And Kidney Damage.” According to the World Health Organization, “Young children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of lead and can suffer profound and permanent adverse health effects, particularly affecting the development of the brain and nervous system. Lead also causes long-term harm in adults, including increased risk of high blood pressure and kidney damage. Exposure of pregnant women to high levels of lead can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth and low birth weight, as well as minor malformations.” [World Health Organization, [September 2016](#)]

World Health Organization: “Exposure Of Pregnant Women To High Levels Of Lead Can Cause Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Premature Birth And Low Birth Weight, As Well As Minor Malformations.” According to the World Health Organization, “Young children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of lead and can suffer profound and permanent adverse health effects, particularly affecting the development of the brain and nervous system. Lead also causes long-term harm in adults, including increased risk of high blood pressure and kidney damage. Exposure of pregnant women to high levels of lead can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth and low birth weight, as well as minor malformations.” [World Health Organization, [September 2016](#)]

Huffington Post: Lead Poisoning Can Lead To “ADHD, Behavior Problems, And Irreversible Brain And Central Nervous Damage.” According to The Huffington Post, “Paint was peeling off the windows,” recalled Gray in the 2009 deposition of a lead-poisoning lawsuit he and his siblings filed against the owners of the building they grew up in. For children like Gray, who was 25 years old when he died in April, lead poisoning can mean ADHD, behavior problems, and irreversible brain and central nervous damage.” [Huffington Post, [2/27/17](#)]

- **Huffington Post: “The ‘Lead Kids’ Who Make It To Adulthood Often Suffer From Lower IQ Scores, Behavioral Disorders, Hyperactivity And A Lack Of Impulse Control.”** According to

The Huffington Post, “One part of Trump’s New Deal was to improve education and reduce crime in black communities. But the ‘lead kids’ who make it to adulthood often suffer from lower IQ scores, behavioral disorders, hyperactivity and a lack of impulse control — all of which can lead to high crime rates and a high number of repeat offenders.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

GUTTING PROGRAMS FIGHTING LEAD POISONING WOULD CAUSE DISPROPORTIONATE HARM TO POOR, BLACK AND HISPANIC CHILDREN

Huffington Post: Trump’s Cuts To EPA Lead Exposure Programs Would Hit “Poor Black People, Especially Children” The Hardest. According to The Huffington Post, “But, on March 31, a 64-page budget memo for the 2018 fiscal year obtained by The Washington Post revealed that officials within the Environmental Protection Agency want to eradicate two programs that curb children’s exposure to lead paint. This proposed cut would include the Lead Risk Reduction Program, which trains building renovators on safe paint removal, maintains federal safety standards and educates the public on the detrimental health effects of lead exposure. While this is just a proposal at the moment, one thing is clear: poor black people, especially children, would be hit the hardest despite Trump’s promises to protect them.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Mother Jones: “Most Middle Class White Families Feel Relatively Immune From The Dangers Of Lead” While “Economically And Politically Vulnerable Black And Hispanic Children, Many Of Whom Inhabit Dilapidated Older Housing, Still Suffer Disproportionately From The Devastating Effects Of The Toxin.” According to Mother Jones, “Hundreds of tons of the lead in paint that covered the walls of houses, apartment buildings, and workplaces across the United States remains in place almost four decades later, especially in poorer neighborhoods where millions of African American and Latino children currently live. Right now, most middle class white families feel relatively immune from the dangers of lead, although the gentrification of old neighborhoods and the renovation of old homes can still expose their children to dangerous levels of lead dust from the old paint on those walls. However, economically and politically vulnerable black and Hispanic children, many of whom inhabit dilapidated older housing, still suffer disproportionately from the devastating effects of the toxin.” [Mother Jones, [2/13/16](#)]

Lead Poisoning Has Predominantly Impacted Black Children. According to The Huffington Post, “Between 1997 and 2001, the CDC estimates that 60 percent of children with confirmed elevated blood-lead levels were black. Most of them live in poor, predominantly black areas like Cleveland’s Glenville neighborhood where 26.5 percent of 286 children tested in 2014 had lead levels greater than five micrograms per deciliter. And, a 2005 study in the Journal of Environmental Health Perspective discovered that kids living in the inner city were further exposed to lead from soil blowing across playgrounds. A 2015 HuffPost analysis found a strong correlation between high black populations and high lead poisoning rates.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Huffington Post: “A 2015 HuffPost Analysis Found A Strong Correlation Between High Black Populations And High Lead Poisoning Rates.” According to The Huffington Post, “Between 1997 and 2001, the CDC estimates that 60 percent of children with confirmed elevated blood-lead levels were black. Most of them live in poor, predominantly black areas like Cleveland’s Glenville neighborhood where 26.5 percent of 286 children tested in 2014 had lead levels greater than five micrograms per deciliter. And, a 2005 study in the Journal of Environmental Health Perspective discovered that kids living in the inner city were further exposed to lead from soil blowing across playgrounds. A 2015 HuffPost analysis found a strong correlation between high black populations and high lead poisoning rates.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Huffington Post: “Between 1999 And 2004, Black Children Were 1.6 Times More Likely To Test Positive For Lead In Their Blood Than White Children” And “3 Times More Likely Than White Children To Have Highly Elevated Blood-Lead Levels.” According to The Huffington Post, “On

average, between 1999 and 2004, black children were 1.6 times more likely to test positive for lead in their blood than white children. And among children who tested positive for extremely high lead levels (≥ 10 micrograms per deciliter), the disparity was even more stark. Black children were nearly three times more likely than white children to have highly elevated blood-lead levels, the type of lead poisoning where the most damaging health outcomes occur.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Huffington Post: In 2013, “Eight Percent Of Kids In Detroit Had Elevated Blood-Lead Levels, Which Is 16 Times The National Average.” According to The Huffington Post, “And, in 2015, Baltimore had over 16,700 blighted properties, while Detroit had at least 80,000. As of 2013, eight percent of kids in Detroit had elevated blood-lead levels, which is 16 times the national average, and nearly two percent of kids in Baltimore had high levels as well.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]

Five Percent Of Children In Savannah, Georgia, Four Percent Of Children In Montgomery, Alabama And Three Percent Of Kids In Birmingham, Alabama Had Elevated Blood-Lead Levels. According to The Huffington Post, “The problem extends beyond Rust Belt cities. HuffPost found that more than five percent of children in Savannah, Georgia, which is 57 percent black, have elevated blood-lead levels compared to 0.5 percent of children nationally. Four percent of children in Montgomery, Alabama and three percent of kids in Birmingham, Alabama — both of which have populations that are over 50 percent black — also have elevated blood-lead levels.” [Huffington Post, [4/6/17](#)]