



May 4, 2017

Dear Senator,

**The over 100 organizations, health professionals, faith leaders, and community leaders below are writing to ask you to act immediately on SB 48/AB 78, the *Leading on Lead Bill*.**

Right now, thousands of children across Wisconsin are being exposed to toxic lead when they drink a glass of water at home or use drinking fountains at school, places of worship, and the park. We know that water systems across Wisconsin have tested for unsafe levels of lead and that lead pipes are prevalent in every part of Wisconsin – rural, urban, and suburban. We also know that between 1996 and 2016 more than 200,000 children were diagnosed as being lead-poisoned.

Lead exposure doesn't discriminate. Wherever there are lead pipes, there is risk. And the risks are frightening. Children with elevated blood lead levels can suffer profound and lifelong health problems, including damage to brain development that causes learning disabilities, mental illness, increased violent behavior, more suspensions from school, and more. Even in the smallest amounts, lead interferes with the synapses in a child's brain. In the words of one researcher, lead "derails (the) brain's learning center."

The *Leading on Lead Bill* creates a commonsense tool for helping local communities begin to remove lead pipes. Lead leaches into water via lead water mains, lead laterals, old pipes, solder, and fixtures. The threat increases when municipalities replace pipes on public property and homeowners don't replace the lateral pipes on their property. That's because more lead is released into the drinking water supply when new lead-free pipes are soldered onto older lead pipes. Currently, water utilities have little flexibility to help homeowners replace lead pipes in their homes and on their property.

SB 48/AB 78 would give communities the tools necessary to help get rid of these toxic lead pipes by allowing them to provide greater financial assistance to homeowners to replace them.

As legislators, you need to act quickly to make sure that Wisconsin's children are safe from the long-term damage of lead poisoning. Vote to approve SB 48/AB 78 so that local communities can get to work to protect our kids.

Sincerely,

**Organizational Supporters:**

Physicians for Social Responsibility Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards  
Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Wisconsin Environmental Health Network  
Wisconsin Association of School Nurses

Wisconsin Public Health Association  
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families  
JONAH (Joining Our Neighbors Advancing Hope), Eau Claire  
Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Wisconsin Green Muslims  
Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters  
Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Artha Sustainability Living Center LLC, Amherst  
Brown County Conservation Alliance  
Citizens' Water Coalition of Wisconsin  
Clean Water Action Council of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.  
Clean Wisconsin  
Climate Action Now, Eau Claire  
Crawford Stewardship Project, Gays Mills  
Forward Action Wisconsin Network  
Freshwater for Life Action Coalition, Milwaukee  
Headwater LLC  
Indigenous Warrior Society of Wisconsin, Green Bay  
Indivisible Fond du Lac  
Indivisible Up North  
Indivisible Winnebago  
Midwest Environmental Advocates  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Milwaukee Water Commons  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Progressive Students & Alumni, Eau Claire  
River Alliance of Wisconsin  
United We Stand Brown County  
WEi - Go Greener  
Wisconsin Freshwater Coalition  
Wisconsin John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club

**Health Professionals:**

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James Omohundro, MD, Madison  
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Jonathan Takahashi, MD, Madison  
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Carrie Bach, PA, Madison  
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**Faith and Community Leaders:**

David Anderson, Pastor, Eau Claire  
Rev. Ron Adams, Fitchburg  
Reverend Bill Beaton, Fond du Lac  
Reverend Sandra McKinney, President of JONAH, Eau Claire  
Jackie Thiry, Chair of St. Matthew Justice & Human Concerns Committee, Green Bay  
Dean Hoegger, President and Executive Director –CWAC, Green Bay  
Andrew Werthmann, Eau Claire City Council Alder, Eau Claire  
Joe Luginbill, Eau Claire Area School Board Vice President, Eau Claire

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