



Legislation Text

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Clerk 08/18/2016

A MOTION calling for meaningful actions to address lead poisoning and support for efforts to eliminate lead poisoning in King County.

WHEREAS, international and national health agencies and programs recognize that lead is an extremely toxic metal that can have severe health impacts on adults and children, and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assert there is no safe level of exposure to lead, and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also assert that exposure to lead has negative impacts on almost all systems of the human body and can cause permanent disability and other health problems in children such as learning disabilities, decreased IQs, behavioral problems, decreased physical growth and other health issues, and

WHEREAS, lead poisoning is a preventable public health problem, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Department of Health surveillance data show that only a fraction of children exposed to lead in Washington state and King County receive blood-lead-level testing, and

WHEREAS, Public Health - Seattle & King County estimates that more than eight thousand children in King County may have elevated blood lead levels, based on 2014 data, and

WHEREAS, it is well-documented nationwide that older housing stock that contains lead-based paint is a continuing source of lead poisoning in children, and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, approximately twenty percent of all King County housing was built before 1950 and an additional forty-one percent was built

between 1950 and 1979, when use of lead-based paint and other materials was common, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance program has identified businesses in King County that use large amounts of lead or generate lead contamination that poisons adult workers, and found that adults exposed at work may take lead home with them, thereby exposing their children and other family members, and

WHEREAS, a recent review of Washington state Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance data by Public Health - Seattle & King County revealed a disproportionate burden of lead poisoning is borne by communities of color in King County, and

WHEREAS, several occupational- and environmental-health organizations, including the Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists, assert that current occupational standards for lead in state and federal law are based on scientific knowledge from the 1970s and do not reflect the current understanding of lead's health effects, and

WHEREAS, the current occupational standards in state and federal law for lead are not protective of workers and residents in King County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The council calls on federal and state lawmakers to take meaningful action to address lead poisoning.

B. The council encourages and will explore requiring all King County health care providers to adopt Washington state Department of Health guidance for lead screening of all children at ages twelve and twenty-four months, including screening all Medicaid-eligible children, and screening based on the recommended child lead exposure risk assessment.

C. The council supports updating the occupational lead standards for lead in Washington state to provide greater protection for workers and their families.