



Coalition *for* Healthier Schools

*...providing the national platform and
the forum for environmental health at school, since 2001...*

Coordinated by Healthy Schools Network

March 13, 2014

Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of more than 150 participating parent, public health, environment, and education groups in the Coalition, we urge you to make healthy children and healthy indoor environments a priority in the final FY15 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations. Specifically, we ask that you ensure that EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection and EPA's Indoor Environments Division have \$10 million over FY 14 to reduce environmental health risks in our nation's PreK-12 schools.

Some 55 million children attend public and private schools every day, yet our nation's schools – places where 20% of Americans who are 95% women and children learn and work every day – are woefully unaware or under-prepared to manage their facilities, as numerous studies on schoolhouse neglect have shown. Research also shows that environmentally healthy learning places that are clean, dry and quiet, and have good ventilation, have lower absenteeism and higher test scores.

Yet, CDC's 2012 School Health Policy Survey found far too few states and districts adopting environmental management policies that promote attendance and achievement. CDC found for example:

- only 42.9% of states helping districts with Indoor Air Quality; and,
- 36.3% of districts having a policy to purchase low-emitting products which reduce contaminants in indoor air.

We urge you to ensure that EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection receive \$2 million over FY 14 to support its voluntary grants for state agencies and for pediatric environmental health. And we urge that EPA's Office of Air and Radiation/Indoor Environments be allocated \$8 million over FY 14 for voluntary grants to reduce

children's indoor exposures and asthma in homes, schools, and child care centers, as well as to help schools' address resiliency to severe weather events.

Sincerely,

AASA–The School Superintendents Association
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
American Lung Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved
Association of School Business Officials International
Asthma Regional Council of New England
Beyond Pesticides
Center for Cities + Schools, University of California, Berkeley
Center for Environmental Health
Connecticut Foundation for Environmentally Safe Schools
Empire State Consumer Project
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Green Schools, Inc. (MA)
Green Schools Initiative (CA)
Green Schools National Network
Health Resources in Action (MA)
Healthy Schools Network
Improving Kids' Environment (IN)
Institute for Health and the Environment at the University at Albany
Kids for Saving Earth
Maryland Children's Environmental Health Coalition
Maryland Pesticide Action Network
Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
Massachusetts Healthy Schools Network
National Association of School Nurses
National Education Association – Healthy Schools Caucus
New York State United Teachers
Physicians for Social Responsibility–Florida
Sierra Club–Environmental Justice & Community Partnerships Program
Sheet Metal Occupational Health Institute Trust (SMOHIT)
Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health
Take Care of Your Classroom Air (TX)
U.S. Green Building Council
West Harlem Environmental Action

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