

Testimony in SUPPORT of Budget Article 3, Section 17 Lead Registry for Rental Properties

House Finance Committee Hearing on February 29, 2024.

My name is Lisa Jones. I am a member of the Rhode Island Association of Realtors, a registered voter and I live in Providence. I believe having lead safe homes is a top priority due to the dangers of lead. I support the creation of this law and look forward to the day when ever home in RI is lead safe. However, I believe the implementation and timelines set for compliance needs improvement for 2 important reasons.

1. There are very few contractors in RI qualified, licensed and properly insured to remediate lead in homes. Many of these contractors are already booked out until Summer at this point. There simply aren't enough qualified professionals to ensure all multi-family owners with lead in their homes meet the October 2024 deadline to register their homes and be lead-safe. I don't know the numbers but I would venture a guess that there is a shortage of State employees trained and authorized to inspect these homes once remediation is complete and needs to be signed off on.
2. Mutli-family homes that are occupied by adult children and elderly parents are also a concern. Although this law is much needed and overdue, I am not sure proper consideration has been paid to the elderly and families where adult children are living in a 2/3 family to assist in the care and expenses involved in caring for elderly parents. Remediation on many of these homes is going to be costly. Windows with lead painted framework will need to be removed and remediation and/or replacement will be necessary. If a 2 family has 10 windows that need remediation, that will be at least \$10,000 in widow remediation alone. Many elderly cannot afford that. Someone on fixed income isn't going to be able to afford that.

Also, these families living in multi-families with their parents have likely been doing it for decades. They should be well aware of the lead hazards in their home. In circumstances like this, it may be beneficial to adjust the law so that all lead remediation has to be completed prior to selling – so the current owners have time to prepare/save or slowly remediate as they are able and the new owners move into a certified lead safe home.

Respectfully,

