

Hi. I am Steven Sitrin with William Raveis Inspire. I work as a Realtor across Rhode Island, and I am here to testify in support of the legislation to revise the processes by which landlords certify that their rental properties are free of lead risks to tenants.

The first challenge in complying with the inspection process has been the lack of qualified inspectors. Landlords are being quoted a 6-8 week wait for inspections. Delayed implementation and penalties will allow landlords to comply with the law without penalizing them for delays that are beyond their control. With the current delay in inspections, landlords could lose out on rental income while waiting for an inspection and report prior to commencing a lease with a new tenant.

The requirement for inspections of properties built after 1978 when lead paint was banned should be eliminated. This would not only relieve landlords from burdensome inspections of properties without risk of lead paint, but it would also free up inspectors to focus on the housing stock with a real risk of lead paint.

The process is particularly challenging for owner of historic properties - especially in Newport & Providence - are significant portions of the rental housing stock. Owners have to maintain historic structures according to Historic District standards, including maintaining existing double hung wood windows with sashes but inspectors automatically fail wood windows with sashes. No one wants to destroy the historic character of these houses. There needs to be a common sense solution - be it the testing of the air in the vicinity as windows are opened or closed - or something else so that we do not lose this important part of the already limited housing stock available to Rhode Island residents.