

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5478

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As Passed Senate, February 12, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to lead-based paint activities.

**Brief Description:** Reducing childhood lead exposure.

**Sponsors:** Senators Franklin, Winsley, Prentice, Shin, Costa, Eide, T. Sheldon, Fairley, Jacobsen, Thibaudeau, B. Sheldon, Regala, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Spanel, McAuliffe, Fraser and Snyder.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 2/8/01, 2/14/01 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/12/01, 47-0; 2/12/02, 48-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Thibaudeau, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Costa, Fraser and Winsley.

**Staff:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7198)

**Background:** Lead is highly toxic, and lead exposure is dangerous, especially to children ages six and younger. Young children are at higher risk for lead poisoning, as their bodies are smaller and still developing, and as they are more likely to ingest lead dust.

Low to moderate lead poisoning in children can cause nervous system and kidney damage, decreased muscle and bone growth, hearing damage, speech, language, and behavior problems, learning disabilities and reduced IQ. Other studies have linked lead poisoning to anti-social and criminal behavior. Low-income children are at greater risk for lead poisoning.

Lead was commonly used in paint until it was banned for residential use in 1978. Ingesting or breathing dust from lead-based paint is the most common form of lead exposure. Dust is released by the deterioration of paint and during remodeling. Private contractors are required to use proper techniques to control lead dust, but many homeowners perform their own remodeling without using or knowing of these techniques.

There is concern that families in older housing are not aware of the dangers of lead poisoning, that they do not know how to detect and abate existing lead hazards, and how to control for lead dust while doing their own remodeling.

**Summary of Bill:** The Department of Health is directed to establish an education program to reduce childhood exposure to lead in residential settings, with a focus on older housing stock. The department is directed to seek and use federal funds for the program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Lead exposure is a real hazard for children, especially in residential settings. Educating families can minimize risk, and the Department of Health is committed to continuing to do so.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Bill White, Department of Health, Environmental Health.

**House Amendment(s):** The department is not required to implement this program if federal funds are not available.