

2024 -- H 8306

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LC005972
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 23, 2024, TO BE "LEAD POISONING PREVENTION DAY" IN
RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Morales, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale,
Kennedy, Ajello, Fogarty, Cortvriend, Shallcross Smith, and Diaz

Date Introduced: May 23, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, exposure
2 to childhood lead poisoning can do great damage to a child's health. Exposure to lead poisoning
3 can damage the brain and nervous system, lower IQ, slow growth and development, cause
4 hearing and speech problems, learning and behavior problems, and decreased attention span
5 leading to underperformance in school; and

6 WHEREAS, Lead is a naturally occurring element found in the air, soil, water and often,
7 inside of homes. Exposure comes from many sources including fossil fuels and leaded gasoline,
8 paint used in homes, ceramics, pipes, solders, plumbing materials, batteries, ammunition, and
9 even cosmetics. Lead can also often be found in high levels at industrial sources and
10 contaminated sites; and

11 WHEREAS, A recent medical research paper published by the National Academy of
12 Sciences stated that over 170 million Americans who were adults in 2015 had been exposed to
13 harmful levels of lead as children. The researchers estimate that half of the United States adult
14 population had lead levels higher than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention threshold
15 for harmful lead exposure. The researchers also found that in addition to negatively affecting
16 cognitive development, high levels of lead exposure also increased the risk for developing
17 hypertension and heart disease; and

18 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that worldwide, nearly
19 one million people die every year due to lead poisoning. They also estimate that globally, one in

1 three children, approximately 800 million worldwide, have high blood levels of lead poisoning.
2 The WHO estimates that lead exposure leads to 21.7 million years lost to death and disability
3 around the world; and

4 WHEREAS, Approximately 80 percent of Rhode Island houses were built before 1978,
5 when lead-based paints were finally banned from residential use. It is estimated that currently,
6 66,000 children in Rhode Island live in these houses. In 2020, 472 Rhode Island children under
7 the age of six were diagnosed with lead poisoning, tragically making Rhode Island home to the
8 second-highest number of children with severe lead poisoning in New England. According to
9 Joseph Braun, Associate Professor of Epidemiology at Brown University, "a doubling of blood
10 levels is associated with a 72 percent increase in aggressive behaviors" and also "results in a 6.9
11 point decline in IQ. And it's estimated that each IQ point is worth a loss of \$17,000 in lifetime
12 earnings"; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
14 proclaims May 23, 2024, to be "Lead Poisoning Prevention Day" in Rhode Island; and be it
15 further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mr. Terrance Gray, Director, Rhode Island
18 Department of Environmental Management.

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