

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 2, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

The Honorable Ben Carson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

The Honorable Alex Azar
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Carson, Acting Administrator Wheeler, and Secretary Azar:

We are writing in regards to the *President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children* (Task Force) and its development of a new *Federal Strategy to Reduce Childhood Lead Exposures and Eliminate Associated Health Impacts* (Federal strategy). We are concerned that the Administration is not prioritizing this Federal strategy, and we request a status update on your efforts, including your expected release date for any publication.

In October 2017, the Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development published a Request for Information seeking public comment on a new Federal lead strategy. That comment period closed in November 2017. In February 2018, E&E news published a report documenting a “high-level war on lead summit,” that suggested the Task Force planned to finalize its strategy by June 2018. In addition, a February 16, 2018 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency press release stated that Task Force officials had committed to “Set an aggressive, near-term timeline for the Task Force to complete its work to draft the strategy.”


Unfortunately, those are all the status updates we have. Families and children remain at risk for lead exposure, and it is unclear when the Administration intends to release its strategy. This should be a top priority across your agencies. Any comprehensive strategy should outline new initiatives to eliminate this scourge, a timeline for doing so, and the expected budgetary

resources necessary to accomplish this goal. The Administration should uphold its promise for an aggressive timeline and move forward with its comprehensive strategy.

We request the status of your work on a Federal strategy and your expected release date for publication. We ask that you submit your response in writing by August 9, 2018

Thank you for your prompt reply to this request.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
U.S. Senator



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator