



The League of Women Voters of New York State  
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207  
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812  
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS  
*of New York State*

September 23, 2008

The Honorable David Patterson  
Governor of New York State  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, New York 12224

Re: A.6399-C/S.6350-B  
The Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention and Safe Housing Act of 2008

Dear Governor Patterson:

The League of Women Voters of New York State urges you to sign into law the Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention and Safe Housing Act of 2008.

Primary prevention plans would be developed to conduct housing inspections, public education and outreach activities within the 30 communities in New York State, outside New York City, that have the greatest number of cases of lead poisoning. On a statewide level, more than 5,000 children are newly identified as lead poisoned each year; thousands more are likely poisoned but never diagnosed.

The Gantt/Robach bills (A.6399-C/S.6350-B) would also allow eligible property owners to get limited tax credits for reducing lead hazards, thus providing incentives for property owners to remove lead paint hazards in their homes. It would establish a worker certification and training program to remove lead hazards safely.

Under current state law, a property only gets inspected for lead paint hazards after a child has already been permanently injured by lead poisoning. At that point, it is too late to reverse the neurological damage to the child, although the property may subsequently have its lead hazards removed. This legislation would provide that lead hazards in the highest risk areas of the state be identified *before* children are poisoned, thus providing for primary prevention rather than secondary prevention.

The cost to implement A-6399-C/S.6350-B is modest; the cost of doing nothing is huge. Taxpayers will have to bear a much greater burden if more children come to school displaying disruptive behavior, attention deficit disorder, and need special education, social services and medical treatment. Taxpayers may also face a greater burden funding more juvenile detention centers and prisons when these children grow up in light of a recent longitudinal study which reported and confirmed a positive correlation between childhood lead poisoning and adult criminal behavior

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Martha C. Kennedy'.

Martha C. Kennedy, President