

**Statement of RuthAnne Visnauskas
Commissioner/CEO
New York State Homes and Community Renewal**

**Joint Senate Standing Committee on Health
Senate Standing Committee on Housing, Construction, and Community Development**

I want to thank Chairmen Rivera and Kavanagh and the distinguished members of the Legislature for the opportunity to submit testimony to your public hearing on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention. New York State Homes and Community Renewal is committed to advancing safe affordable housing for all New Yorkers that is consistent with local municipal health departments, federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards and regulations, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules.

As you well know, lead is a threat to our children and a threat to our future. Its devastating effects on public health and childhood learning contribute to enduring problems, with a disproportionate impact that too often cascades across generations in communities and households of color. Importantly, the advances we make towards greater environmental justice are critical to creating a more socially equitable society that delivers better and more enduring health outcomes to our most vulnerable communities.

HCR is on track to reach our targeted goals of creating and preserving 100,000 affordable homes and an additional 6,000 supportive homes through the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI). This achievement will include the preservation and new construction of tens of thousands of units compliant with HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule (24 CFR Part 35), the accompanying Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Based-Paint Hazards in Housing (Second Edition, July 2012), and the EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (40 CFR Part 745).

In all projects that we finance, HCR ensures that lead hazards are addressed – both in housing that is newly built as well as housing that is rehabilitated – in compliance with HUD rules and guidance for testing and removal of lead hazards and certified third-party examination reports. As part of the housing plan, HCR has created almost 25,000 new multifamily units free of lead hazards. HCR has also financed the preservation of 3,000 units of public housing across the state addressing any lead hazards and creating safe and healthy environments in an aged part of the state's housing stock.

Furthermore, HCR-financed projects must conform to local municipal health department regulations, and HUD and EPA guidance in addressing lead hazards. And we work continuously with public health

professionals and industry experts to regularly update our lead poisoning prevention policies and procedures within each of our portfolios.

As we approach the successful culmination of the state's current housing plan, we look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to deliver greater economic and environmental justice for all New Yorkers as we embark on a framework for the next housing plan.