



American Water Works Association
Michigan Section

MI-AWWA
P.O. Box 150469
Grand Rapids, MI 49515
T 517-292-2912
F 517-292-2912
844-MI-WATER
www.mi-water.org

April 13, 2023

Re: Support for HBs 4340-42 "Filter First" Bills

The Honorable Julie M. Rogers
Chair, House Health Policy
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Chairwoman Rogers:

We urge you to hold a hearing and pass House Bills 4340-4342 to protect Michigan children from lead exposure via their school and childcare center drinking water. The legislation will ensure all schools and childcare centers in Michigan follow the "Filter First" approach designed and recommended by drinking water and public health experts.

Some water utilities test lead levels in childcare centers and schools and soon all will be required to do so. These bills would establish an effective process for this testing and filtration of water, to better protect the most vulnerable populations. The bills also more clearly define who is responsible for this testing, which alleviates burdens on many utilities.

Professionally run municipal water supplies are some of the safest sources of drinking water in the United States and the world. Unfortunately, many school and childcare facilities often have older plumbing that isn't lead free. Given the patterns of usage in these facilities, which often have frequent stops and starts based on the time of year and day, water can sit in this older plumbing and have lead potentially leach into the water. While the water flowing into the facility often has zero lead, by the time it comes out of the tap, it can contain lead. The "Filter First" approach would address this by requiring the use of filtered water fountains and other potable water faucets in schools and childcare centers.

Our member organizations understand that the "Filter First" approach is the most protective, cost-effective, and immediate option for addressing this lead contamination in school and childcare center drinking water.

While testing and filtration does have some associated cost, funding for "Filter First" implementation was signed into law last session. This important legislation, which our organizations supported, included billions of dollars in funding for critical water infrastructure. The funding set aside \$50 Million for spending on filtration of water in schools. Many legislators, including members of your committee, voted for this funding. The ongoing costs of this program would be relatively low, given the inexpensive nature of the filters.

As a result, we kindly ask you to support and advance HBs 4340-4342 to protect Michigan children from lead exposure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Jernberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "W" and a long, sweeping underline.

Wayne Jernberg
Chair, MI-AWWA Board of Trustees

Cc: Members of the House Health Policy Committee