



December 4, 2018

USPSTF Program Office
5600 Fishers Lane
Mail Stop 06E53A
Rockville, MD 20857

RE: Draft Recommendation Statement: Elevated Blood Lead Levels in Children and Pregnant Women: Screening. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. October 2018.

Dear Sir or Madam,

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) is an international, nonprofit, scientific and educational society dedicated to providing total water solutions assuring the effective management of water and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA) is an organization representing chief executive officers and general managers of the largest publicly owned drinking water utilities in the United States. AWWA and AMWA thank the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force for the opportunity to comment on the Task Force's draft recommendation regarding blood lead level testing in pregnant women and children. This is an important recommendation, given the importance of USPSTF recommendations in (1) guiding the behavior of clinicians and (2) informing what medical services are funded by Medicare and Medicaid Services.

It is important for USPSTF to recognize and consider in its final recommendation that BLL observations collected through routine screening play an important role in (1) engaging clinicians in educating pregnant women and parents about lead mitigation measures,(2) informing local, state, and national intervention strategies to reduce environmental exposure to lead, (3) identifying household exposure risks by finding elevated BLLs in children who have no obvious signs of elevated levels (before that child is grossly poisoned and symptomatic), and (4) similarly identifying community wide changes in risk levels by spotting changes in community wide BLLs such as occurred in Flint, Michigan.¹ Finally, continued broad national tracking of children's BLLs allows us to see if progress is being made to reduce lead levels.

¹ Sadler RC, LaChance J, Hanna-Attisha M. Social and Built Environmental Correlates of Predicted Blood Lead Levels in the Flint Water Crisis. 1. Am J Public Health. 2017 May; 107(5):763-769. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2017.303692.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment to the Task Force.

Best regards,

Handwritten signature of G. Tracy Mehan, III in black ink.

G. Tracy Mehan, III
Executive Director – Government Affairs
American Water Works Association

Handwritten signature of Diane VanDe Hei in black ink.

Diane VanDe Hei
Chief Executive Officer
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies

cc: Peter Grevatt
Jennifer McLain
Eric Burneson
Lisa Christ