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**Grace Meng**

**Congress of the United States**

**Sixth District, New York**

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July 25, 2019

The Honorable Bill de Blasio  
Mayor, City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I write today to request an update on your lead-testing initiative for New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing and to urge you to expedite the testing process. I represent Pomonok, Latimer, and Bland Houses. It must be a priority of the city to ensure that no one, especially children, are exposed to the dangers of lead poisoning in New York's public housing.

As you know, exposure to lead is a serious health hazard with particularly pernicious effects on children under 6. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, there is no safe amount of lead exposure in children.<sup>1</sup> Some effects of lead exposure to children include irreversible neurological and behavioral damages such as reduced IQ and shorter attention spans.<sup>2</sup> It is entirely unacceptable that anyone – let alone vulnerable children – should live in such threatening conditions a day longer.

While the city rightly prioritized testing in complexes with the highest number of children under 6, the reported backlog on testing and failure to begin testing in Queens is unacceptable. As of July 23, not a single NYCHA complex in Queens has been tested.<sup>3</sup> Located in my district, the Pomonok Houses, in particular, have the highest number of children under 6 in Queens – fourth highest across all NYCHA complexes; but these have yet to be tested.<sup>4</sup> In these houses, each of the more than 300 children under 6 are threatened by the dangers of lead poisoning.

<sup>1</sup> "With No Amount of Lead Exposure Safe for Children, American Academy of Pediatrics Calls For Stricter Regulations." *AAP.org*, 20 June 2016, [www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/With-No-Amount-of-Lead-Exposure-Safe-for-Children,-American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Calls-For-Stricter-Regulations.aspx](http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/With-No-Amount-of-Lead-Exposure-Safe-for-Children,-American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Calls-For-Stricter-Regulations.aspx).

<sup>2</sup> "Lead Poisoning and Health." *World Health Organization*, World Health Organization, 23 Aug. 2018, [www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health](http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/lead-poisoning-and-health).

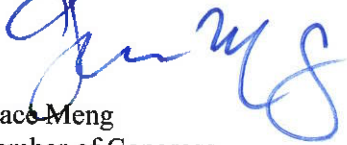
<sup>3</sup> Brand, David. "NYCHA Lead-Testing Plan Has Yet to Reach Sites with the Most Kids under 6." *Queens Daily Eagle*, *Queens Daily Eagle*, 23 July 2019, [queenseagle.com/all/nycha-lead-testing-kids-under-age-6-not-yet](http://queenseagle.com/all/nycha-lead-testing-kids-under-age-6-not-yet).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

As you continue your lead-testing initiative, I ask that you provide my office with an update on the status of testing. Additionally, I urge you to expedite the testing process throughout the city and begin testing in Queens as soon as possible. No child should live in lead exposure under our watch and the lead-testing initiative must be a top priority.

I look forward to your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Grace Meng', written in a cursive style.

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress