

May 27, 2010

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins:

On behalf of the National Association of REALTORS[®] (NAR) and the affiliated Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM), thank you for filing Senate Amendment 4218 to H.R. 4899, the Supplemental Appropriations Act. This amendment would prohibit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from imposing fines on contractors for renovation and repair work if by September 30, 2010, they enroll in training to comply with the new Lead Paint Renovation and Repair Regulation which took effect on April 22, 2010.

EPA's new lead-paint renovation rules require any contractor—renovators, builders, plumbers, electricians, etc.—performing any work that disturbs considerable lead paint in pre-1978 housing to follow specific work practices that could prevent exposure to lead dust. Thousands of contractors have already enrolled to take the training required for certification, but as of May 11, no state had more than 15 EPA-certified trainers and in 32 states, there were five or fewer trainers to cover each state. This amendment recognizes that but for the lack of adequate EPA-provided training classes, these contractors would already be trained and certified. Instead, these contractors now face the Hobson's choice of refusing projects that affect their livelihood or being penalized up to \$37,500 per day for work in target housing.

This amendment would not reduce existing protections for children from lead paint exposure; existing regulations involving disclosure, notification and education would remain in effect. This amendment would only enable the EPA to ramp up their training classes and allow contractors to become certified.

NAR and IREM support S.A. 4218 to give contractors the opportunity to take the required training and certification without being penalized, so they can continue to reduce children's exposure to lead dust and maximize the public health benefits of the rule.

Sincerely,

National Association of REALTORS[®]
Institute of Real Estate Management