



319 N. Fourth St., Ste. 800
St. Louis, MO 63102
(314) 231-4181 facsimile (314) 231-4184
www.greatriverslaw.org
Founding President: Lewis C. Green 1924-2003

President

Bruce A. Morrison (*Licensed in MO, IL*)

Staff Attorneys

Bob H. Menees (*Licensed in MO, OR*)

Sarah W. Rubenstein (*Licensed in MO, IL, and KS*)

Madeline Semanisin (*Licensed in MO*)

Ethan Thompson (*Licensed in MO, D.C*)

Director of Development and Community Outreach

Linden Mueller

February 14, 2023

Good morning,

Thank you to the Committee on Education for holding a hearing on such an important bill.

My name is Madeline Semanisin. I am a Staff Attorney at Great Rivers Environmental Law Center. I helped with the passage of a similar bill in Missouri last legislative session. My expertise are the Lead and Copper Rule, serving environmental justice communities, and drinking water standards. I am here today to state my support in addressing lead contamination in school drinking water by installing hydration stations and prioritizing awarding grants to disadvantaged school districts. For those reasons, I support **HB 2142**

The problem:

Currently, most schools in Kansas are not required to act if lead concentrations are detected in drinking water. Under the current legal landscape, some schools are required to remediate under the Lead and Copper Rule, some schools undertake these functions themselves, and others take no action at all. **HB 2142** will immediately address this gap in protection. No current federal or state law adequately and uniformly addresses this public health issue. In fact, I argue, the current Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) which won't be in effect after 2024, (EPA is developing a new proposed rule, the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements), still do not adequately meet the needs of children. Under the current LCRR:

- Public water utilities must conduct sampling at 20% of elementary schools and conduct sampling at secondary schools on request for 1 testing cycle (5 years)
- Conduct sampling on request of all schools and childcare facilities thereafter.
- Excludes facilities built or replaced all plumbing after January 1, 2014.

There are several concerning gaps in this federal regulation. Mainly, the regulation does not require remediation if lead is found. **HB 2142 would address this gap.**

The Solution:

Installing and maintaining filtered hydration stations is a cost-effective solution to a public health crisis, a crisis that has potential long-term health ailments.

More than sixty percent of Kansas children have detectable levels of lead in their blood. We have a unique opportunity to address this crisis in a place where children spend most of their time outside of the home. From the first bell to after-school activities, students can spend over thirty-five hours per week at school. Thirty-five hours a week where children can be exposed to lead. **HB 2142** takes the necessary steps to ensure that children are drinking safe water while attending school.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Madeline Semanisin