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NEHA's Policy Priorities on Water

Environmental health is profoundly local and environmental health professionals mediate some of the most intimate parts of our lives: the food we place in our baby's mouths, the control of insects like mosquitos, and the water that rehydrates children after play time. Environmental health professionals save money, saves lives and protect the future

Only 28 states currently require a credential that is an impartial, third-party endorsement of an individual's professional knowledge and experience.

- Congress shall require all 50 states and the District of Columbia to have their environmental health workforce receive a verifiable credential of environmental health knowledge.
- The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services shall ensure that the 20,000 environmental health professionals are held by the same standard and have the same knowledge base in order to guarantee the same policies and procedures are being enforced across all communities and that they stay current in their education.
- Formally authorize the CDC's National Environmental Health Tracking Program (also known as the Environmental and Health Outcome Tracking Network) and provide appropriate funding (\$100 million) to expand current activities to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, territories, and selected tribes, including funding for workforce and training to identify and act on environmental exposures;
- Direct the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) to consider how long-term planning for electronic health record could better integrate with CDC and other public health surveillance systems to more quickly identify and address emerging environmental exposures and disease threats, and to issue a report on the feasibility and current state of IT systems of state and local public health departments;
- Expand CDC childhood lead poisoning prevention surveillance to all 50 states, D.C., and the 15 largest cities and expand state and local efforts and expand support to state and local efforts to deploy evidence-based interventions to prevent, reduce, and mitigate childhood lead exposures;
- Expand CDC Safe Water programs to cover 100 percent of the population; and
- Formally authorize a CDC nationwide program that builds on past successes to help all 50 state health departments and D.C. develop and disseminate model policies and practices for integrating public health considerations into transportation and other community planning decisions at the state, regional, and local levels related to the built environment, including increased use of health impact assessments.

NEHA currently serves 5,000 members to advance the environmental health and protection professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all. Professionals who earn a Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian credential from NEHA are recognized as having achieved an established standard of excellence. These environmental health professionals master a body of knowledge (which is verified by examination), and acquire sufficient experience to satisfactorily perform work responsibilities in the environmental health field.