

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Lead is a toxic metal that can cause severe health issues, particularly in children and pregnant women, and prolonged exposure to lead can lead to developmental delays, learning disabilities, and damage to nervous systems and kidneys; and

WHEREAS, Since even low levels of lead exposure can have detrimental health effects over time, any amount of lead in drinking water poses a public health problem; and

WHEREAS, With approximately 400,000 lead service lines – the most in the nation – the City of Chicago has a moral and civic obligation to address this public health threat by replacing lead water service lines with safer piping alternatives; and

WHEREAS, The continued use of lead water service lines – particularly in disproportionately affected minority and low-income communities, whose residents are least likely to be able to afford lead service line replacements – constitutes not only a public health and environmental crisis, but also a crisis of equity and justice that the City must address; and

WHEREAS, While the City Council has authorized the creation of various lead service line replacement programs by the Department of Water Management (the “Department”), the City is financially limited in its ability to implement an impactful lead service line replacement program that aggressively addresses the existing public health and environmental threat; and

WHEREAS, In August 2021, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker signed into law the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act, making Illinois the third state in the nation to require full replacement of lead drinking water pipes; and

WHEREAS, In November 2021, the United States Congress passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA); and

WHEREAS, The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests more than \$50 billion nationwide in water infrastructure, which is essential to delivering reliable, affordable and safe water; and

WHEREAS, The United States Environmental Protection Agency will be allocating \$15 billion over 5 years to states to help fund lead service line replacement programs, with 49% loan principal forgiveness for disadvantaged communities; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago contains the highest number of disadvantaged communities in the state of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (ILEPA) will receive in its State Revolving Fund (SRF) an estimated \$1 billion federal allocation over 5 years to fund the replacement of approximately 686,000 known lead service lines statewide; and

WHEREAS, The ILEPA received \$107 million of these federal BIL funds in Fiscal Year 2023 to disburse to Illinois municipalities and public water suppliers, with Chicago receiving **zero** dollars for its lead service line replacement programs; and

WHEREAS, The ILEPA is scheduled to receive \$230 million in federal BIL funds in Fiscal Year 2024, with the state agency proposing to cap the City of Chicago's allocation at a **maximum of \$2.8 million**; and

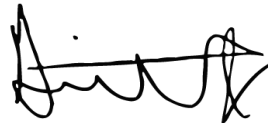
WHEREAS, The ILEPA disbursing **less than 1%** of Illinois' federal BIL funds to **Chicago**, which contains more than half of the known lead service lines in Illinois, is a gross under-allocation and deprivation of federal funds, which undermines the City's efforts to address its public health crisis in an equitable manner; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Chicago City Council, call upon Governor JB Pritzker and the Director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to authorize a fairer and more just allocation of federal BIL funds to Chicago that more accurately reflects Chicago's exceedingly high proportion of lead service lines in Illinois that need to be replaced; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chicago City Council calls upon the Illinois General Assembly members that represent Chicago to join the Council's call for more equitable BIL funding from the ILEPA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chicago City Council calls upon the ILEPA officials to testify, at a joint meeting of the Chicago City Council's Economic, Capital and Technology Development Committee and the Environmental Protection and Energy Committee regarding the ILEPA's efforts to address lead service line removals statewide and regarding its BIL funding disbursement decisions pertaining to Chicago for 2023, 2024, and beyond; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Pritzker and to Illinois General Assembly members that represent Chicago residents.



Gilbert Villegas, Alderman, 36th Ward &
Chairman of the Economic, Capital and Technology Development Committee



Maria Hadden, Alderwoman, 49th Ward
Chairwoman, Committee on Environmental Protection & Energy