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**IAPMO Commends Washington State Legislature’s Passage of Bill Requiring  
Testing Water for Lead in Schools and Day-Care Facilities**

**Ontario, Calif. (May 4, 2021)** — IAPMO commends the Washington State Legislature for passing HB 1139, a bill that requires the Washington Department of Health (DOH) to test drinking water outlets for lead contamination in public elementary and secondary schools. Gov. Jay Inslee signed the bill into law Monday.

The Biden administration recently announced a plan for the nationwide removal of lead pipes, and HB 1139 takes an additional step to support lead reduction in schools’ drinking water by mandating the repair or replacement of fixtures where elevated lead is found.

As noted in the bill, the DOH sampled and tested drinking water outlets in 551 elementary schools between 2017 and 2020 and found that 82 percent of these schools had lead contamination of five or more parts per billion in one or more drinking water outlets. Further, 49 percent of these schools had lead contamination of 15 or more parts per billion in one or more drinking water outlets.

“Children shouldn’t drink water when they go to school with levels of lead that decrease their IQ and cause other health effects,” said Gerry Pollet, the bill’s primary sponsor. “IAPMO provided crucial technical support, such as information on using certified filters, for Washington’s Legislature to pass HB 1139, which we hope will be a model for the nation.”

Lead contamination in drinking water poses serious health risks, and even low levels of lead exposure can cause permanent cognitive, academic, and behavioral difficulties in children.

Neil Hartman, government affairs director for the Washington State Association of the United Association of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States, Canada, said the state’s 2021 legislative session showcased how IAPMO and the UA, through the state association, work together to pass meaningful legislation improving the plumbing industry and protecting the public’s health.

“Collaboration between IAPMO and the Washington State Association (WSA) of the UA was necessary for the successful passage of House Bill 1139, taking action to address lead in drinking water,” he said. “IAPMO provided data and outreach, and the WSA of the UA took the bill on as a priority, elevating the issue with our legislative contacts. The joint efforts of our two organizations underscored the need for HB 1139, and vital information on the science of lead filtration was put in the hands of legislators. On two separate occasions, HB 1139 was stalled by opponents and seemed fated to fail, except for the efforts of IAPMO and the WSA. With our two organizations working together we can achieve great things for the plumbing industry, and HB 1139 can now be added to our long list of accomplishments.”

One key aspect requires the DOH to develop a technical guidance for reducing lead content in drinking water that is no less stringent than the federal EPA guidelines. The bill mandated that the technical guidance must include “best practices for remediating elevated lead levels at drinking water outlets, including installing and maintaining filters certified by a body accredited by the American National Standards Institute.”

“As an ANSI-accredited certification body, IAPMO supports the use of products that meet effective standards and can truly reduce lead found in schools’ drinking water,” said IAPMO Director of Government Relations Robyn Fischer. “We applaud the state for taking immediate action to protect children’s health by passing HB 1139.”