



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Ruth Ann Norton
Executive Director
410.534.6447**

CANDLE LIGHT VIGIL TO ELIMINATE LEAD POISONING

BALTIMORE, MD (November 16, 2006) On November 20, 2006, the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning will organize a candlelight vigil on War Memorial Plaza from 5:30 PM - 7:00PM to commemorate the 1,331 children in Maryland with dangerous levels of lead in their bodies in 2005.

The Coalition and supporters will light 85 symbolic candles; each candle is representative of 10 children identified with dangerous levels of lead in their blood in 2005. We have made tremendous progress and we CAN eliminate childhood lead poisoning. Had a similar vigil been held in 1995, each candle would have represented 160 children. There is no excuse for children to continue being harmed by an entirely preventable problem. We MUST eliminate childhood lead poisoning.

“The true lights of any community are its children. This vigil will illuminate our goal of eradicating childhood lead poisoning and allowing every child’s life to be one of health, hope and opportunity,” said Ruth Ann Norton, Executive Director of the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning.

The Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning is a nationally recognized leader, committed to the mission of eliminating childhood lead poisoning by 2010 and creating healthy homes so that children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The Coalition has led the effort in Baltimore City to achieve a 94% reduction in lead poisoned children since 1994.

The Coalition’s direct services and outreach have provided education to over 3.5 million people and services to thousands of Maryland residents. Innovative programs and landmark policy have been a hallmark of the Coalition’s success and continue to drive Maryland’s nation-leading push towards elimination.

The Coalition recently received a \$2,000,000 grant from HUD’s Office of Healthy Homes to support Operation LEAP Baltimore, a program that will make 380 Baltimore properties lead-safe.

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