

Robert T Brookings
Bangor
LD 1570

Testimony against the removal of Fluoride in Maine's Public Water Systems -
04.22.2025

Robert T. Brookings, DMD

Good Afternoon,

My name is Robert T. Brookings, and I am a 3rd generation Dentist, practicing in Bangor, ME. I am submitting a written testimony today, in opposition to removing fluoride from Maine's Public water systems.

My patient's often ask what new magic drug or magic treatment has been developed that will stop, or limit their risk for dental disease. And I tell them that it already exists, and has existed for many years. Fluoride IS that magic substance that we have discovered that not only can prevent the start of dental decay, it can also repair tooth structure when it starts to break down. Think of your teeth like Jenga towers. Imagine each bite or sip of sugary or acidic food and beverage we consume as essentially removing a block from the tower. Over time, this process would leave bigger and bigger holes, and eventually, cause the collapse of the structure. This is exactly what happens with our teeth. But thankfully for us, we have discovered Fluoride, which travels to these areas where the "blocks" have been removed, and replaces each broken block with a better fitting block, leading to a stronger tower than we even had to begin with. I don't know about you, but that seems like magic to me.

The people who would be most affected by the removal of water-based Fluoride would be the poorest of our communities, specifically the children. There is an access to care problem in Maine. We do not have enough Dentists to currently treat our population, and on top of that, patients routinely cannot afford the care required to treat and manage their dental disease. Many people in Maine do not routinely see a Dentist to care for their mouth, and the only "dental care" they have access to is Fluoride through their water source. When children have rampant dental disease, they are less likely to perform well in school, have difficulty eating, and are at risk for dental infection which could lead to systemic and life-threatening infections. The same can be said for our adult populations, which will increase the burden of dental emergencies on our already overburdened healthcare systems, specifically our Emergency departments.

I welcome further studies to be performed as any person trained in the scientific method should. But, as it stands today, with the proven scientific information that we have available to help us guide these decisions, there is clear and readily available information that Fluoride helps decrease the rate of dental decay, and is safe when delivered via public water systems at the currently regulated level of 0.7 milligrams per liter of water. Please do not pass this bill, as it would be a disservice to the people of Maine, specifically our children.

Sincerely,
Robert T. Brookings, DMD