



April 22nd 2025

LD 1570 An Act to Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply.

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lyvia Gaewsky, pronouns she her hers, and I am the Program Manager for the statewide From the First Tooth program. I am testifying today to encourage the Committees to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD1570.

From the First Tooth is a statewide children's oral health program funded by the Children's Oral Health Network of Maine. For the last 17 years, From the First Tooth has worked to increase access to preventive oral health care by integrating evidence-based oral health interventions into pediatric primary care. As a program, we encourage primary care providers to talk with families about where their water comes from to ensure their children are getting the right level of fluoride to protect against cavities.

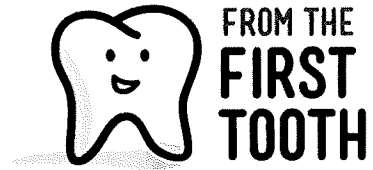
Communities greatly benefit from water fluoridation programs, especially people who have limited access to dental care. According to the CDC communities with fluoridated water have 25% fewer cavities when compared to communities without water fluoridation programs. This is confirmed in additional studies dating back to 1945.

1. Griffin SO, Regnier E, Griffin PM, Huntley VN. Effectiveness of fluoride in preventing caries in adults. *J Dent Res.* 2007;86(5):410–414.
2. Iheozor-Ejiofor Z, Worthington HV, Walsh T, et al. Water fluoridation for the prevention of dental caries. *Cochrane Database of Syst Rev.* 2015;(6). Art. No.: CD010856. doi: 10.1002/14651858.CD010856.pub2.
3. National Institutes of Health. Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2000.

Additionally, water fluoridation programs are a smart investment. For every dollar invested in water fluoridation \$20 are saved in restorative dental care.

1. Griffin SO, Jones K, Tomar SL. An economic evaluation of community water fluoridation. *J Public Health Dent.* 2001;61(2):78–86.
2. Ran T., Chattopadhyay SK, Community Preventive Services Task Force. Economic evaluation of community water fluoridation: A Community Guide Systematic Review. *Am J Prev Med.* 2016; 50(6): 790–796.
3. O'Connell JM, Rockwell J, Ouellet J, Tomar SL, Maas W. Costs and Savings Associated with Community Water Fluoridation in the United States. *Health Aff.* 2016; 35(12):2224–2232.

A 2024 report by the National Toxicology Program examined potential impacts of fluoride on children's IQ but specifically did not evaluate fluoridation at the recommended levels we use in the United States. Instead, the findings in this report are limited to fluoride exposure that is twice the amount (≥ 1.5 mg/L) that is recommended by the CDC for community water (0.7 mg/L). The report specifically states:



"This Monograph and Addendum do not address whether the sole exposure to fluoride added to drinking water in some countries (i.e., fluoridation, at 0.7 mg/L in the United States and Canada) is associated with a measurable effect on IQ."

Additionally, multiple drafts of the report, including the most recent, have been criticized by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine for inadequate research methodology.

1. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2021. Review of the Revised NTP Monograph on the Systematic Review of Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects: A Letter Report. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/26030>.

We do know that the controlled additional of fluoride in public water reduces dental caries for the community. In Maine, the importance of this cannot be understated given dental workforce shortages and limited dental providers accepting patients with MaineCare insurance.

1. Community Preventive Services Task Force. Dental caries (cavities): community water fluoridation. The Community Guide. Accessed January 30, 2024. <https://thecommunityguide.org/findings/dental-caries-cavities-community-water-fluoridation.html>
2. Kohn WG, Maas WR, Malvitz DM, Presson SM, Shaddix KK; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S.); National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (U.S.). Division of Oral Health. Recommendations for using fluoride to prevent and control dental caries in the United States. *MMWR Recomm Rep*. 2001;50(RR-14):1–30.
3. McDonagh MS, Whiting PF, Bradley M, et al. A Systematic Review of Public Water Fluoridation. *BMJ*; 2000. 321(7265):855–9.
4. Community Preventive Services Task Force. Dental caries: community water fluoridation (2000 archived review). The Community Guide. Accessed December 26, 2023. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/media/pdf/Oral-Health-Fluoridation-Archive.pdf>

I am the mother of two children under age 3. Their teeth are still developing, and public fluoridated water is helping them build strong tooth structure that will have a lifelong impact. As a parent, I am comforted knowing that fluoride added to my children's drinking water will help in preventing potential future dental pain, infection, missed school days and expensive restorative dental treatment.

I urge this committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1570 for the benefit of my children and all children across the State of Maine.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

On behalf of From the First Tooth,

Lyvia Gaewsky
From the First Tooth, Program Manager