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Testimony of Rep. Jennifer Poirier introducing
LD 1570, "An Act to Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply"
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

April 22, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the committee,

I am Jennifer Poirier, and I represent House District 70, which is the wonderful community of Skowhegan.

I am pleased to present **LD 1570, "An Act to Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply"** at the request of my constituent.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to end the practice of adding fluoride to public drinking water. While intended to improve dental health, growing scientific evidence and public health data now suggest that fluoridation presents more risks than benefits and undermines the principle of informed consent in medical treatment.

Water fluoridation is an outdated public health practice. Water fluoridation began in the 1940s, based on observational studies that are now considered methodologically limited. The most recent comprehensive review by the Cochrane Collaboration (2015) found that many early studies were of poor quality and lacked modern scientific rigor. According to this review, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether water fluoridation reduces inequalities in dental health or has meaningful effect in adults. (Iheozor-Ejiofor et al., 2015).

Water fluoridation has marginal dental benefits. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) show that tooth decay has declined significantly in industrialized nations—both in countries that fluoridate water and those that do not. For example, as of 2020:

- The U.S., where 63% of the population receives fluoridated water, saw similar reductions in dental caries as countries like the Netherlands and Sweden, which do not fluoridate their water.

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- A CDC report (2019) estimates that water fluoridation reduces tooth decay by approximately 25% among children and adolescents, but this benefit is likely overstated in the context of widespread fluoride toothpaste use (CDC, 2019).

Adding fluoride to our public drinking water poses potential health risks. Multiple peer-reviewed studies raise concerns about fluoride's potential toxicity at levels found in fluoridated communities:

- A 2019 NIH-funded study published in *JAMA Pediatrics* found that higher maternal urinary fluoride levels during pregnancy were associated with lower IQ scores in offspring (Green et al., 2019).
- The National Toxicology Program (NTP) in a 2023 draft report concluded there is evidence of an association between higher fluoride exposure and reduced IQ in children (NTP, 2023).
- The National Research Council (NRC) report in 2006 found that fluoride can adversely affect the brain, kidneys, thyroid, and bones, especially in sensitive populations (NRC, 2006).

Fluoridation of public drinking water is a violation of informed consent. Fluoridating drinking water amounts to mass medication without the ability to monitor individual dosage or gain consent. Unlike vaccines or prescription drugs, fluoride in water is distributed to the entire population, including vulnerable groups such as infants and individuals with kidney disease who may be more susceptible to harm (NRC, 2006).

Water fluoridation poses environmental and economic concerns. The fluoride compound most commonly used in public systems, fluorosilicic acid, is a by-product of phosphate fertilizer manufacturing and is not pharmaceutical-grade (Connett et al., 2010). Furthermore, removing fluoride at the household level requires expensive filtration systems, making the burden fall disproportionately on low-income families.

Maine has an opportunity to join countries and communities worldwide that have ended water fluoridation in favor of safer, more targeted dental health strategies. Given the marginal benefits and the growing body of scientific evidence pointing to potential risks, I respectfully urge the Legislature to end water fluoridation and protect the health and rights of all Mainers.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to consider the evolving body of scientific evidence and support legislation to remove fluoride from Maine's public water systems.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will gladly respond to any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Rep. Jennifer Poirier
State Representative

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References

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