

Lasorsa, Megan

From: Peter J. Levandoski <plevandoski@icmsvh.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2025 2:01 PM
To: Cmte HHS
Subject: LD 1570: An Act to Prohibit Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Peter Levandoski and I am writing to you today as a resident of Maine, a parent and a dentist to ask you to please consider killing this bill in committee. Community water fluoridation is one of the great public health successes in this country's history and has been instrumental in helping to prevent childhood dental caries, the most common infectious disease in our pediatric population.

Opposition to water fluoridation is based on false science as well as a level of ignorance; those who have not suffered through dental problems that water fluoridation helps prevent can easily forget that these problems exist. I am writing to make sure we as a State do not collectively forget that these problems exist and that water fluoridation is one of our best tools to combat disease.

I have been a practicing dentist in Maine for 12 years and a provider of Mainecare services for each and every one of those years. As I'm sure you are aware, the number of dentists accepting Mainecare is a small one. Access to care is limited for folks with this coverage, many of whom are children, those who are chronically ill and the elderly. These are the folks who are at the greatest risk for developing dental problems, yet they also have most difficult time accessing care. We need not make their lives any more difficult by eliminating water fluoridation, a proven, cost-effective way for reduce dental disease across the board.

I have extracted infected teeth for 3-year-olds. I have watched parents struggle to figure out how they will afford to miss work or find childcare for siblings to take their children to the dentist. Tooth decay impacts not only my patients but their families, businesses and their schools. Missing school for a day to go to the dentist may not stunt a child's development but when it becomes a chronic issue, how many missed days does it take to have a lasting negative impact on their education and development?

The kids I worry about the most are the ones who go untreated. I don't think it's an unfair assumption that a child living with untreated dental pain does not get as much out of school as a healthy child might. Community water fluoridation is an effective and financially responsible method of reducing dental decay. My fear is that if eliminated, more children will suffer and more families and communities will be saddled with the undue burden of treating a disease that can be prevented.

Please consider killing this bill. It will harm our most vulnerable neighbors and have a cascading, detrimental effect on our communities, our economy and our State at large.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Peter Levandoski, DMD