

H.B. 5350 - An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations on  
Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply

Public Health Committee  
February 24, 2016

My name is Elaine Titus. I am a mother of two, a holistic health coach and a public health policy advocate. I believe that we should all have access to pure, clean and fresh drinking water. I am here today in person to ask that you consider not only reducing the level of the fluoride in our water but that you consider eliminating this potentially toxic substance entirely. I urge you to do a complete and thorough risk-benefit analysis of fluoride based on the current scientific research to determine whether the benefits outweigh the substantial risks of this half century old public policy. Right now, we have the opportunity to ensure that our citizens have access to clean water by removing the addition of fluoride, a non-essential element and a hazardous byproduct of the phosphate fertilizer industry. Having pure, clean water would be as simple as turning a spigot off.

When fluoridation first began in the 1940s, dentists believed it was a nutrient and that a deficiency of fluoride caused dental cavities. Over a half a century later, we now know definitively that this is not the case. In 1999, the CDC acknowledged that the benefit of fluoride is topical not systemic stating that "its actions primarily are topical for both adults and children". (1) Furthermore, in 2006 the National Research Council agreed stating that "the major anti-caries benefit of fluoride is topical and not systemic." (2) The process of fluoridation in the water supply should have been ended then.

Adding fluoride to our water supply appears to do more harm than good. According to scientific studies, fluoride has health effects including reduced IQ, arthritis, increased rates of ADHD, bone damage (50% of fluoride accumulates in the bones), dental fluorosis (41% of children have this condition), thyroid dysfunction, impaired kidney function, bone cancer and reproductive problems. Reducing tooth decay by 25% sounds appealing but when you look at the actual study it only accounts for reducing decay by a fraction of a tooth or one tooth surface (out of 128) (3). Are the benefits of saving a fraction of a tooth worth the risk of all the potential health effects?

Although we have been fluoridating our major cities for over 50 years, we continue to have a silent epidemic of oral and dental diseases that largely affects low-income and minority populations. (4) If fluoridation was the answer, wouldn't the issue be solved? Unfortunately, fluoridation cannot solve the issues of inadequate nutrition, lack of access of dental care and epidemic poverty. Minorities suffer disproportionate harm from fluoridation. African American mothers are less likely to breast feed (5), so they bottle feed their babies and are inadvertently exposing their infants to up to 175 times more fluoride than a breast fed baby since mother's breast milk contains very low levels of fluoride at .004 ppm (6). African American infants and children have a higher risk of being overexposed to fluoride.

Given the potential harm to the citizens of Connecticut, I firmly believe the risks outweigh the benefits and we should eliminate fluoride completely. I urge you to take this opportunity to do a

thorough review of fluoridation based on the current scientific and medical research so that we can truly evaluate whether we want fluoride in the water supply.

- (1) CDC, 2001
- (2) National Research Council (2006).
- (3) SO Griffin, E Regnier, P.M. Griffin, and V. Huntley (2007). Effectiveness of Fluoride in Preventing Caries in Adults. *J Dent Res* 86(5):410-415, 2007
- (4) HHS (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). 2000. Oral Health in America: a report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health
- (5) CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). 2010 a. NIS Breastfeeding Data
- (6) NRC (National Research Council). 2006. Fluoride in drinking water: a scientific review of EPA's standards. National Academies Press: Washington, D.C.  
507 pp.