

Connecticut General Assembly - Public Health Committee
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: HB 5350 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON FLUORIDATION OF THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY

Dear Senator Gerrantana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Kim Mohan and I am the Executive Director of the New England Rural Health RoundTable. The RoundTable is the rural health association for the six New England states, dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of rural communities throughout the region. Our members consist of leaders from a diverse range of health care and social service providers serving rural communities. I am pleased to learn that the Public Health Committee has raised a bill to continue the requirement to add fluoride in public water supplies. This bill will optimize the **community water fluoridation to the level recommended by the US Department of Health and Human Services**. Please support HB 5350, An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations on Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply.

Connecticut's fluoridation law applies to local water systems that serve at least 20,000 people and some of the other water systems also control the level of fluoride in water. Both children and adults benefit from water fluoridation. Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25% of tooth decay in children and adults over a lifespan. A 2002 research paper concluded that fluoridated water is "the most effective and practical method" for closing the gap of tooth decay between affluent and disadvantaged Americans.

In addition to providing direct benefits to those residents who live in areas with fluorinated water we believe that this law could have a broader reach to improve oral health across the state including your rural communities. The law alone serves as an important educational piece as it communicates the effective role fluoride plays in preventing tooth decay. The law conveys a commitment to improving the oral health of CT's residents and may reinforce the merits of other related efforts like educational programs to promote topical fluoride, appropriate policies to ensure oral health insurance coverage and improving the oral health workforce.

This is the 51st year of the passage of the statute that requires optimal levels of fluoride in community water in Connecticut. To further outline the significance of this measure, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named community water fluoridation as one of the "Ten Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century".

As a member of the Public Health Committee, I know you share my concern for oral health care measures that affect all of us as a community. **I urge you to support this very important measure that will ensure healthier children and adults in our state.** If I can be of any assistance, please contact me. Thank you for your time and your commitment to the health of all Connecticut citizens.

Sincerely,

Kim Mohan
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