

Monday, February 22, 2016

Written testimony for HB5350:

Public Health Committee,

I am in favor of completely eliminating water fluoridation to ZERO.

I lived in Colchester, CT for most of my life, at a home with well water, and never thought much about fluoride, until I moved to downtown Middletown, CT two years ago, and was diagnosed by a doctor with severe hypothyroidism only months after the move. I had no symptoms at all while living in Colchester. I believe that that my symptoms were caused by exposure to Middletown city water, and were then reversed when I stopped exposing myself to this tap water.

My hypothyroid symptoms included a very puffy and swollen face, rapid weight gain of about thirty-five pounds without changing my eating habits, and complete exhaustion all the time no matter how much I slept. I could not exercise anymore because I would get so severely out of breath after only five minutes that I would have to stop and lie down.

Every time that I took a shower, huge clumps of my hair would fall out of my head, equal to the amount of a tennis ball! Every single time! That is a lot of lost hair! After showering, I also had a strange feeling in my throat. I starting showering less and less, until it was only once a week, and then once every two weeks, because the hair loss scared me, and I saw that my scalp was thinning. I felt awful because I could not get clean without compromising my health. I felt dirty and smelly but that was still better than the experience of my hypothyroid symptoms. Once, while staying at a family member's home who had well water, I noticed that my hair would not fall out at all after showering, just a few strands which was normal. But when I returned to Middletown, my hair would fall out again in massive amounts.

I felt like my brain was slow. When someone would talk to me, I had to really think and pause longer than normal before replying. My movements were slow too. I could not move quickly. I had a part time job as a server at that time, so the mental and physical slowness was affecting my ability to do my job well, and I left it.

Then, I decided to completely stop cooking with the tap water, stop drinking it, and stop showering in it. I do not even wash my hands in it anymore! I buy water from the store to cook with and to drink. I go to a fresh water spring once a week, which is a one hour drive away from where I live, to collect clean water in fifteen one-gallon jugs. I have to ration out the water to make sure it will last the whole week, making sure not to use too much at a time. I use this water to bathe with, this means I do not ever turn on the shower water! I get a washcloth wet with spring water that has been heated on the stove, and soap up, and then rinse with the warmed

spring water. To wash my hair, I kneel forward over the tub, and rinse my head with spring water. I have not taken a real shower here in seven months!

This routine that I am keeping to preserve my health is time consuming, difficult, uncomfortable and upsetting. But my swollen, puffy face has gone away, my hair does not fall out anymore, and I have lost almost all the extra weight! I can exercise again normally. I feel better, I can think clearly, I have my energy back, and I am not tired anymore. This is worth all my efforts.

I am glad that I was able to figure out and maintain a lifestyle change that reversed my hypothyroid symptoms, but I shouldn't have to go to such extremes to find clean water. This routine makes me feel like a person from a third world country who does not have easy access to a basic resource like clean water.

Please consider my story as reasoning to completely eliminate water fluoridation in the state of Connecticut. There is no good that comes of it. It is damaging to one's health, and ruins quality of life. While living here in Middletown, I cannot cook, bathe, shower or drink water like a normal person. I NEVER turn the faucet on! I NEVER turn the shower on! And I am healthier for it.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimonial.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lysik
Middletown, CT