



October 21, 2025

State Government Interim Joint Committee

As a collective group of concerned healthcare providers, business leaders, active community members, and oral health advocates, we write to you today regarding discussion of water fluoridation programs. For over 70 years, public water providers in Kentucky have had a direct impact on improving the oral health of children and adults through community water fluoridation.

Fluoridation of water has been widely recognized as one of the most effective public health measures for preventing tooth decay and promoting oral health. Adding fluoride to community water supplies has significantly reduced the incidence of cavities, particularly among children and vulnerable populations who do not have access to regular dental care.

Ensuring access to preventive oral health measures such as comprehensive community water fluoridation is critical in Kentucky, where 93 of 120 counties are [dental professional shortage areas](#), and additional gaps in access to care exist in all Kentucky regions.

In addition to the direct health benefits, water fluoridation contributes to significant cost savings for Medicaid and individuals without access to regular dental care. Fluoridating drinking water is cost effective at about 50 cents per person per year. Meanwhile, estimates [indicate](#) that for every 10% of the population that loses access to fluoridated water, Medicaid costs will increase **nearly \$20 Million annually** to address increased dental treatment needs.

Maintaining comprehensive community water fluoridation programs promotes a healthy, more engaged workforce. A higher prevalence of dental problems impacts Kentuckians' ability to work and learn, with employees missing more work to address their own dental treatment needs, or to support their children's needs, as kids are nearly [three times](#) more likely to miss school when they have poor oral health.

Jeopardizing water fluoridation programs will lead to increased healthcare costs and disparities in oral health outcomes, particularly among low-income and underserved populations.

Sincerely,

Delta Dental of Kentucky
Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children
Kentucky Dental Association
Kentucky Dental Hygienists' Association

Kentucky Oral Health Coalition
Kentucky Medical Association
Kentucky Primary Care Association
Kentucky Voices for Health
Louisville Water Company