



Kentucky Dental Association

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**VIA EMAIL**

February 7, 2024

House Standing Committee on State Government  
702 Capital Ave  
Annex Room 315  
Frankfort, KY 40601

**SUBJECT: Opposition to HB 141, AN ACT relating to water fluoridation programs.**

Dear Members of the House Standing Committee on State Government:

On behalf of the over 1000 dentists we represent and the patients they serve, the Kentucky Dental Association would like to express our concern and opposition to HB 141 AN ACT relating to water fluoridation programs.

For background, the fluoridation of community water supplies is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. In 1951, Kentucky began its first community water fluoridation efforts in Maysville, Kentucky. Community water fluoridation has continued successfully since then. Today, 217 fluoridated communities serve nearly 95 percent of the state's population, making Kentucky a national leader. In Kentucky, water fluoridation is mandatory (KRS 211.190; KAR 902 115.010) for community water supplies serving populations of 3,000 or more. Community water supplies serving fewer than 1,500 users may voluntarily fluoridate, and most do.

Community water fluoridation is the controlled adjustment of fluoride that occurs naturally in all water to optimal levels to prevent tooth decay. Community water fluoridation benefits everyone, especially those without access to regular dental care. Water fortified with fluoride is similar to fortifying salt with iodine, milk with vitamin D, and orange juice with vitamin C — none of which are medications. Over 70 years of research and practical experience, the overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe.

Compared to the cost of other prevention programs, water fluoridation is the most cost-effective means of preventing tooth decay for children and adults in the United States. The cost of a lifetime of water fluoridation for one person is less than the cost of one filling. For community water systems that serve more than 1,000 people, the economic benefit of fluoridation exceeds the cost. The benefit-cost ratio increases as the size of the population served increases (largely due to economies of scale). Fluoridation is a cost-saving method to prevent tooth decay.

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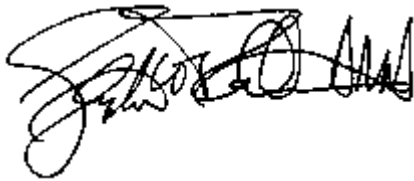
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As you consider this issue, we ask that you please remember that Kentucky is not in a position to take a step backward in oral health and that community fluoridation for many in the state is a first line of oral health defense.

**We ask that you please oppose HB 141 in the interest of Kentucky's oral health.**

Thank you for considering this very important issue! If you have any questions, please contact me at 502-489-9121 or [steve@kyda.org](mailto:steve@kyda.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen W. Robertson". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Stephen W. Robertson, DMD  
Executive Director  
Kentucky Dental Association

cc: House Leadership