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February 3, 2014

The Honorable David Crum
Chairman, House Health and Human Services Committee
300 SW 10th St.
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Representative Crum,

As your committee deliberates HB 2372 requiring community water authorities to add language to local water bills intended to discourage community water fluoridation, the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) encourages legislators to instead support efforts of local authorities to continue fluoridating their water at the optimum levels. Fluoride at the levels recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prevents tooth decay without health risks.

ADHA, the largest national organization representing the professional interests of more than 150,000 dental hygienists in the nation, has a longstanding policy in support of water fluoridation as a safe and effective method for reducing the incidence of dental caries. ADHA supports education of the public and other health professionals regarding the preventive and therapeutic benefits of fluoride.

A Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report, "Achievements in Public Health, 1900-1999: Fluoridation of Drinking Water to Prevent Dental Caries," shows that between 1966 and 1994 — a period when roughly 70 million Americans gained access to fluoridated water — the average number of decayed, filled or missing teeth among 12-year-olds fell 68 percent.

Opponents claim that ending fluoridation will save money. Community water fluoridation has been shown to be a cost-effective measure in preventing tooth decay. A study published by the CDC, "An Economic Evaluation of Community Water Fluoridation," shows that for most cities every dollar invested in water fluoridation saves \$38 in dental treatment costs.

ADHA is pleased to submit this letter in support of water fluoridation for your communities. Community water fluoridation serves as a preventive oral health care service to millions. The CDC estimates that 73.9 percent of the U.S. population can access fluoridated drinking water. For many, this represents their only access to preventive oral health care.

If you require any additional information regarding ADHA's support of water fluoridation, please contact the ADHA Governmental Affairs Division at 312-440-8900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise Bowers, RDH, PhD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Denise Bowers, RDH, PhD
President, American Dental Hygienists' Association

Cc: Stephanie Witt, RDH, Kansas Dental Hygienists' Association President
Jill Gottschamer, RDH, Kansas Dental Hygienists' Association Legislative Chair
Janette Delinger, RDH, MSDH, ADHA District VIII Trustee
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