

Chairman Crum and Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story. My name is CaSandra Smith. My husband and I have five children. Our first three children were born in Gorham, KS, just outside of Hays. When my oldest was three, we moved to Minneapolis, Kansas, a small town of about 2,000 people, 25 minutes north of Salina. It was in Minneapolis that we added two more children to our family. Minneapolis seemed like the ideal place to raise our kids with small town living and ideals. What we didn't realize we would be giving up with the move were the preventative benefits of fluoride—and the affect that would have on my children's oral health.

Hays' water is fluoridated, but Minneapolis' is not. This came to my attention when I noticed that my oldest two children have no cavities, while my youngest three children have each needed very extensive dental treatment at young ages. Recently, a dental exam showed that my third child had several cavities, one of which required a root canal to save the tooth. I am extremely frustrated and embarrassed by the state of my children's mouths and teeth. I feel bad for them, too, when they hear what the dentist says and know that their teeth are full of cavities, even though they brush every single day. It breaks my heart that my two youngest boys hate going to the dentist because they know they will need painful procedures. On a side note, I must take time off work for the additional procedures as well as the recovery period afterwards. Our insurance pays for almost all the procedures, but we know we are lucky to have that good insurance.

I was puzzled by the differences between my kids' teeth, since there are no differences among the children in eating or oral hygiene habits. My dentist, Dr. Lisa Metzen, helped me draw the link between our family's move from a fluoridated comment to a non-fluoridated one. She said that my older children had received fluoridated water, whereas my younger children had not, and their teeth were much more prone to cavities because of it.

I am a big supporter of the benefits of fluoride in the water.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my family's story. I hope that you will make sure that parents like me are allowed to know the truth about the benefits of fluoride.

Sincerely,
CaSandra Smith