10/23/14

Dear Ms. Gotkowitz and Members of the Water Utility Board,

As a local dentist with an unique vantage point, I am very interested in the debate concerning water fluoridation in Dane County. I am employed by Access Community Health Centers as the site director of the Celebrate Smiles school based dental program. As our own mobile "clinic", we go from school to school in Madison and Sun Prairie to provide dental services to children who often are not able to access our dental health care system. In fact, this year, we will be at a total of 24 schools and very likely another 3 this summer. Let me tell you some of our findings: Over 40% of the students I screen have obvious dental caries. Greater than 4% have urgent needs, which include dental abscesses, pain, or decay which may likely lead to the loss of a permanent tooth. This decay is a result of poor nutrition, poor dental hygiene, the consumption of juice and other sugary drinks, and a lack of education on how to prevent these problems. Take away the important counterbalance of water fluoridation, and these horrible numbers will skyrocket. I am aware of this since I used to work in a school based dental program that served children in rural Central Illinois who did not have water fluoridation. The decay rate was even greater over there.

There are other issues that are faced by our public where discourse may lead to policy change. Some doubt the necessity of vaccinations or find the idea of climate change difficult to believe. I wholeheartedly endorse to use of science to lead policy. On this issue, science is on the side of water fluoridation.

Thank you,

Brian Schwarzbrott, DDS, Celebrate Smiles Site Director