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Orthodontist

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

It has come to my attention that the Madison Water Utility Board will be reviewing their fluoridation policy statement at the October 28th meeting and that it will be open for public comment. Prior to this meeting, there are a few facts about community water fluoridation that I hope you will take the time to consider. Fluoridation of community water supplies is considered one of the most significant public health advances of the 20th century and one of the safest, most cost-effective ways to increase overall oral health. Since its introduction over 65 years ago, fluoridation has dramatically improved the dental health of tens of millions of Americans.

As a member of the Greater Dane County Dental Society, I am committed to promoting professional excellence and quality oral health care. I ask you to please consider:

- Studies clearly demonstrate water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by 30-50% for children and adolescents (27% for adults), even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources. Community water fluoridation benefits everyone, especially those without access to regular dental care.

- Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has established drinking water standards for a number of substances, including fluoride, to protect the public's health. The Food and Drug Administration has also approved bottled water with optimal levels of fluoride for public consumption.

- Fluoride toothpaste alone is insufficient, hence why pediatricians and dentists alike prescribe fluoride tablets to children residing in non-fluoridated communities. Fluoride tablets can be a challenge as families don't always remember to continue taking them so the benefits are lost while the cost is still incurred. Studies have shown that communities that fluoridated water have a lower rate of tooth decay than non-fluoridated communities.

- The maximum reduction in tooth decay occurs when fluoride is available before the teeth erupt (systemically) and after teeth erupt (topically). Residents who receive the benefits of water fluoridation experience approximately 30+ percent less tooth decay.

- Every $1 invested in water fluoridation saves $38 in dental treatment costs for most cities.

On behalf of all the adults and children living in Madison, I urge you and your fellow board members to continue to support your fluoridation policy statement and maintain fluoridation in the municipal water system.

Sincerely,

Christian Witek, DDS

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