

November 3, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The members of our twenty-one organizations respectfully ask you to cosponsor H. Res. 416. Introduced by Rep. Mike Simpson, this resolution commemorates the 70th anniversary of community water fluoridation—one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century.¹

In 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan became the world's first city to adjust the level of fluoride in its community water supply to optimal levels. The decision was based investigations and clinical observations dating back to the early 1900s, which correlated fluoride levels in water with reduced incidence of dental decay.

Fifteen years after adjusting the fluoride content of its public water supply to optimal levels, researchers found the children in Grand Rapids who drank fluoridated water from birth had 50 to 63 percent less tooth decay.² Subsequent studies affirmed the safety and effectiveness of the measure, and public health officials began urging other communities to embrace the practice.³

Today, nearly 75 percent of the U.S. population served by public water utilities—more than 210 million people—receive the benefits of optimally fluoridated water.⁴ Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25 percent of tooth decay in children and adults, even with the widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.⁵⁻⁶

The decision to fluoridate community water supplies—which is always made at the state and local levels—is cost effective for taxpayers. For most cities, every \$1.00 invested in water fluoridation saves \$38.00 in dental treatment costs. And the average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling.⁷

We hope you will join Rep. Simpson—along with the U.S. Surgeon General and his predecessors—in acknowledging community water fluoridation as one of the most practical, cost-effective, equitable, and safe measures communities can take to prevent tooth decay and improve oral health.⁸⁻¹³

Again, we respectfully ask you to commemorate the 70th anniversary of community water fluoridation by cosponsoring H. Res. 416. If you have any questions or would like to cosponsor this resolution, please contact Mr. James Neill in Rep. Simpson's office. James can be reached at 202-225-5531 or James.Neill@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

American Dental Association
Academy of General Dentistry
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Periodontology

American Association for Dental Research
American Association of Endodontists
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthodontists
American Association of Public Health Dentistry
American Association of Women Dentists
American Dental Education Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association
American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists
American Student Dental Association
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
Dental Trade Alliance
Friends of NIDCR
Hispanic Dental Association
National Dental Association
Oral Health America

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ten Great Public Health Achievements -- United States, 1900-1999. *MMWR* 1999; 48 (12): 241-243.

² Arnold FA Jr., Likins RC, Russell AL, Scott DB. Fifteenth year of the Grand Rapids fluoridation study. *J Am Dent Assoc* 1962; 65: 780-5.

³ Department of Health and Human Services (US), Office of the Surgeon General. Oral health in America: a report of the Surgeon General. Rockville (MD): HHS, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research; 2000.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2012 Water Fluoridation Statistics.

⁵ Guide to Community Preventive Services. Preventing dental caries: community water fluoridation. April 2013.

⁶ Griffin S.O., et al. Effectiveness of fluoride in preventing caries in adults. *J Dent Res* 2007; 86(5):410-415.

⁷ American Dental Association, *Fluoridation Facts*, 2005.

⁸ Murthy, VH. Surgeon General's Perspectives: Community Water Fluoridation: One of CDC's "10 Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century." *Public Health Reports* 2015; 130(4): 296-298.

⁹ Benjamin, Regina, letter to the National Oral Health Conference, April 22, 2013.

¹⁰ Carmona, Richard, Surgeon General Statement on Community Water Fluoridation, July 28, 2004.

¹¹ Satcher, David, Surgeon General's Statement on Community Water Fluoridation, December 3, 2001.

¹² Manley, Audrey, Surgeon General's Statement on Community Water Fluoridation, December 14, 1995.

¹³ Koop, C. Everett, Surgeon General Urges Adoption of Fluoridation, *J Pub Health Dent* 43 (2); June 1983: 185.