



May 29, 2012

Dear Sir/Madam:

Mr. Bohl's proposal to cease Milwaukee's fluoridation program does nothing more than seek to undo a highly effective, repeatedly proven, exceedingly economical, unquestionably safe, and demonstrably fundamental public health measure that the city's political leadership had the wisdom, foresight, and regard for the general welfare to implement nearly 60 years ago. As a result, millions of Milwaukee city residents since then, the current 589,697 residents of the city, and future generations have or will have derived the health and economic benefits of community water fluoridation across the age spectrum.

These long-established benefits need not be recited here— they have been amply provided by others rightfully opposed to this proposal— other than to say they are affirmed in a concise statement from the Centers for Disease Control: Community water fluoridation is one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.

In contrast to this is Mr. Bohl's statement of May 22, 2012, which is unfortunately filled with scripted falsehood, fabrication, distortion of fact, indefensible assertions, selective half-truth, cunning use of innuendo and demonstrate a lack of awareness or attention to science and health care issues. A prime example is his opening allegation that "New research shows that ingesting fluoride delivers health risks without benefit of less tooth decay which makes water fluoridation obsolete, unhealthy and a waste of money..." No such "new research" in any legitimate, refereed journals exists. This is hardly the basis upon which a representative body responsible to its constituency is to decide a public health issue, or any public policy matter for that matter.

Milwaukee has every reason to take pride that its aldermen of the day made their city an early leader among all major cities in the nation by adopting community water fluoridation in 1953 to benefit its residents, a decision made through ingenuous and intelligent assessment of the scientific and economic facts and sense of responsibility for the public welfare. The subsequent avoidance of unnecessary disease and the cost of its treatment have accrued monumentally not only to individual families and to the city's coffers, but to its character as well.

Prevention of disease and avoidance of unnecessary health care costs remain key responsibilities of elected officials, and are only underscored nowadays. Present day aldermen already possess an extremely potent tool to do just that, and are now called upon to reaffirm Milwaukee's proud legacy by soundly rejecting Mr. Bohl's proposal. The entire American Public Health Community stands behind this scientifically proven disease prevention measure.

Sincerely,

Judy Gelinias, President

American Association for Community Dental Programs represent more than 500 local, county and non-profit dental public health programs with a vision is to promote and protect the oral health of the residents of cities, counties, and communities in the United States by stimulating, improving, and maintaining city, county, and community-based oral health programs.