



Sixteenth Street
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

May 31, 2012

TO: The Honorable Alderman Jim Bohl
Members of the Milwaukee Common Council

FROM: John Bartkowski, DrPH
President & CEO

RE: #120187 Resolution ordering the immediate cessation and prohibition of the introduction of sodium silicofluoride or any fluoride compound into water distributed by the Milwaukee Water Works.

Sixteenth Street Community Health Center would like to add its voice to the growing chorus of children's health advocates, dental professionals and public health experts who oppose the resolution prohibiting fluoride from being added to City of Milwaukee drinking water.

Sixteenth Street treats more than 12,000 children under the age of 12 each year. The first line of defense against tooth decay for these children is the fluoride in the City water supply. The second line of defense against cavities is the fluoride varnish applied by our pediatricians as part of a well-child check. Access to regular dental care is generally not available to these families, because of their income and insurance status. Eliminating fluoride from tap water where these children live, makes no sense.

Recent headlines about the resurgence of measles and polio show the dire consequences that can result when longstanding and successful public health practices are ignored or discontinued because of perceived lack of value. Communities that have eliminated fluoride from drinking water have seen across-the-board increases in dental decay for all age groups. Creating an oral health crisis, that is larger than the one we already have, is something Milwaukee cannot afford. Our emergency rooms are flooded with people suffering from untreated oral health issues as it is.

Please listen to the public health community, and do not eliminate fluoride from City of Milwaukee drinking water.

Thank you.