

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Resolution on Community Water Fluoridation

WHEREAS, community water fluoridation benefits everyone, especially high risk populations. It is the most efficient way to prevent one of the most common childhood diseases- dental decay (five times as common as asthma and seven times as common as hay fever in five-to-seventeen year-olds). Without fluoridation, there would be many more than the estimated 51 million school hours lost each year in this country because of dental-related illnesses.

WHEREAS, states need to reduce expenditures in Medicaid budgets, and studies have proven that communities benefiting from fluoridated water use fewer Medicaid dollars to treat dental decay;

WHEREAS, the average cost for a community to fluoridate its water is estimated to range from approximately \$3.00 a year per person in small communities to approximately \$0.50 a year per person in large communities. For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation yields \$38 savings in dental treatment costs;

WHEREAS, with more than 60 years of research and practical experience, the overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe.

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has proclaimed community water fluoridation (along with vaccinations and infectious disease control) as one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century. Fluoridation of community water supplies is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay.

WHEREAS, more than 125 national and international health, service and professional organizations recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing tooth decay.

WHEREAS, community water fluoridation simply adjusts the level of fluoride that occurs naturally in water to the level considered optimal in helping protect against tooth decay. More than two-thirds of the population of the United States is served by public water systems that are optimally fluoridated.

WHEREAS, simply by drinking water, everyone, especially those without access to regular dental care, can benefit from fluoridation's cavity protection whether they are at home, work or school. Studies prove water

fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by 20-40%, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

WHEREAS, the maximum reduction in tooth decay is achieved when fluoride is available before teeth erupt so that it can be incorporated while teeth are forming and after teeth erupt to help repair enamel damaged by acid from decay-causing bacteria.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that due to the devastating consequences of tooth decay, The Council of State Governments urges state and local policymakers to consider the effectiveness of community water fluoridation as an economical public health measure in preventing tooth decay– particularly among those at greatest risk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments urges state and local policymakers to favorably consider policies related to the important oral health benefits of optimally fluoridated community water systems.

Adopted this 8th Day of May 2006, at the
CSG Spring National Committee and Task Force Meeting
In White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia

Governor Jim Douglas
2006 CSG President

Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin
2006 CSG Chair