



Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority

424 Hurley Drive, P.O. Box 450

Hackettstown, NJ 07840-0450

908-852-3622 Fax 908-852-2681

www.hmua.com

March 2, 2012

The Honorable Alison Littell McHose
115 Demarest Rd.
Suite 2B
Sparta, NJ 07871

Dear Assemblywomen Littell McHose,

In 2012, the New Jersey State Legislature will again be considering legislation calling for the mandatory fluoridation of all New Jersey public water supplies. The purported benefits of Water fluoridation have been a scientifically controversial issue for some time. There are growing concerns about the proliferation of chemicals and pharmaceuticals in the environment. Water Fluoridation chemicals can contribute high levels of toxic contaminants such as arsenic and lead. According to a 2000 American Water Works Association (AWWA) publication, the chemicals used for water fluoridation (Fluorosilicic acid, sodium fluoride and sodium fluorosilicate) can contribute as much as 0.249 parts per billion (ppb), of arsenic to the water supply and are not high purity grade products. All three chemicals are byproducts of the phosphate fertilizer industry. The USEPA Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Arsenic in Water is 10 ppb. New Jersey has adopted a more stringent limit of 5 ppb. The EPA Maximum Contaminant Level *Goal* (MCLG) for arsenic is *zero*, which is defined as "*The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health*". Therefore, the addition of any chemical containing arsenic is in conflict with the MCL Goal.

The mass fluoridation of drinking water is an inefficient delivery system in addressing dental health for children. Less than 1 percent of the water supplied is actually consumed. Bottled water has dramatically increased and customers have many other fluid options. The unconsumed fluoridated water and contaminants would be discharged to groundwater septic systems or wastewater treatment plants. Many wastewater treatment facilities have contaminant limits that are more restrictive than drinking water. In the case of the Hackettstown MUA, the arsenic limit of 0.017 ppb is 294 times lower than the NJ Drinking Water arsenic standard of 5 ppb. As a result, facilities may be faced with building additional wastewater treatment facilities solely as a result of the addition of a fluoride treatment chemical to drinking water. In fact, Bills currently before the Legislature as A733 and S81, would prohibit health care institutions from disposing of medicines into septic systems or wastewater treatment systems. The New Jersey Clean Water Council and the US EPA Headquarters Union of Scientists *oppose* the mandatory fluoridation of water supplies.

Mandatory Fluoridation would also have a significant cost impact upon the ratepayers in New Jersey. Proponents of fluoridation claim it will only cost about \$1 dollar per person per year. However, the cost estimate does not consider all of the cost impacts. The Hackettstown MUA has 7 water supply facilities and would need to construct fluoride chemical treatment facility for each location. Expansion of existing buildings would likely be required. As previously stated, additional wastewater treatment facilities may need to be constructed for treatment of byproduct contaminants. The three Fluoride treatment chemicals are all hazardous chemicals regulated by the Toxic Substances Control Act. The

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chemicals are classified as toxic hazards, are very corrosive and pose significant exposure issues for operations personnel requiring additional operator safety training. The North Jersey District Water Supply Commission has developed cost estimates of **\$4.05 to \$7.05 billion in capital improvement costs and annual costs of \$1.4 to \$2.7 billion** to implement the proposed legislation in New Jersey. The costs will certainly be far above the \$1 per person per year.

The Fluoridation of water supplies in the US began in 1945. The original Fluoridation studies were crude by present day standards and conditions have changed. The introduction of Fluoride toothpaste in the 1970's is considered the main reason for the decline in tooth decay in industrialized countries and appears to be the single common factor in countries where tooth decay has declined. The cases of dental fluorosis (overexposure to fluoride) are increasing. According to a 2011 Center for Disease Control Report, 41 percent of children age 12 to 15 have some form of dental fluorosis. Today, when fluoride alternatives are more readily available in toothpaste, oral rinses and dental treatments, programs could be developed to specifically address children's dental health rather than the mass distribution of a chemical in every drop of water supplied in New Jersey. Even the American Dental Association and Centers for Disease Control agree that the major benefit of fluoride comes from its topical application as opposed to its systemic ingestion. Historically, some of the best intentions have over time proven to be costly disasters. Asbestos, DDT, radium and cigarettes were all introduced as modern marvels and conveniences, only to turn out to be medical and/or environmental disasters.

Aside from the moral, constitutional and civil liberty issues, there is growing concern about chemicals and medicines in the environment. As laboratory testing has evolved into the parts per trillion levels, Drinking Water maximum contaminant levels continue to be reduced. Wastewater limits have been reduced even further. The Legislation would be an unfunded mandate and the cost of implementing the legislation would certainly be significant at a time when utilities should not be passing additional costs to customers. Based upon the information provided, does it really make sense today to add fluoride to every drop of public water supplied to customers in the State of New Jersey? Therefore, the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority respectfully requests that you **vote *against*** the New Jersey Public Water Supply Fluoridation Act (A1811 and S959). The citizens of New Jersey have a right to ***choose*** what goes into their drinking water.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce D. Smith', is written over a faint, larger signature.

Bruce D. Smith
Executive Director

cc: HMUA Board

The letter was mailed to Governor Christie and the following Legislators:

Assemblyman DiMaio

Lt. Governor Guadagno

Senate President Sweeney

Assembly Speaker Oliver

Senator Doherty

Assemblywoman Littell McHose

Assemblywoman Munoz

Assemblywoman Tucker

Senator Sarlo

Assemblyman Bramnick

Assemblyman Peterson

Senator Bucco

Assemblyman Bucco

Assemblyman Conaway

Senator Vitale

Senator Kean, Jr.

Assemblyman Rible

Senator Oroho

Assemblyman Greenwald

Assemblywoman Weinberg

Senator Allen

Assemblyman Chiusano

Assemblyman Carroll