



Coalition of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Unions

August 5, 2005

RE: Bone Cancer-Fluoridation Cover-Up

Hon. J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert:

Our unions represent a substantial portion of the nation-wide workforce at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and we are writing to ask for a moratorium on the national program of the U.S. Public Health Service to fluoridate all of America's public water supplies.

One us (Dr. Hirzy, of NTEU Chapter 280) testified before the Subcommittee on Wildlife, Fisheries and Water of the Senate on June 29, 2000 on this subject on behalf of his headquarters union. At that time the union called for a moratorium based on science indicating a number of adverse health effects and out-of-control, excessive exposures to fluoride.

We now join NTEU Chapter 280 in renewing the call for a moratorium, based on startling and disturbing new information that confirms the worst fears expressed in the earlier testimony.

Work done at Harvard College's School of Dental Medicine by Dr. Elise Bassin, which has been hidden since 2001, shows that pre-adolescent boys who drink fluoridated water are at a seven-fold increased risk of osteosarcoma, an often fatal bone cancer. We ask that the moratorium take effect immediately and remain in place until a full hearing

by the Congress on the wisdom of continuing the practice is concluded. The last such hearing was in 1978.

Dr. Bassin's work, done as her doctoral thesis, was completed and accepted by Harvard in partial fulfillment of the requirements for her Ph.D. in 2001. It is a landmark investigation of age-specific exposure of young people in a case-control epidemiology study of the incidence of osteosarcoma. The thesis remained sequestered until 2004, when her research adviser, Chester Douglass, inexplicably reported to the funding agency, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, that *no* connection was found between fluoride and osteosarcoma. This discrepancy between Chester Douglass' written report and the actual findings of the funded study is under investigation by several entities, and we believe should be looked into by the Congress as well. It appears to be yet another instance of federally funded science gone awry to protect special interests. Chester Douglass edits Colgate Company's *Oral Health Report*.

Chapter three of Dr. Bassin's work (enclosed) cites the impressive weight of convergent evidence for the carcinogenicity of fluoride in young boys (but not girls): fluoride is a mitogen, increasing the rate of cell division; it has been shown to be mutagenic, damaging chromosomal structure; it accumulates primarily in bone, site of the cancer; several previous epidemiology studies have found heretofore unexplained increases in osteosarcoma in young men (but not young women); a National Toxicology Program animal study found statistically significant increases in osteosarcomas in male (but not female) rats. And she discusses why several other epidemiology studies found no association between fluoridation and osteosarcoma; principally, those studies did not consider age-specific exposures and development of the cancer.

It is simply unconscionable that her federally funded work was hidden for four years while millions of young boys continued to be exposed to increased risk of this disease, whose best outcome involves amputation. Several federal statutes express Congressional intent regarding timely warning about such risks. These include, for example, the Toxic Substances Control Act, section 8(e) and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act section 6(a)(2). We believe another area for Congressional investigation is: who knew about the results of Dr. Bassin's work besides herself and Chester Douglass? and was any federal statute violated by keeping those results hidden for four years?

Another reason for a Congressional review of fluoridation is the recent work of Dr. Richard Maas of the Environmental Quality Institute, University of North Carolina-Ashville, which shows that use of chloramine disinfectant and silicofluoride fluoridating agents with excess ammonia increases lead concentrations in public water supplies. This may explain at least some of the increased lead levels seen in the District of Columbia's water supplies and in the blood of children drinking water fluoridated with silicofluorides. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that ninety four percent of fluoridated water systems use silicofluorides.

Dr. Hirzy is available to meet with your staff to pursue this matter, and we hope that you will find it of sufficient concern to initiate a full investigation of fluoridation, which we believe is long overdue.

Sincerely,

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cc: Hon. Stephen L. Johnson, Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency