

April 30, 2021

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Chair, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member, Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

On behalf of our 162,000 members, we would like to thank you for considering proposals to revitalize the nation's infrastructure.

As you move forward with your discussions, we respectfully urge you to include a one-time supplemental infusion of funds to help states and localities revitalize their water fluoridation infrastructure. Doing so would be timely considering that a new water fluoridation technology—the first advancement in water fluoridation in decades—has just come to market.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has hailed community water fluoridation as one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century.¹⁻² For over 75 years, it has been an effective, reliable, and inexpensive way to reduce tooth decay by at least 25 percent in the population. In fact, an individual can enjoy a lifetime of fluoridated water for less than the cost of one dental filling.³

For the last several years, the CDC has used its Small Business Innovation Research funding authority to develop an even less costly option to expand water fluoridation throughout the country, particularly in rural areas. In February, this new technology—the sodium fluorosilicate tablet system—came to fruition. It has now met all of the agency's safety and effectiveness criteria to enable its widespread adoption.⁴

The new tablet fluoridation technology is less expensive for municipalities to purchase and maintain. It also uses less floor space, allowing municipal water agencies to repurpose areas that traditional fluoridation systems would ordinarily occupy. Moreover, the new tablet technology will extend the benefits of water fluoridation to rural communities, where the cost of traditional fluoridation systems has been prohibitive.

The CDC deserves tremendous credit for using its SBIR program to develop this new technology. We applaud the forward thinking of our colleagues at the Division of Oral Health, and we hope the taxpayers' investment in developing this new technology will be realized throughout the country.

Again, we respectfully urge you to include a one-time supplemental infusion of funds to help states and localities revitalize their water fluoridation systems. Doing so will reduce the need for costly dental care, particularly in areas where the cost of community water fluoridation has traditionally been prohibitive. A sudden demand for this new technology may also inspire companies hire new workers for its manufacture.

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Thank you for considering our request. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chris Tampio at 202-789-5178 or tampioc@ada.org.

Sincerely,

/s/

Daniel J. Klemmedson, D.D.S., M.D.
President

/s/

Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

DJK:KTO:rjb

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ten Great Public Health Achievements -- United States, 1900-1999. *MMWR* 1999; 48 (12): 241-243.

² Vivek H. Murthy, Surgeon General's Perspectives: Community Water Fluoridation—One of CDC's 10 Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century, *Public Health Rep* 2015; 130(4): 296-298.

³ American Dental Association, *Fluoridation Facts*, 2018.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, March 18). CDC Initiative Creates New Water Fluoridation Technology to Support Rural Health Needs [Press Release].