

Submission on the Health (Fluoridation of Drinking Water) Amendment Bill

To the **Health Committee**

December 26, 2016

I oppose the intent of this bill because it is a very carefully structured and organized plan to expand and maintain fluoridation of the water supply in New Zealand, in areas where the local councils and the people do not want their water fluoridated.

This submission is specifically about the bill before the committee. I am not going to discuss the health reasons against fluoridation because you believe it is the intent of this bill to remove the decision-making on fluoridation from the members of Parliament, although it is doing it in a deceptive way, and I do not believe that the members of the committee want to hear the usual arguments against fluoridation so I am not going to go into those other than one item which does relate to a particular clause of the bill.

I wish to make the following comments:

Clause 5: This clause requires that the decision to add fluoride to water, be decided by the District Health Boards and that water suppliers must comply with their decision, otherwise it is an offense.

The District Health Boards do not necessarily have toxicologists and it is not within their domain to conduct studies or engage in research relating to the safety of fluoride. Therefore, the District Health Boards are going to consider the Minister of Health water standard. Clause 7 will allow the minister to specify that a certain amount of fluoride be in the water supply. And the District Health Boards will consider New Zealand government-funded review: http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/media/2014/08/Health-effects-of-water-fluoridation_Aug_2014_corrected_Jan_2015.pdf (Health effects of water fluoridation: A review of the scientific evidence).

This is a government-funded extensive review which is clearly biased in favor of fluoridation. This is what the District Health Boards are going to rely on. They are not going to rely on anything else.

A response relating to an email message I sent relating to this bill, from **Glenn Harris, MP Support, Office of Hon Simon Bridges** which said: "The decision on whether or not to put fluoride in our water is best made by our health professionals – not Local Bodies or central Government – and that is the essential purpose of this Bill; to put decision making in the hands of our health experts."

This goes to the essence of the perception of the bill and reveals the fact that the members of Parliament are not properly educated about the true intent of the bill.

If you read the bill, clearly it is not the decision of health professionals. The decision ultimately is going to be by the Ministry of Health since the bill now allows the minister to set water standards which includes a certain level of fluoride. What is the purpose of that being in the bill if the decision should not be by the central government?

Clause 7: The Minister of Health, now has authority to specify that fluoride be added to the water supply. This is a central government decision. Not of the District Health Board.

Another thing which I have not seen discussed and not commonly written about in regards to fluoride in the water supply is that water suppliers certainly are going to make mistakes with the delivery of fluoride into the water supply and sometimes introduce more fluoride, that goes over the limit. Here is one such incident in Australia where 20 times the limit of fluoride was put into the water supply for three hours:

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/fluoride-overdose-a-triple->

consider anything else including the harm to the human body. Therefore, the national government is effectively saying fluoride is "safe".

The New Zealand government funded review, Health effects of water fluoridation: A review of the scientific evidence, also states: *"These various studies suggest that the predominant effect of fluoride is mainly local (interfering with the caries process) rather than systemic (pre-eruptively changing enamel structure)".* According to their own admission, putting fluoride in the water is ineffective.

The bill also has a provision to make the District Health Board direction an enforceable decision on this matter and does not require the decision to be made by the House of Representatives (**69ZJA(6)**). This is undemocratic.

Conclusion:

So in effect this bill is a carefully thought out and structured attempt to try to remove members from the decision and give the authority to the Minister of Health. So the will of the people is clearly being subverted.

I recently immigrated to this country and one thing that I liked about New Zealand is that it is a small country with better representation in government and low corruption. It is considered one of the least corrupt governments in the world. When you subvert the will of the people, naturally you are going to hurt the reputation of the government.

The long-term harm this does to the public's trust in government and the reputation of government should not be underestimated including an erosion of economic activity due to reduced tourism and of the tax base due to people leaving the country and fewer immigrants wanting to come. It is important that New Zealand remains a healthy, green and competitive country in the views of the rest of the world and that the government operates in a reasonable manner and respects the will of the people.

I remain opposed to this bill in its entirety.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anthony Sarafa