



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Brains versus Teeth: Kentuckians Call for Informed Choice in Water Fluoridation

*“Unfortunately, we now have more damning evidence of fluoride being a neurotoxin that has systemic effects that are harmful to the body” - Louisville dentist Dr. John Kall, DMD, FAGD, Exec Chair INT’L Academy Oral Medicine & Toxicology*

*March 13, 2024*

**Louisville, Kentucky** — Water districts and citizens are questioning the necessity of mandatory water fluoridation. Kentucky lawmakers have heard their concerns and passed House Bill 141<sup>1</sup> out of committee on February 8, 2024, 16-to-1, almost unanimously. House Bill 141 will repeal Kentucky’s statewide water fluoridation mandate and place the decision in the hands of the governing body of the local water producers. Supporters of the bill are encouraging fellow citizens to call their State Representative and ask for their support of the bill and for House leadership to allow HB 141 to pass to the house floor for a vote. The bill, first filed in 2018, has growing bipartisan support from citizens, legislators and Kentucky water districts with concerns regarding the safety, efficacy and ethics of water fluoridation. [Click to View Photos for Use](#)

*“It’s a bill that will undo an unfunded state mandate and return this decision to local control.” - Rep. Mark Hart (primary bill sponsor)*

#### The History and Background of Fluoridation:

- 1. Historical Context:** In 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan, became the first city in the United States to fluoridate its water. Kentucky’s water fluoridation program began in 1951 and was mandated in 1966. Today Kentucky is ranked #2 in water fluoridation next to DC<sup>2</sup> and 49th in dental health<sup>3</sup>. Data shows a steady decline in Kentucky’s dental health outcomes after 1987, an indication that mass water fluoridation is not as effective as initially presumed.<sup>4 5</sup>

*“Kentucky consistently ranks among the worst states for dental health. A 2023 assessment reported the state has more people 65 or older missing all of their natural teeth than any other state.” - Louisville Courier Journal*

**2. What type of fluoride is added to drinking water?** The chemical commonly used to artificially elevate fluoride levels in Kentucky public drinking water is hydrofluorosilicic acid, an industrial waste byproduct of the phosphate fertilizer and aluminum industries. The chemical is not naturally occurring and is not the mineral salt found naturally in rivers or vegetables. Instead, the silicofluoride is created during the production of phosphate fertilizer. Due to the toxicity profile, it is required by the EPA to be captured in wet scrubbing smokestacks and is often contaminated with other heavy metals from the Earth's crust. Fluorosilicic acid as a water additive is not an FDA approved product, not pharmaceutical grade, and is regulated only as an environmental contaminant by the EPA, which sets a maximum contaminant level of fluoride.

*"Many are surprised to learn that unlike the pharmaceutical grade fluoride in their toothpaste, the fluoride in their water is an untreated industrial waste product (fluorosilicic acid), one that contains trace elements of arsenic and lead." - Frank Zelko, Environmental historian and professor [6 7 8](#)*

**3. Who pays for water fluoridation?** Water treatment plants buy fluorosilicic acid and the cost is passed onto the consumer. Plants in Kentucky spend anywhere from thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars depending on the size of the water district. Customers who do not want to consume fluoride in their drinking water must purchase a specialized water filtration system to remove fluoride from tap water or buy bottled drinking water. These systems can be cost-prohibitive for many Kentuckians.

#### **Recent Lawsuit, New Scientific Studies, Data, and Legislation:**

**1. Ongoing Legal Battle:** A lawsuit filed in 2017 by Food & Water Watch and other advocacy groups has forced a reevaluation of water fluoridation. The ongoing case reconvened early this year in 2024 and multiple studies evaluating the adverse health effects of consuming fluoride at levels in drinking water, including those that suggest neurotoxicity in relation to the developing brains of infants, were brought before a judge.<sup>9</sup>

*"The issue at hand is whether fluoride is not so good for the developing brain." - Dr. Howard Hu (1/31/24) regarding his testimony at the 2nd phase of the fluoride lawsuit. Dr. Hu is a physician-scientist, internist and preventive medicine specialist, with a doctoral degree in epidemiology. Dr. Hu is also a Professor of Population and Public Health Sciences at the University of Southern California.*

**2. NTP Draft Report:** In 2023, the National Toxicology Program (NTP) released an early draft of a report that began in 2020 on fluoride, revealing that evidence from scientific studies provides an association between fluoride in drinking water and lower IQ in children.<sup>10</sup>

**3. Harmful effects:** Current scientific research suggests that consuming fluoride at levels available in drinking water may be harmful to infants' neurological development, reducing IQ, and contributing to ADHD, depression, thyroid dysfunction, endocrine disruption, dental fluorosis, skeletal fluorosis, and damage to liver, kidneys and red blood cells, just to name a few.<sup>11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18</sup>

4. **Efficacy Doubts:** Research and data over the past 50 years has raised doubts regarding the efficacy of water fluoridation. Kentucky's steady decline in dental health rankings begs the question: **Is mandated water fluoridation the equitable and effective solution legislators hoped for back in 1966?** The University of Kentucky's 2023 dental health report shows access to dentists as the key factor. Harvard Public Health published findings showing high-income countries with no artificial fluoridation having declined dental decay rates at a pace comparable to those with fluoridated water.<sup>19</sup> In 2023, a new study using dental insurance records of 6.4 million adults in England found essentially no reduction in tooth decay for those living in fluoridated areas.<sup>20 21</sup>
5. **Fluoride is Being Challenged Worldwide:** Only 15 U.S. states have laws mandating water fluoridation. Georgia, Kentucky and Nebraska have filed bills that would reverse the mandates and leave the choice up to localities. This year, local governments in Union County, North Carolina, and Collier County, Florida, prohibited the addition of fluoride to their drinking water. Last year, Branson, Missouri, State College, Pennsylvania, and Brushy Creek, Texas, stopped adding fluoride to their water systems. Further, 98% of western Europe does not artificially fluoridate their public drinking water, along with most of the world.<sup>22</sup>

*"The argument is if this board, the Union County Board of Commissioners, has the authority to put a medicine or a medical substance in our water without the consent of the residents. Do we have the authority to do so? My opinion is that we do not." - Vice Chairman Brian Helms*

*"Fluoride is added to the water to treat us, and I think that should give us pause." - Union County Commissioner David Williams*

6. **Letters from KY Water Districts Supporting HB 141:** Water districts across the state are imploring KY lawmakers to overturn the mandate for reasons ranging from ethics, harm, safety, and, frankly, beyond their role as clean water producers. Click to read their official statements below:

1. [Grayson County Water District](#)
2. [Irvine Municipal Utilities](#)
3. [Martin County Utility Board](#)
4. [McCreary Water District](#)
5. [Morehead Utility Plant Board](#)
6. [Rattlesnake Ridge Water District](#)
7. [Leitchfield Water](#)
8. [City of Danville](#)

*"Since it does nothing to improve the quality of potable water, fluoridation is simply mass medication for the millions of citizens in our state. A one size fits all dose for everyone, whether needed or harmful to each particular individual. A doctor cannot prescribe medication to his/her patients without informed consent, yet we inject a hazardous chemical byproduct of fertilizer manufacturing into our drinking water each day as preventative medicine." – Phillip Adkins, Moorhead Water Treatment Plant Superintendent*

*"Its use significantly increases safety hazards for our workers. Many of our customers, your constituents, have expressed concern about fluoridation. Grayson County Water District respectfully urges you to support HB 141." – James Hale, Chief Water Plant Operator*

## **Additional Reasons for Opposing Water Fluoridation:**

1. **Ethical Considerations:** Water fluoridation is a form of mass medication without individual consent. Citizens value their right to make informed decisions about their health. Water fluoridation mandates infringe upon this autonomy by imposing a one-size-fits-all approach and no consideration for dose. Individuals should have the freedom to choose whether to ingest fluoride based on their unique circumstances and preferences.
2. **Environmental Impact:** Artificial water fluoridation introduces additional chemicals into the water supply, raising environmental concerns. Disposal of fluoride additives can harm animals, plants and ecosystems.<sup>23</sup>

## **Call to Action:**

Supporters of HB 141 and advocates for choice regarding artificial water fluoridation are asking citizens to please **CALL 800-372-7181** to leave a message for the House Rules committee saying, "Please bring HB 141 to the House floor for a vote. Citizens want a say in water fluoridation" and for your own representative saying "Please support HB 141 giving local districts a choice regarding water fluoridation." The message line is open Mon-Thurs until 9 PM and Friday until 6 PM when the legislature is in session. Follow-up email messages are also persuasive.

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## **About Kentucky for Fluoride Choice:**

Kentucky for Fluoride Choice is a volunteer grassroots movement started in 2018 with a goal of allowing for local decision-making and informed choice when it comes to artificial water fluoridation distributed via municipal water supplies. Members include Kentucky citizens, legislators, water treatment plant employees, water districts, elected county and city leadership, and more.

For questions, email: [KentuckyForFluorideChoice@gmail.com](mailto:KentuckyForFluorideChoice@gmail.com)

Representative Mark Hart, primary sponsor

[Mark.Hart@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:Mark.Hart@lrc.ky.gov)

[www.FluorideFreeKentucky.org](http://www.FluorideFreeKentucky.org) | <https://www.facebook.com/kentuckyforfluoridechoice/> | <https://twitter.com/FluorideFreeKY>

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