



June 11, 2015

Dear Esteemed Members of the Washington State Board of Health,

The Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (WAHA) strongly supports your intention to adjust WAC 246–290–460 to follow the recommendation of the US Department of Health and Human Services, thereby adopting the optimal water fluoridation standard of 0.7 mg/L for improved oral health.

Community water fluoridation is an effective, inexpensive and safe ways to prevent tooth decay and improve public health. It is the most highly recommended and proven foundation for good oral health, and is endorsed by the American Dental Association, American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

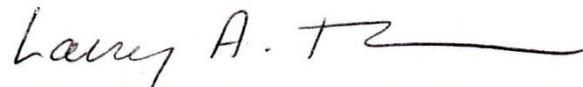
Here in Whatcom County, the vast majority of our community water supply is NOT fluoridated, and 42% of our children start kindergarten with decay experience. By third grade, 61% of our children have experienced tooth decay.¹ These are discouragingly high disease rates, and the preventive strategy of fluoridating our communities' water supply would benefit both children and adults.²

The Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (WAHA) works to improve oral health, especially for the most vulnerable in our community. We coordinate the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program, and share leadership for the Whatcom Oral Health Coalition. While these activities have increased access to dental care, we clearly need more primary prevention, including water fluoridation.

For the health of our communities, we urge the Board of Health to follow the community water fluoridation recommendation of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Thank you for your efforts to improve oral health in Washington's communities.

Sincerely,



Larry Thompson, Executive Director

¹ Whatcom County 2010 Smile Survey, <http://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1501>

² Fluoridated Water Helps Older Adults Keep Teeth, Study Says. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/31/health/fluoridated-water-helps-older-adults-keep-teeth-study-says.html?_r=0