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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

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Recognizing community water fluoridation as a safe, effective public health intervention to prevent tooth decay and promote oral and physical health.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing community water fluoridation as a safe, effective public health intervention to prevent tooth decay and promote oral and physical health.

Whereas oral health is integral to overall health and well-being, affecting a person's ability to eat, speak, learn, and work;

Whereas caries disease (commonly known as tooth decay or cavities) is one of the most common chronic diseases in children and adults, despite being largely preventable;

Whereas tooth decay can lead to pain, abscess (infections), swelling, bleeding gums, damaged or broken teeth, tooth loss, tooth sensitivity, inability to chew, shift in teeth positioning, weight loss and malnutrition, a weakened im-

mune system, fatigue, heart disease, heart attacks, worsening of existing health conditions, including diabetes, osteoporosis, and HIV/AIDS, and other health issues;

Whereas tooth decay has led to infections that have resulted in death;

Whereas, in 2007, 12-year-old Deamonte Driver died after bacteria from an abscessed tooth traveled to his brain;

Whereas, in 2009, 24-year-old Kyle Willis died after being unable to afford antibiotics to treat a tooth infection, which spread to his brain;

Whereas, in 2017, 26-year-old Vadim Kondratyuk, a father of 2 young children, died of a tooth infection that spread to his blood and lungs;

Whereas, each year, there are thousands of hospitalizations and multiple deaths in the United States due to dental infections;

Whereas 1 in 4 adults has untreated tooth decay;

Whereas nearly 1,000,000 Americans visit the emergency room each year because of dental pain, costing the Nation's health care system hundreds of millions of dollars;

Whereas tooth decay is nearly always preventable;

Whereas fluoride is an essential component in preventing tooth decay, reducing tooth decay by about 25 percent;

Whereas fluoride is naturally found in almost all soil and water and in many rocks;

Whereas many communities add a small amount of fluoride to their water supply to prevent cavities and promote good oral and physical health;

Whereas community water fluoridation, the adjustment of fluoride in drinking water to optimal levels to prevent tooth decay, has been supported by more than 75 years of scientific research and has been recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as 1 of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century;

Whereas, since its introduction in 1945, community water fluoridation has led to a dramatic decline in cavities;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, communities with water fluoridation save \$32 per person annually by avoiding dental treatment costs and leading to fewer missed workdays and schooldays;

Whereas providing optimally fluoridated water to communities nationwide for 1 year saves \$6,500,000,000 in dental treatment costs and offers an average return on investment of \$20 for every dollar spent;

Whereas community water fluoridation is a cost-effective, equitable, and accessible means of delivering preventive oral health care to populations regardless of age, income, or access to regular dental services;

Whereas leading health organizations, including the American Dental Hygienists' Association, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research, and the World Health Organization, support community water fluoridation as a safe and effective public health measure;

Whereas community water fluoridation has long enjoyed bipartisan support at local, State, and Federal levels as a practical, evidence-based public health solution;

Whereas Florida and Utah became the first States in the United States to enact legislation prohibiting the addition of fluoride to their public drinking water systems, raising concerns among public health professionals about an increased risk of preventable tooth decay, particularly among children and low-income families; and

Whereas February is recognized by numerous organizations as “National Children’s Dental Health Month”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes community water fluoridation as
3 a safe, effective public health intervention to prevent
4 tooth decay and promote oral health;

5 (2) encourages States and localities to initiate
6 or maintain fluoridation of community water sys-
7 tems at optimal levels recommended by the World
8 Health Organization and the American Association
9 for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research;

10 (3) recognizes the role of public health profes-
11 sionals, dental providers, and community leaders in
12 promoting evidence-based oral health initiatives;

13 (4) supports continued research, education, and
14 investment in community water fluoridation pro-
15 grams to improve the oral health of the public; and

16 (5) recognizes and supports the goals of “Na-
17 tional Children’s Dental Health Month”.