
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ORAL HEALTH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii's public
2 elementary school children have tooth decay rates that nearly
3 double those documented in all of the other states. For Native
4 Hawaiian and Filipino children, the rate of tooth decay is even
5 higher. Poor oral health among children and vulnerable adult
6 populations is among the most widespread and pressing challenges
7 identified in Hawaii. Dental disease, including tooth decay, is
8 Hawaii's silent epidemic. It causes pain, suffering, loss of
9 productivity at school and work, and becomes more expensive to
10 treat the longer the decay or disease is left untreated. In
11 addition to negatively affecting one's quality of life, dental
12 disease and tooth decay are also catalysts to other life-
13 threatening systemic diseases and infections.

14 There is a dramatic documented variance in Hawaii between
15 children attending military base schools whose water is
16 fluoridated and children in non-military base schools. While
17 many factors affect dental health, the fact that Hawaii's



1 military base water systems are optimally fluoridated is
2 considered the major factor contributing to the superior oral
3 health found among military base elementary school children.
4 When dental health statistics from Hawaii's military bases are
5 not used in the calculations, Hawaii ranks last in oral health
6 in the United States.

7 Over four hundred million people in over sixty countries
8 presently receive the benefits of optimally fluoridated drinking
9 water. This figure includes more than one hundred seventy
10 million people in the United States in thousands of communities,
11 and approximately sixty-five per cent of the total United States
12 population. Every recent United States surgeon general has
13 recommended optimally fluoridating water. More than one hundred
14 health organizations, including the American Medical Association
15 and the World Health Organization, support water fluoridation.
16 Between 2000 and 2004, more than one hundred twenty-five United
17 States communities in thirty six states have voted to adopt
18 fluoridation programs. The Centers for Disease Control and
19 Prevention has proclaimed community water fluoridation as one of
20 the ten great public health achievements of the 20th century.

21 Fluoridation is safe and cost effective. Community water
22 fluoridation in the United States has a record of safety and



1 effectiveness dating back over fifty years. Despite claims to
2 the contrary, years of critical scientific research has not
3 demonstrated an association between fluoridation and acute or
4 long-term health problems. It is considered among the most
5 socially equitable and cost-effective public health measures
6 ever implemented. The benefits of fluoridated drinking water
7 include a sixty to sixty-five per cent reduction in tooth decay.
8 Our communities would further benefit from this substantial
9 reduction in tooth decay by lower private and public health care
10 costs and dental insurance premiums. Those in greatest need in
11 our community will benefit the most. The United States Centers
12 for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the lifetime
13 cost: benefit ratio of community water fluoridation is 1:80;
14 every dollar spent on fluoridation will save eighty dollars in
15 health care costs. The average annual cost of community water
16 fluoridation is estimated to be about one dollar per person per
17 year. The lifetime cost per person is less than a single dental
18 filling.

19 All drinking water systems in Hawaii contain a low level of
20 naturally occurring fluoride. The adjusted concentration
21 recommended to effectively improve oral health is 0.7 parts per
22 million. In relative terms, this minute amount may be viewed as



1 equivalent in length to 1 inch in 20.8 miles, in time, to 1
2 minute in 2.6 years, in money, to 1 penny in \$13,000, and in per
3 cent, to 1/13,000th of 1 per cent.

4 The purpose of this Act is to promote oral health in our
5 communities by adjusting the amount of naturally occurring
6 fluoride in the water to the optimum level that will benefit
7 oral health.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 340E, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
10 and to read as follows:

11 "§340E- Water fluoridation pilot program. (a) There is
12 established a water fluoridation pilot program to be
13 administered by the director in the geographic areas of
14 Waimanalo, Kalihi, and the Waianae coast. The director shall
15 administer the program to all other communities at the option
16 and request of each requesting community.

17 (b) At any time, the fluoride content of water served by
18 the public water system in an area specified under subsection
19 (a) is less than 0.7 parts per million of fluoride, the
20 department shall add a measured amount of fluoride to the water
21 so as to maintain a fluoride content that is in accordance with



1 the water fluoridation guidelines issued by the United States
2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

3 (c) The department may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91
4 to effectuate this section."

5 SECTION 3. The department of health shall submit a report
6 to the legislature evaluating the efficacy of the water
7 fluoridation pilot program no later than twenty days prior to
8 the convening of each regular legislative session in which the
9 program is administered.

10 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$, or so
12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and
13 the same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
14 year 2008-2009, for the establishment and administration of the
15 water fluoridation pilot program.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
17 of health for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;
20 provided that section 4 shall take effect on July 1, 2007; and



H.B. NO. 209

1 provided further that this Act shall be repealed on July 1,
2 2012.
3

INTRODUCED BY: John Brown

JAN 18 2007



Report Title:

Oral Health; Water System; Fluoridation

Description:

Requires the department of health to establish and administer the water fluoridation pilot program to adjust the amount of naturally occurring fluoride in the water to a level that will benefit oral health. Makes appropriations.

