



Hon Lawrence Springborg MP  
Minister for Health

- 3 DEC 2012

Mr Neil Laurie  
Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Level 19  
147-163 Charlotte Street Brisbane 4000  
GPO Box 48 Brisbane  
Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3234 1191  
Facsimile +61 7 3229 4731  
Email [health@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:health@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 1921-12, tabled in Parliament on 1 November 2012, in relation to the mandatory fluoridation of water supplies in Queensland.

As some petitioners would be aware, the Government had proposed amendments to the Water Fluoridation Act 2008 to expand the grounds under which Local Governments could apply for an exemption from the requirement to fluoridate their drinking water supplies. The Government had also proposed to clarify which water supplies would be eligible to apply for an exemption.

On further consideration, the Government has decided to bring forward amendments to the Water Fluoridation Act that will see the removal from the Act of the mandatory obligation to implement fluoridation of drinking water supplies in Queensland.

These amendments will now ensure that the decision on whether to fluoridate a water supply can be made by Local Government; and it will be Local Government's obligation to determine what is 'in the best interests of the community' when deciding whether to fluoridate or not.

I note petitioners' concerns that water fluoridation may be deemed "mass medication". In Australia, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is responsible for regulating medicines to ensure their quality, safety and efficacy. The TGA does not require fluoride compounds to be registered as medicines if they are used for the prevention of tooth decay and are at concentrations below the level of 15 milligrams per kilogram as specified in the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons. In Queensland the concentration of fluoride in drinking water supplies, after fluoride dosing, ranges from 0.6 to 0.8 milligrams per litre. One litre of water weighs one kilogram, therefore this concentration places fluoridated drinking water well below the level at which fluoride would be classified as a medicine or poison.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP  
Minister for Health