



Hon Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

MI164736

Deputy Premier
Minister for Health

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

10 NOV 2009

Email: TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter dated 5 August 2009, regarding Petition No 1189-09, in relation to water fluoridation.

I note the concerns raised in the petition and can assure you that the safety and effectiveness of water fluoridation at optimal levels has been frequently re-evaluated, and the weight of evidence consistently shows that fluoridated water is safe.

I am advised that Queensland Health recommends that water be fluoridated in the target range of 0.6 to 1.1mg/L, depending on climate, to balance the reduction of dental decay and occurrence of dental fluorosis. Queensland communities with water supplies that service over 1000 people will be drinking water fluoridated at between 0.6 and 0.8 mg/L. This is lower than other parts of Australia owing to our hotter climate and higher consumption of fluids.

In relation to the petitioners request for full rebates for the purchase and installation of reverse osmosis water filters, I am advised that the filters not only remove fluoride from drinking water but also other beneficial minerals. As such, the Queensland Government does not support subsidising or reimbursing households for reverse osmosis filters.

The Queensland Government's ongoing investment in the provision of quality oral health services will be enhanced by the introduction of water fluoridation as a key preventative measure. Research has demonstrated that fluoridation – together with oral hygiene and good nutrition – can reduce tooth decay by up to 40%. We cannot ignore the extensive scientific evidence which shows that fluoridation is a safe and effective means of improving oral health, thereby reducing the considerable personal and financial burden of oral disease. The introduction of water fluoridation will shift the focus to prevention over cure.

Yours sincerely

PAUL LUCAS MP
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