



# North Dakota House of Representatives

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## Representative Matthew Heilman

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## COMMITTEES:

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Matt Heilman, and I am a state representative from North Dakota's seventh legislative district in Bismarck. I am here to testify in favor of HB 1605 which would prohibit adding fluoride to any public water supply system. There are fines listed in the bill for violations and becomes effective August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, to give everyone sufficient time to adjust to the new law.

Why am I bringing this legislation? Fluoride in the water has been a topic of debate for many years now. This conversation has become far more mainstream and with Robert F. Kennedy Jr. potentially becoming the Secretary of Health and Human Services, there is not a better time to introduce this legislation. RFK Jr. has been incredibly outspoken about removing fluoride from water supply systems. The U.S. Senate Finance Committee is scheduled to vote on his confirmation on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of February.

Recently, JAMA Pediatrics released a nine yearlong study of fluoride and how it lowers IQ. CNN reported "Every 1 part per million increase in fluoride in urine — a way of measuring all the sources of fluoride a person consumes — was associated with a roughly 1 point drop in a child's IQ score, the review concluded." In the conclusion of the report it says, "A 5-point decrease in a population's IQ would nearly double the number of people classified as intellectually disabled." For those who do not know, JAMA Pediatrics is a monthly peer-reviewed medical journal published by the American Medical Association.

Last August, the National Toxicology Program, part of the Department of Health and Human Services, released a report saying fluoride at twice the recommended limit is linked to lower IQ in children. AP News reported "It summarizes a review of studies, conducted in Canada, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, and Mexico, that concludes that drinking water containing more than 1.5 milligrams of fluoride per liter is consistently associated with lower IQs in kids."

Last September, U.S. District Judge Edward Chen ruled against the EPA regarding adding fluoride into water. His ruling was ordering the EPA to further regulate fluoride due to fluoride lowering IQ in children. He did not give specific instructions, but just that they need to further regulate it. His historic ruling was based off the JAMA Pediatrics report. It's the first time a federal judge has decided about the neurodevelopmental risks to children of the recommended U.S. water fluoride level.

Since 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends a concentration level of 0.7 mg/L in drinking water. The previous 50 years the recommendation concentration level was 1.2 mg/L. I went on the CDC website to find some data on fluoride levels in North Dakota. Many of the water systems did not have available data but I did find some examples. Those include the city of Bowman at 1.95 mg/L and Watford Residence Suites at 1.50 mg/L. According to the CDC, 74 of our water systems do not have fluoride while 299 do have fluoride. Going through the CDC website, it confirms most water systems have fluoride but many of the concentration levels were not available. The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services states that 96.5% of North Dakotans drink water with fluoride in it.

The opposing side of this discussion will always say fluoride is good for your oral health. Assuming that is the case, why do people need to consume it? Toothpaste with fluoride in it is incredibly easy to obtain for those who wish to use fluoride. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee now is the time to act. I will stand for whatever questions you may have.

Sources

<https://www.hhs.nd.gov/health/oral-health-program/community-water-fluoridation>

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