The Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL), from an editorial published by the newspaper on November 19, 2015:

“Despite more than 70 years of evidence of its public health benefits, fluoridating water supplies continues to be a controversial practice in many communities. Nobody knows that better than Port Orange.

“For the third time since at least 2013, the city is grappling with protests over whether it should continue fluoridating its water, something it has done since 1983 — and with good reason. When added to water supplies, fluoride, a naturally occurring mineral, has been demonstrated to reduce tooth decay, especially among children.

“... Kooky conspiracy theories (during the Cold War) eventually gave way to concerns about fluoride’s potential side effects, such as whether it contributed to cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, birth defects, Down syndrome and other maladies. No reputable research over more than seven decades has ever confirmed those fears.

“That doesn’t mean public health officials have become complacent to any possible pitfalls to fluoridation. Indeed, in April the federal government lowered the recommended amount of fluoride in water supplies. ...The change was made in response to some children getting too much fluoride from other sources, such as toothpastes and mouthwashes, which was causing white splotches on their teeth. Although the discoloration is harmless to their health, the government was wise to adjust its standards, if only to demonstrate it is sensitive to public concerns.

“...nothing has changed since 2013, or 1983, or 1946. Council members should fall on the side of sound science and public health, and vote to renew the fluoridation program.”

Austin American-Statesman

The Austin American-Statesman (TX), from an editorial published by the newspaper on August 20, 2015:

“The recent battles in Austin and San Marcos over fluoridated water are just the latest examples of how quickly the American public forgets its medical triumphs.

“Just as vaccines have fallen out of favor despite defeating polio, mumps, rubella and measles, foes of fluoride have been pressuring cities nationally to cease one of America’s most successful public health efforts. While we respect the decision of the Austin City
Council to allow activists to air their concerns, we commend council members for resisting the rhetoric of a small-but-vocal minority determined to reverse more than 70 years of progress in public health.

“At the same time, we urge voters in San Marcos to consider in November the preponderance of medical evidence that shows that fluoridated water is not only safe and effective, but a worthwhile public investment.”

TORONTO STAR

The Toronto Star, from an editorial published by the newspaper on January 27, 2016:

“Unable to refute an overwhelming body of evidence showing the health benefits of fluoridated drinking water, anti-fluoride activists now hope to end local use on jurisdictional grounds. . . . What utter nonsense. Federal and provincial authorities have repeatedly, consistently and convincingly spoken on this issue and made clear that fluoridated drinking water is a boon to public health. No sound scientific evidence has surfaced showing this poses a risk.

“If municipal officials . . . feel ill-equipped to grasp the complexities of fluoridation they should heed the more than 17 major reviews on this issue done since 1997, including an expert panel convened by Health Canada in 2007. All concluded that fluoridation reduces risk of tooth decay in a safe and cost-effective manner.

“They would also do well to consider a 2003 report done on children in Peel showing that half the kids in Caledon had cavities in their teeth while only 37 per cent in Brampton, and 38 per cent in Mississauga, did so. Why? Drinking water in Brampton and Mississauga has been fluoridated since the early 1960s, while much of the water in Caledon came from wells without any added fluoride.”

THE DENVER POST

The Denver Post (CO), from an editorial published by the newspaper on August 1, 2015:

“Times change, science evolves and public attitudes shift, so it’s to the board’s credit that it is re-examining the issue. But when the board does make its decision, probably later this month, we hope it sticks with its policy of fluoridating water by the amount recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in order to minimize tooth decay.

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers water fluoridation one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Not only did tooth decay become far less prevalent but Americans also were far more likely to retain their permanent teeth into old age.

“At its recent meeting, the Water Board heard from three expert witnesses in favor of fluoridation and three opposed. Opponents included the director of the Fluoride Action Network, who argued that government experts are resistant to new evidence that
contradicts long-held beliefs. Such a possibility can't be discounted, of course, which is why board members need to consider the broad range of opinion.

“Given the benefits from fluoridated water, however, the evidence for health risks should be quite compelling before board members elect to change course. We don’t think the evidence rises to that level.”

The Boston Globe

The Boston Globe (CO), from an editorial published by the newspaper on April 24, 2015:

“Opponents of water fluoridation on the North Shore may not believe, as a character in the classic 1964 satire “Dr. Strangelove” did, that adding fluoride to water is a communist plot. But their half-baked reasons for asking Rockport and Gloucester voters to end water fluoridation, in votes scheduled for this May and November, aren’t much more convincing than the Cold War-era conspiracy theories.

“... [Fluoridation] ended a kind of geographic lottery, in which residents of areas with optimal natural fluoride levels had healthier teeth than people who lived in parts of the country with little natural fluoride.

“Opponents point out, correctly, that fluoride can be dangerous in large quantities, and argue that adding it to water amounts to medicating residents without their permission. The safety concerns are disingenuous. It would require chugging gallon after gallon of fluoridated water to reach even a potentially dangerous level. Water itself can be fatal in large enough quantities, but nobody would seriously consider ending public water supplies because of the remote risk of water intoxication.

“Nor is the idea that it’s forced medication particularly convincing. Fluoridation doesn’t introduce a new substance to drinking water; it instead brings the amount of the naturally occurring mineral to an optimal level. And nobody is forced to drink it: For North Shore skeptics who truly can’t stomach treated water, distilled water is cheap, and reverse osmosis water-treatment equipment can reduce levels of fluoride.

“Like their soulmates in the vaccine-skeptic movement, opponents of fluoride are capitalizing on fading memories of what life was like before the introduction of scientific improvements that we now take for granted, and they’re putting broader public health at risk for the sake of fringe superstition. At a minuscule cost, fluoridation has improved the lives of millions of Americans, and should remain a key part of the public-health toolkit.”

The Citrus County Chronicle

The Citrus County Chronicle (FL), from an editorial published by the newspaper on October 25, 2015:

“Further, the statement that 99 percent of the fluoride goes down the drain or into the environment seems a little odd, since most of the water used in a home goes down the
drain unless it is used for irrigation, and in both instances both the water and any chemicals added to it goes back into the environment.

“But the appropriate information that the council asked is whether there is a benefit to fluoridation. That was answered by dentists who were concerned enough with the proposal to come to the meeting and testify. They pointed out the benefit fluoridation had to the public, particularly to children from low-income families who may not otherwise have access to dental fluorine.

“Thanks to the willingness of dental professionals to take the time to come and speak against the proposal, and to the willingness of council members to listen to the facts before making a decision, Inverness came to the right decision to reject the staff proposal and continue fluoridating its water.”

The Press of Atlantic City (NJ), from an editorial published by the newspaper on April 2, 2015:

“Egg Harbor City Council has voted to continue adding recommended amounts of healthful fluoride to their water system. We commend them for what in New Jersey is apparently an act of courage or superior understanding.

“You might think fluoridating water is a no-brainer. The science that it prevents and even reverses tooth decay is about as established as science gets.

“...New Jersey is quite backward when it comes to fluoridation, with just 15 percent of municipalities providing it. State law leaves it up to the towns to decide whether they want it. New Jersey American Water, which supplies a lot of municipalities, says it will fluoridate water for towns that want it.

“So, town governments of South Jersey, what are you waiting for? Join Egg Harbor City and three-quarters of your fellow Americans in one of the great advances of the last century ...before we get too far into this century.”

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (PA), from an editorial published by the newspaper on January 9, 2015:

“Leave it to the divided and contentious Ford City Council to unite and solve a problem that most of the nation doesn’t recognize as a problem. All five council members at a recent meeting voted to stop fluoridation of the borough’s water supply when a new water plant starts operations in about a year.

“It’s an understatement to say most of the nation doesn’t see fluoridation as a problem. Nearly every large city adds fluoride to its water systems. ...There have been opponents of fluoridation since it was instituted in the 1940s. The dissenters have gotten more
sophisticated in their claims against fluoride, but they have yet to disprove the fact that it is a safe and effective way to fight tooth decay.

“Ford City has put itself on the short list of non-believers—right next to Portland, Ore., one of the larger cities to have rejected fluoridation. That city, by the way, rallies around this slogan: ‘Keep Portland Weird.’ That should say it all.

“The bickering members of the Ford City Council finally have found an issue they can agree upon. Unfortunately, stopping a practice that has been benefiting residents for decades is the wrong issue.”

Johnson City Press

The Johnson City Press (TN), from a column published by the newspaper’s editorial page editor on Jan. 5, 2015:

“I received an email last week that revisits a conspiracy theory that goes back more than 60 years — fluoride in drinking water is bad. Why it’s bad depends on which conspiracy theory you believe. Some say fluoridation is a corporate plot to control our minds. Others say it is a government plot to control our minds. During the Cold War, it was a communist plot to control our minds.

“…Beverly Pennell of Flowery Branch, Ga., informed me by email Thursday that the ‘debate is far from over.’ Fluoride, she wrote, is ‘dumbing us down, and in the end, killing us.’ Most of the so-called proof she lists is the same unsubstantiated claims opponents of fluoridation have said for years. And Tom Witherspoon, Johnson City’s water and sewer director, has heard them all before. ‘Those who are anti-fluoride are hardcore against fluoride,’ Witherspoon told me last week.

“…And even though the Environmental Protection Agency now says water utilities no longer need to put in the same level of fluoride as they did decades ago because of advancements in fluoride toothpaste and the like, fluoridation still benefits public health.”

The Press-Democrat (Sonoma County, CA), from an editorial published on Oct. 7, 2014:

“On Nov. 4, Healdsburg residents are being asked to pull the plug on that same program, all on the basis of fuzzy science, fanaticism and fear. We encourage residents to vote yes on Measure P, which calls for preserving the city's fluoridation program.

“This is not about cost. The fluoridation system costs Healdsburg less than 6 cents for every 1,000 gallons of water delivered from Fitch Mountain — about $40,000 a year. It’s a cost-effective program.”

“…The fact is the science behind the anti-fluoridation campaign is the same as the sketchy science fueling the anti-vaccination campaign in schools. Given the rapid rise of whooping cough and measles cases in California, it’s children who are paying the cost. Healdsburg
residents should not be conned into following that path. The Press Democrat recommends a yes vote on Measure P.”

Salina Journal

The Salina Journal (Salina, KS), from an editorial published on Oct. 27, 2014:

“There are a couple of things you need to know about the effort to remove fluoride from Salina's water. The first is that the dentists in town support the use of fluoride in the water. If they really believed that it would be better for people's health to remove it, don’t you suppose that they’d say so?

“Actually, it would mean money in their pockets if it were removed because it would mean more business — a lot more business. Those who lived in Salina before fluoride was put in the water can recall the horror stories of children with mouths full of painful, rotting teeth. Is this what we want? To go back to the good old days?

“We’re not going to get into the science of the issue because we, as with those leading the charge against fluoride, are not qualified to do so. But we will say, don’t be frightened and misled by those whose entire knowledge of medicine and science primarily was gleaned from the Internet.

“This is public health policy by fear, not science.”

The Northwest Indiana Times

The Northwest Indiana Times, from an editorial published on May 28, 2014:

“Valparaiso is looking at whether to continue fluoridating the city’s drinking water. The answer should be easy. There are people who say fluoridation is bad for health. That’s true, if not done correctly. But don’t discount the good that has been done by fluoridating water for Valparaiso’s past 60 years or so.

“... Occasionally, someone complains to The Times or the water department about adding fluoride to the drinking water supply. Back when it was begun, in the height of the Cold War, some extremists considered it a communist conspiracy. But then there are people who complain about vaccinations, too, and those are also on the CDC’s list of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.

“... Opponents of fluoridation will present science and junk science to support their case as Valparaiso goes through this review. Examine that evidence, but look also at the research that supports fluoridation at the great public health advance the CDC says it is.

“Also, remember that people who don’t want fluoride added to their water can always filter the water to remove it. But people who do want it can’t add it on their own. Don’t turn back time, and create more bad teeth, by stopping fluoridation. Trust the CDC and continue to fluoridate Valparaiso’s drinking water appropriately.”
The Star Tribune (Casper, WY), from an editorial published on September 23, 2014:

“When an idea earns acclaim as one of the 10 greatest achievements of its time and is subsequently endorsed by legions of professionals and confirmed by one study after another, the general public can scarcely contain its enthusiasm for said idea, right?

“Well, no, apparently not. The city of Sheridan’s attempt to fluoridate the municipal water supply is being stonewalled by Clean Water Sheridan, a determined group of holdouts who base their claim on a vote held more than half a century ago. It pains us to have to rebut the utter fiction that Clean Water Sheridan espouses. Because we must, however, we will start with the notion that fluoride poisons drinking water.”

“…Among the great contradictions in medicine is the fact that a substance can be both poisonous and beneficial. Some toxins that are potent enough to kill are also potent enough to heal. The difference is in the dosage. When administered by qualified professionals, the proper dose of an otherwise terrible poison can seemingly work miracles.

“ Tooth decay is one of the most common chronic illnesses in the world, and it can prove a major hindrance to childhood development. Youngsters who spend schooldays suffering through the pain of cavities and dental abscesses are hardly in optimal physical condition to learn and succeed in the classroom. For a minuscule cost, fluoridation offers families of all social and economic circumstances the gift of healthy teeth.”

The Gloucester Times (MA), from an editorial published on September 10, 2014:

“The fact that 35 Cape Ann dentists all signed a letter to the Times two weeks ago in support for continuing the community fluoridation program should carry a lot of weight. And Dr. William Bebrin, the orthodontist who crafted and circulated the letter, has noted some key points.

“ First, a community-wide fluoridation program makes the tooth decay fighter available to all residents — especially children — regardless of any socio-economic status. Also, as he noted, dentists would be the ones to financially gain if fluoride were dropped from the water systems; by most counts, fluoridation remains effective in preventing tooth decay, so any change could be expected to bring more cavities, fillings, and higher dental bills. The dentists, Bebrin noted, took this rare, unified step simply in the name of the communities’ health.”
The Hartford Courant (CT), from an editorial published on July 3, 2013:

“Attacks on adding fluoride to public water systems continue today — and they are as misguided now as they were half a century ago. Last week, a small anti-fluoride group held an informal hearing at the state Capitol at the behest of state Sen. Joe Markley, R-Southington, who wants to end the state requirement, in place since 1965, that public water supplies serving more than 20,000 people be fluoridated.

“...Sen. Markley’s main anti-fluoride argument, however, has as much to do with finances and governance as with medicine. He sees a town’s responsibility to treat its water supplies as an unfunded, unnecessary mandate that unfairly burdens local taxpayers. He unsuccessfully proposed a bill this past legislative session that would have repealed the state law, leaving the decision to fluoridate up to local water agencies.

“The state Department of Public Health estimates that every dollar invested in water fluoridation saves about $38 in averted dental care costs. The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate the water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling.

“From both a medical and a monetary perspective, fluoridation makes sense.”

The Journal (Dublin, Ireland), from an opinion column published on October 4, 2014:

“It never ceases to amaze me that, in matters of public health, the debate is more often informed by people who believe everything they read on the internet. Celebrities with a cause-du-jour and an audience are given more time and attention than scientists, doctors, or even just people who understand basic chemistry, and realise that not all scientific papers were created equal.

“...Dental fluorosis is the most common side effect from fluoridated water, and it is almost always solely cosmetic. Lots of claims have been made about fluoride affecting brain development, affecting IQ, affecting bone growth — and all of these claims just don’t really apply to water fluoridation.

“Studies which claim to show adverse effects of fluoride are typically using concentrations of fluoride far higher than what is permitted in our water supply, and the concentration in our water supply is monitored. In high concentrations, fluoride absolutely can cause significant health problems, but these concentrations are hundreds of times more than what is currently in our water supply.

“...The fluoride debate is an emotive issue, and because of this, it will probably continue to be controversial. The controversy, however, merely makes it even more important that our politicians do not bow to pressure from scare-tactic groups and appeals to emotion, but decide based on the best available evidence. And that evidence is pretty clear — just ask the World Health Organisation, the Centre for Disease Control and the American Dental Association.”
The Valley News (West Lebanon, NH), from an editorial published on June 22, 2014:

“Given the choice between siding with the minority of skeptics or the medical establishment, which regards the fluoridation of public drinking water as one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century, the Hartford Selectboard chose the noisy few.

“... Board members expressed two reservations. For starters, they were reluctant to compel those Hartford residents opposed to fluoridation to drink treated water. The problem with that objection is that it ignores one of the most significant benefits of treating a public drinking supply: Fluoridation ensures that a basic level of preventative oral care is delivered to a wide range of people, including minors under the care of adults who may not be sufficiently attentive to their children’s dental practices. Considering the overwhelming advantage of preventing tooth decay in this manner — attested to by many local dentists who have seen the unfortunate results of forgoing fluoridation — it’s reasonable to ask conscientious objectors to alleviate their concerns by assuming the inconvenience and expense of buying bottled water.

“But it seems that the board declined to hear out the public health advocates mostly because it didn’t wish to get entangled in something so “controversial,” to borrow the term used by Co-chairman Alex DeFelice. The board didn’t want to consume precious time that might otherwise be used to take on other pressing matters — more pressing than the health of town residents, that is.”

The Durango Herald (CO), from an op-ed column published on February 2, 2014:

“... Fluoride that is swallowed, say through a city water supply that is fluoridated, combines with calcium and phosphate as teeth are formed under the gums. These teeth are more resistant to decay and cavities throughout childhood. For people of all ages, fluoride also heals teeth and protects them from further decay after saliva neutralizes the acid produced by bacteria on our teeth.

“... It turns out fluoride toothpaste is not enough to reap all the protective benefits of this nine-proton ion. Since 1980, when fluoridated toothpaste reached more than 90 percent of the market, countless studies have demonstrated lower rates of tooth decay in communities also having access to fluoridated tap water.

“Not only does fluoridated water help our community achieve the common good, but it also saves money — a lot of money. In 2003 alone, Colorado saved nearly $149 million in unnecessary treatment costs by fluoridating public water supplies — average savings of $61 per person. For all of these reasons and many more, I applaud the city of Durango for fluoridating its water supply. However, there are still 5,000 people just outside Durango without adequate fluoride in their water supply.”
Science Blogs, from a commentary published on May 23, 2013:

“... I’m hard pressed to find [anti-fluoride activists] referring to anything but ‘fluoridation chemicals’ rather than fluoride or fluoridation. It’s repeated so often that it’s jarring to me and clearly meant to play on people’s fear of chemicals rather than on reason or evidence.

“... the antifluoride forces were playing on the public’s fear of chemicals and misunderstanding of chemistry to make fluoridation seem a lot more scary than it is. (Actually, it’s not scary at all.) As always, the dose makes the poison, and the levels used in municipal water supplies have a long history of safety.”

The Des Moines Register

The Des Moines Register (IA), from an editorial published on December 2, 2013:

“... (Des Moines) waterworks officials and its board members should side with research and science on what is clearly an issue of public health. The facts are clear.

“Adding fluoride to community drinking water over the past 60 years has dramatically reduced tooth decay among Americans. That is indisputable. Scientists, public health officials and medical professionals agree with the practice. Though fluoridation reduced business for dentists who filled cavities, the American Dental Association has long supported such use of fluoride.

“Fluoride ‘has been proven to prevent, and even reverse, tooth decay,’ according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Every $1 invested in this preventative measure yields about $38 in dental treatment cost savings.

“... Some fluoridation opponents say they want to limit government’s role in their lives or they want water to be as natural and pure as possible. They, of course, are free to drink directly from Iowa’s lakes and rivers. That way the government won’t interfere at all with the quality of their water.

“... Perhaps the real public benefit in all of this is reminding Iowans about the importance of a practice they may have never given a second thought. We should not take for granted that the simple process of adding a tiny amount of fluoride to drinking water helps save our teeth. That can change the trajectory of a child’s future. It can save the life of an elderly person. That is the reality public officials should focus on today and in the future.”

The News & Advance

The News & Advance (Lynchburg, VA), from an editorial published on January 15, 2014:
“Tooth decay in the United States has declined dramatically since fluoridation of public water supplies began in the 1940s.

“But don’t bother officials in Amherst County with that fact. And don’t bother them with other information showing fluoridation is the single-most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. The federal Centers for Disease Control has proclaimed community water fluoridation ‘as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.’”

“The Amherst County Service Authority, nonetheless, has given its blessing to stopping fluoridation of the water supplied to its Madison Heights customers. It may or may not resume it. That was the news out of a Board of Supervisors meeting last month at which the public was not given a chance to comment one way or the other on the question of whether to resume fluoridating the water.

“… Transparency in government in Amherst has had its ups and downs in recent years. The decision not to resume fluoridating the water has to be one of the downs.

“… Fluoridation has been well documented in the fight against tooth decay across America. There’s no reason to stop that fight for water customers in Madison Heights.”

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (MO), from an editor’s column published on October 30, 2013:

“… in (the movie) ‘Dr. Strangelove,’ Gen. Jack D. Ripper ordered his B-52 bomber wing to attack the Soviet Union with nuclear weapons because he thought adding fluoride to drinking water was a communist plot to pollute his ‘precious bodily fluids.’

“Stanley Kubrick’s film was released in 1964. Now, nearly 50 years later, the city of St. Peters finds itself listening to people who share Gen. Ripper’s views.

“The Post-Dispatch’s Mark Schlinkmann reports that the city’s advisory committee on health and wellness may recommend that St. Peters stop adding fluoride to water produced by the city’s wells. The Board of Aldermen would get the final decision. Barry Pulley, a committee member affiliated with a national anti-fluoride group, said, ‘Whether it’s good for your teeth or not, bad for my body or not, it should be my choice. Forced mass medication is just wrong.’

“It could be argued adding chlorine to kill bacteria is equally wrong, but never mind. This is a silly argument. Fluoridated water helps prevent tooth decay, which is why it’s been added to public water systems since the late 1940s.”

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN™

Scientific American, from a blog post published on May 22, 2013:

“It’s the fourth time Portland (Oregon) has rejected the public health measure since 1956. It’s the fourth time they’ve gotten the science wrong.
... When new medical treatments are implemented, when new drugs are introduced into the populace, there is always some hesitation. There are (hopefully) some clinical trials to back up the new intervention, but the long-term implications are often unclear. Water fluoridation doesn't have this problem. For over 65 years, it has been rigorously tested as a public health measure, and considered one of the most successful measures of the last 100 years ...”

The Tampa Bay Times (Tampa, FL), from an editorial published on May 25, 2013:

“Last week, after a three-hour public workshop on fluoridation, (Brooksville council member Joe) Bernardini unsuccessfully sought a voter referendum on the issue. The rest of the council wisely declined. Looking out for the health, safety and welfare of the population is a role that correctly belongs to the council and it should not be abdicated in a search for political cover.

“Bernardini is the only council member without a stated position, though he opposed fluoridation in the past. Frankie Burnett and Joe Johnston favor fluoridation, citing the healthy teeth of their own offspring they attributed to drinking fluoridated water. On the opposite side is Mayor Lara Bradburn who questioned whether fluoridation contributed to her own thyroid cancer. Vice Mayor Kevin Hohn advocated for a state Health Department public awareness campaign on the benefits of brushing and oral hygiene.

“Hohn's attempt to pass the buck is not leadership. One of the leading attributes of fluoridating community water is that it does not require a change in behavior and its benefits are universal regardless of socio-economic standing or knowledge of oral hygiene.

“... This debate came about because state health officials learned only recently that a unanimous council voted in September 2011 to kill the city's 25-year-old fluoridation program. The vote came, with no prior public notice, late in an evening budget hearing after just 78 seconds of discussion.”

The New Zealand Herald (Auckland, NZ), from an editorial published on October 16, 2013:

“There was no more apt commentary on the result of Hamilton’s referendum on the fluoridation of its drinking water than that delivered by Dr. Jonathan Broadbent, a public health dentistry specialist at Otago University. ‘Well done to the people of Hamilton, who have shown more common sense than many of their own city councillors,’ he said. The 70 per cent who had voted to return fluoride to the city’s water supply had, he added, struck a blow for science, public health and less dental decay.
“In addition to the Hamiltonians, Dr. Broadbent might also have congratulated the people of Whakatane and Hastings, who voted by 60 per cent and 63 per cent respectively to retain fluoride in their water supplies. In sum, the outcome of these polls, held in conjunction with the local body elections, represented an overdue triumph for reason and scientific research over rowdiness and irrationality. “Yet [opponents’] success in getting fluoride removed from Hamilton’s water was all about a noisy minority prevailing over a woeful group of councillors who failed to pay heed to overwhelming scientific opinion.”

**The Oregonian**

*The Oregonian (Portland, OR), from an editorial published on May 5, 2013:*

“... Portland residents should support Measure 26-151. Fluoridating Portland’s water, as the measure would require, is a safe and efficient way to address a very real problem.

“Cavities are the problem, the scope of which is reflected in the state’s three "smile" surveys, the most recent available only in draft form. Released at five-year intervals beginning in 2002, the surveys indicate that a high percentage of kids in grades one through three have cavities. According to the latest numbers, 51 percent of Multnomah County public school kids in this age range have cavities, one percentage point below the statewide average.

“... It’s true that fluoridation additives are bad for you in high doses. But so are chlorine and ammonia, which Portland adds to its water to kill microorganisms. Notwithstanding the presence of these scary-sounding chemicals — in fact, because of them — the city’s water is exceptionally good, and it will continue to be so even when fluoridated.”

**The Portland Mercury**

*The Portland Mercury (Portland, OR), from an editorial published on May 2, 2013:*

“If fluoride fails at the ballot box later this month — an incredibly distinct possibility, and something of a tragedy for Portland — it won’t be because of the kooks and the conspiracy theorists who’ve spent decades stoking panic about a safe, tested, and effective health measure. That ugly strain of paranoia is a well-known fluoridation killer, and maybe it helped kill fluoridation the other three times Portland said no.

“But this time? If anyone deserves blame, it’ll be your neighbors — your very regular and very well-meaning neighbors. The simple and reasonable case for fluoridation—which the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) definitively urges for the prevention of tooth decay in children and adults — is drowning under a hailstorm of counter-arguments that look, sound, and seem rational. Except that they aren’t.”
“... Never mind that many of you who might be leaning toward ‘no’ won’t be the ones who suffer: it’ll be poor kids whose lives are more complicated than ‘why don’t they just brush more?’ Make no mistake — those who vote ‘no’ will be voting against the class of people Portland is famous for supporting.

“It doesn’t have to be this way. Portland can still make a rational choice come May 21. ... Because those sane-sounding anti-fluoride arguments you’ve been turning around in your head? They’re wrong.”

**Slate**, from a commentary published on September 11, 2013:

**Fourteen Oddball Reasons You’re Not Dead Yet**

*A selection of underappreciated people, innovations, and ideas that save lives.*

“**Fluoride:** There were plenty of miserable ways to die before the mid-20th century, but dying of a tooth abscess had to be among the worst — a slow, painful infection that limits your ability to eat, causes your head to throb endlessly, and eventually colonizes the body and kills you of sepsis. Now it’s a rare way to go, thanks to modern dental care, toothbrushes, and (unless you’re in Portland) fluoridated water.”

**The Arizona Republic**

*The Arizona Republic (Phoenix, AZ), from an editorial published on September 11, 2012:*

“The Phoenix City Council tackles many tough issues, matters for which strong and convincing arguments can be made for either side. An item on today’s agenda is not among those. The council will decide whether to continue fluoridating the city’s water. It’s a yes vote that should take, oh, about 5 seconds.

“Medical and dental professionals rank fluoridation as among the greatest advances in public health. For a relatively tiny public outlay, the incidence of tooth decay was drastically reduced.

“But there are skeptics. Just as you can find people who doubt Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon, there are those who are certain fluoride is ruining their health. Their evidence is equally strong, coming down to ‘this is what we believe.’ Two of those skeptics ran the water department in Gilbert, where they unilaterally shut off the fluoride, circumventing a vote of the people. They were fired, as they should have been.

“Phoenix’s council also must weigh its public trust. It can listen to a few well-intentioned but misinformed skeptics. Or it can continue to support public dental health. It will not face an easier decision.”
**The Sacramento Bee**

The Sacramento Bee (Sacramento, CA), from an editorial published on October 4, 2013:

“Confronted with passionate opposition to adding fluoride to the city’s water, the Davis City Council took the easy way out.

“Justifying their vote Tuesday night against fluoride, council members said they didn’t want to jeopardize support for a massive project, essential to the future of Davis, to draw 12 million gallons of water a day from the Sacramento River starting in 2016.

“... The council’s politically expedient rationale may have sidestepped the shaky science behind some of the opposition to fluoridation.”

**The Wichita Eagle**

The Wichita Eagle (Wichita, KS), from an editorial published on November 7, 2012:

“Wichita voters defeated water fluoridation again, tossing aside established science and the expertise of more than 533 local dental and medical professionals as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Fluoridation’s opponents seemed to tap into voters’ concerns about big government and big water bills. But it was shocking to see so much junk and rumor passed off as credible science during the divisive campaign, and disappointing that Wichita passed on another opportunity to reduce its tooth decay and improve its oral health.”

**The National Post**

The National Post (Ottawa, Canada), from a commentary piece published on April 10, 2013:

“In the past few years, towns, villages and cities throughout Canada have passed a wave of laws that could well be described as ‘anti-science.’ Water fluoridation bans. Anti-WiFi resolutions. GE free zones. The decisions often fly in the face of scientific consensus, ignore the advice of experts and lend legitimacy to groups once considered fringe. But, as activists are starting to discover, science does not matter when a city hall meeting is facing a room full of angry townsfolk.

“It is very easy for a small group of people to show up at a town council meeting and, the councillors aren’t scientists, they don’t know, they just know they’ve got a whole bunch of angry constituents,’ said Iain Martel, a co-chair with the Committee for the Advancement of Scientific Skepticism, an offshoot of the U.S. Center for Inquiry, which examines science claims in public policy.”
"Of late, one of the most successful of these groups has been water de-fluoridation activists. Fears of fluoridated water have lingered on the fringe for decades, but only in the last few years has it begun making serious headway.

"...According to Bad Science Watch, a newly formed group devoted to rooting out false science in public policy, the issue is one of scientific literacy. ‘Smaller communities have little if any scientific staff, beyond the local officer of health, and therefore cannot defer to the consensus on these issues,’ said board member Michael Kruse. As a result, councillors “are more easily swayed by the subtle yet specious arguments offered by organized groups of anti-science protesters.”

The News Tribune (Tacoma, WA), from a column written by an editor and published on March 18, 2013:

“I was in my middle twenties before I knew what a cavity was. My friends had them; I almost felt left out. I happened to have spent my early years in Madison, Wis., one of the first cities to have its water supply fluoridated.

“Our editorial today argues for restoring Medicaid dental coverage for poor adults. ...Total Medicaid dental in Washington could come in at something north of $90 million per biennium.

“That cost might be pared in the future if all of Washington's cities adopted fluoridation, which the U.S. Centers for Disease controls has called “one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.”

“... Close to two-thirds of Washingtonians benefit from fluoridated drinking water, but a few bastions of enlightenment — including Olympia, Spokane and Bellingham — remain holdouts.

“... It’s not worth arguing with fluoridation opponents. If the pro-fluoride stances of the CDC, American Dental Association, World Health Organization, American Academy of Pediatrics and International Association of Dental Research (among others) don't impress them, nothing will.”

The Star-Ledger (Newark, NJ), from an editorial published on February 2, 2012:

“Opposition to fluoride in public water supplies began in the 1950s and the connection to the Red Scare is no coincidence — when true-blue Americans were trained to see “red” conspiracies and Commie spies hiding under every rock.

“... the conspiracies have evolved — up to and including the worry that industrial polluters conceived of fluoridated water as a way to cheaply dispose of chemical wastes. Here's a
bottom line you can sink your teeth into: Fluoride fights tooth decay. Yes, there is fluoride in toothpaste and mouthwash, but for populations where dental hygiene is lacking or considered an expensive luxury, fluoride in drinking water is good public health policy.

“Opponents of fluoride sound frighteningly similar to those who oppose vaccinations for their children — pointing to questionable studies ‘proving’ health dangers while ignoring the broader societal health benefits.”

The News-Journal (Daytona Beach, FL) from an editorial published on December 4, 2012:

“It appears that Ormond Beach is going to have a re-do on the issue of fluoridation of water — 55 years after the city got voters’ approval for fluoridation. Insistent complaints may force city government to have another public referendum on the issue.

“The mail-in referendum could cost taxpayers more than $45,000. But the real costs may be borne by children and adults who could see less protection from tooth decay from their water, long a source of such protection.

“Fluoride skeptics have raised many health concerns. One thing is clear, however: Since the addition of fluoride to many public drinking-water sources, dental decay has become less common. ... there have been no major findings that fluoride in drinking water represents a serious public safety threat. Critics, however, have been unrelenting in questioning the safety of fluoride and the city’s provider of hydrofluorosilicic acid.

“Ormond Beach residents should also weigh the costs of removing fluoride from their drinking water. The CDC estimated that for every $1 invested in fluoridating water, there is $38 in savings on dental costs. Any person who has ever needed fillings, root canals, crowns, dentures, etc., knows full well the very real costs of dental work. And there is a cost beyond cash — bad or weak teeth can have an effect on enjoyment of life. Dental problems also can lead to more serious health problems.

“Fluoride is a way to alleviate those public health care costs, both financial and personal.”

The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, from an editorial published on May 31, 2012:

“Fluoridation is not a panacea, nor is it a substitute for visits to the dentist, brushing, flossing and proper diet. But it is an important aid in reducing tooth decay, and for some does provide almost the only protection they get. It’s especially important for children but a report published in 2007 ... found that fluoride also prevents cavities and tooth decay among adults of all ages.”

“... [opponents’] arguments, no doubt sincere, aren’t based on much more than anecdote, conjecture and studies that aren’t particular relevant to the U.S. practice of community
water fluoridation. Hundreds of studies carried out in many different countries in the past 50 years have proved the effectiveness of fluoridation …”

**The Mercury News**

The Mercury News *(San Jose, CA), from an editorial published on November 25, 2011:*

“While opponents of fluoride link it to everything from pitted teeth to the Manhattan Project, scientific study supports its success in dramatically reducing cavities for children and dental deterioration for the elderly.

“Only a few communities in Santa Clara County, such as Palo Alto, have fluoridated water. While San Jose puts fluoride in its municipal water system serving newer parts of the city, most is served by private suppliers that do not. As a consequence, it’s the largest city in the nation without fully fluoridated water.”

**NEW MEXICAN**

The New Mexican *(Santa Fe, NM), from an editorial published on July 16, 2012:*

“The Santa Fe City Council, that hotbed of science, decided last week to stop adding fluoride to the city’s drinking water supply. The reasoning, according to its backers, is that Santa Fe’s water contains enough natural fluoride. They said supplementing is a bad idea, even though fluoride has been added to the city’s drinking water since 1955 to help prevent tooth decay. So far, we fail to see what harm adding fluoride has caused.

“Poor children, the ones most likely to drink tap water and to benefit from added fluoride, also are less likely to brush and floss. A decision to drop fluoridation hurts them more. This decision, as well-meaning as it might be, will impact the most vulnerable among us. Cavities, pain and unnecessary suffering will increase.

“The issue deserves a re-hearing. This time, let’s put science and the good of the public health front and center.”

**The New York Times**


“In the early years, rates of tooth decay among the young dropped by 60 percent in communities that adopted fluoridation. … even though it may have diminished the fortunes of the dental community, the American Dental Association, as well as most national and international health agencies, endorsed fluoridation without reservation.

“In the years since, fluorides have been proved to reduce the rate of tooth decay in adults as well as in children. Older adults whose exposed tooth roots are highly susceptible to decay have particularly benefited.”
**THE DAILY NEWS**

The Daily News *(Longview, WA)*, from an editorial published on April 20, 2014:

“The wave of anti-fluoridation sentiment that seems to be washing north from Portland isn’t based on what the great majority of physical scientists like doctors and dentists believe — but political scientists shouldn’t be surprised.

“Politics, not hard science is behind the move to get fluoride out of public drinking water.

“... Last May, Portland (Oregon) voters decided by a 60 percent margin not to start fluoridating their water. Last summer, Woodland’s City Council decided to stop adding fluoride to that city’s drinking water supply.

“This week, the issue came before the Kalama City Council, with a majority appearing to favor letting voters decide. We’re OK with that, though we hope voters take a hard look at what most experts say about the topic. Given the choice, we’ll take our water fluoridated.

“... Adding fluoride to the city’s water costs about $3,800 a year. Major dental work for just one person can easily cost more than both figures combined. If Kalama turns off the fluoride and its residents become dismayed at the bite of bigger dental bills, they can’t say they weren’t warned.”

**VALLEY NEWS**

The Valley News *(West Lebanon, NH)*, from an editorial published on December 2, 2012:

“... the town of Bradford, Vt., has taken a step back in time by rekindling a public health debate that we thought had been settled long ago — whether fluoride should be added to the municipal water supply to combat tooth decay. As much as we admire quaintness and those who must be dragged kicking and screaming into the modern world, Bradford should move quickly to quell this non-controversy.

“It was the Bradford Water and Sewer Commission that decided to turn back the time machine by voting in October to permanently discontinue the decades-old practice of adding fluoride to town water ... [citing] financial and health reasons for their decision. The district had built a new pumphouse and fitting it out for fluoridation would have cost additional money, as would the continuing purchase of fluoride. And they had concerns about whether fluoridation might pose health risks.

“To whatever extent the budgetary reservations were legitimate ... they no longer are. State public health officials have pledged to cover the bill for the fluoridation equipment. And the cost of buying fluoride is trivial — estimated at $1,200 annually.

“To better understand the commissioners’ health concerns, it’s worth noting that when they voted to discontinue fluoridation, they had heard from an out-of-town anti-fluoridation activist, but had failed to consult local dentists, public health authorities or the Selectboard. Considering that their decision affects the oral health of between 1,500 and 2,000 people, including schoolchildren, their initial lack of interest in seeking out informed opinion was irresponsible.
“... until the skeptics present a persuasive case, the vast majority have every right to implement practices that experts believe will promote public health. Dissenters can opt out by buying bottled water. In this case, leaving the decision about whether to use fluoride up to individuals makes no sense. Too many children would suffer tooth decay because their families lacked the resources, information or skills to act on sound advice.”

The Press Times (Sonoma County, CA), from a column published on February 26, 2012:

“In our editorial Friday (‘The Problem: Our dental crisis’), we detailed the deteriorating state of oral health in Sonoma County, particularly among low-income children. As the county Task Force on Oral Health notes in its final report ... the county is experiencing ‘a staggering burden of suffering and a growing oral health divide between rich and poor.’

“Some of the task force’s recommendations are already in the works, including expanding public-private partnerships to reach more people, particularly in low-income areas. Other efforts include opening up more community-based facilities ... to create more dental clinics.

“All of these measures are needed and should be pursued. But all of them pale in comparison to the single most cost-effective way that Sonoma County can combat its dental crisis — by fluoridating our water.

“So what's the hang-up? In a word: fear. The issue of fluoridation is often mired in refuted claims of dire health risks, fears based on mumbo jumbo science. But in an era of distrust, they succeed in paralyzing decision-makers and blocking meaningful progress.

“... 1 part per million of fluoride is equivalent to 1 inch in a 16-mile journey — an extremely small amount. But all journeys begin with a single step. Sonoma County needs to take this one.”

The San Diego Union-Tribune, from an editorial published on November 10, 2007:

“It's far past time that San Diego lost the dubious distinction of being the largest U.S. city without fluoridation, which has an extraordinarily long and well-documented record of reducing tooth decay. The biggest beneficiaries are young kids in poor families who often have inadequate dental care ...

“Unfortunately, this decision (to fluoridate San Diego's water) is likely to bring back into the spotlight one of the strangest fringe movements in modern-day America: Groups that maintain fluoridation causes cancer, Alzheimer's and a long list of other ailments. They do so absent any proof of any kind — and absent any common sense. If fluoridation really
amounted to the introduction of a highly toxic substance into water supplies, where are all the body bags?"

The Orlando Sentinel (FL), from an editorial published on May 15, 2005:

“Sixty years after fluoride was first introduced in American drinking water — with fewer cavities among subsequent generations as a result — the Eustis City Commission is scheduled to debate Thursday whether to remove fluoride from its water supply.

“The subject was raised by commission newcomer James Rotella, a podiatrist by trade. He should have left it alone, because dental studies confirm that fluoride hardens the teeth against decay and improves their resistance to acid. It is especially important for children whose teeth are forming. Exposure to fluoride at recommended levels poses no health risk, study after study has shown.

“...when a foot doctor meddles into teeth doctors’ business, a fight is on. ... It’s a matter of sound public health. Keep fluoride in the drinking water.”

The Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA), from an editorial published on July 13, 2007:

“... water treatment plants quit adding cavity-fighting fluoride in all of New Orleans and large parts of Plaquemines after Hurricane Katrina. But residents should have been told, so dentists could prescribe fluoride supplements for those who need them, particularly children.

“... extensive research has shown that water fluoridation reduces tooth decay by between 20 percent and 40 percent, even in places where fluoride is available from other sources. Water is also the most reliable and equitable method to deliver fluoride, especially to people who may not have dental insurance.”

The Watertown Daily Times (Watertown, NY), from an editorial published on June 9, 2013:

“Monday’s City Council meeting will finally present a forum for a fair hearing on whether the city should continue its near 50-year practice of adding fluoride to the water supply.

“...The role of the (local) Dental Society is significant. The Dental Society rises above the selfish desire to earn fees from treating tooth decay because of its commitment to healthy patients. Dentists are the most knowledgeable people in society about oral hygiene and have
devoted generations of expert medical practice to the prevention of decay. And they stand by their remarkable commitment to healthy teeth.

“... The City Council and the three other candidates seeking open seats should listen carefully Monday night to the experts. The last thing Watertown needs is a reprise of the worldwide scorn that followed the council’s decision to regulate who could live in your home.

“Protecting the teeth of youngsters has been an admirable and successful function of city government for more than 50 years. To reverse direction is irresponsible and sentences the next generation of children to a high incidence of tooth decay.”

**COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE**

*The Columbia Daily Tribune (Columbia, MO) from an editorial column published on December 5, 2012:*

“In 1973 the city of Columbia (Missouri) began adding fluoride to public drinking water. I remember the move as a nonevent, a no-brainer. Fluoride was praised by health officials as the best institutional way to combat tooth decay. Only a few lonely voices expressed dismay, and through the intervening years overwhelming consensus has prevailed.

“... For 40 years the issue has lain dormant, but now a Columbia chemical engineer raises questions again. I’m not here to criticize Amy Bremer. Seriously intentioned citizens should be willing to question long-standing public policies. The question is: After a respectful period of hearing, what should city officials do? Should they seriously consider changing the long-standing fluoride policy?

“... If one bit of consensus about a health issue should be easy to divine, it is the value of fluoride in drinking water. The city only began adding fluoride when supplies from the alluvial plain near McBaine were developed to replace deep wells that for years had produced naturally fluoridated water. I can remember hearing from dentists that Columbia’s deep well water augmented oral health.

“... Colin Malaker, a local dentist and chairman of the Board of Health, says his group will discuss the matter on Jan. 10 and issue a “credible and evidence-based answer” to Bremer’s suggestion of adverse effects from fluoridation. Malaker indicates his belief in the overwhelming consensus by researchers in the value of fluoridation. Thank goodness.”

**NEWS-LEADER**

*The News-Leader (Springfield, MO), from an editorial published on November 29, 2012:*

“Here we go again. With a major university right there in Columbia (Missouri), you’d think people would be smart enough to recognize the benefits of fluoridation of public water supplies. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called it one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.

“According to the best available scientific evidence, fluoridation is safe, effective and economical in preventing tooth decay. No community should be thinking about cutting fluoridation. It’s just common sense.”
The Palm Beach Post (FL), from an editorial published on January 24, 2008:

“Fluoride has a 70-year track record of decreasing tooth decay, especially among children, and also offers benefits for senior citizens’ dental health, particularly if they did not have fluoridated water as children.

“...Opponents of fluoride rely on myths ... Adding fluoride to water is comparable to adding iodine to salt, folic acid to bread, or Vitamin D to milk. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorse fluoridation as a safe and inexpensive way to promote oral health, as does the American Dental Association.”

The Oregonian (Portland, OR), from an editorial published on August 14, 2012:

“Of the 50 biggest cities in the United States, only a handful do not fluoridate their water, and the list could soon be smaller.”

“... a serious move to fluoridate drinking water here will receive fevered opposition, just as it has over the years in many places. City residents will be told that proponents want to lace their drinking water with toxic industrial waste. They’ll be directed to Internet sites claiming, among other things, that fluoridation could hurt kids’ brains, lower their IQs and compromise various other organs and glands.

“...To believe such crackpottery is implicitly to believe the following: That state and federal health agencies are, for some mysterious reason, hiding the truth and helping to poison more than 200 million citizens, aided by the American Dental Association and, we guess, credulous editorial boards like The Oregonian’s. While we don’t consider any of these groups infallible, or even close, it’s far more likely that fluoridation receives so much mainstream support because it does exactly what it’s supposed to. It reduces the incidence of cavities.”

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, from an editorial published on February 6, 2011:

“Oh, Lord, not again. Wasn't fluoride a staple Soviet conspiracy back when there were still Soviets around? If faulty memory serves, the Rooskies wanted to dumb down America’s youth by adding fluoride to our water systems. By the grace of God and Star Wars, America somehow survived the attack.

“...After the Soviets imploded, the anti-fluoride brigade began making its cause a Health Issue. Never mind that the Centers for Disease Control has called fluoridation one of the top health improvements in the last 100 years. What do the doctors at the CDC know? You need to get on the Internet, darn it, where you can find the real truth.

“...Come, let us reason together.”
The Sacramento Bee

The Sacramento Bee (Sacramento, CA), from an editorial published on August 1, 2012:

“The overwhelming weight of the evidence is that fluoride is safe as long as it’s kept at appropriate concentrations. The National Cancer Institute says that numerous studies have found no link between fluoride and an increased cancer risk.

“Public health authorities steadfastly support fluoridation as a safe and effective way to improve dental health, particularly of the poor. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that community water fluoridation is one of the top 10 public health accomplishments of the 20th century.

“Sacramento was a late adopter, starting fluoridation in 2000 under the thumb of a state law that requires it of all public water systems with more than 10,000 service connections—if there is an outside funding source, usually a federal or foundation grant.

“… The total cost of fluoridation—both operations and equipment—would be somewhere around $45 million over the next 20 years. That’s a big investment, but the payoff is real. While the city can go slow on less urgent upgrades, it also should be very cautious about giving up fluoride’s benefits to public health.”

The Star

The Star (Sun Prairie, WI), from an opinion column written by dentist Timothy Durtsche and published on January 7, 2013:

“A handful of Wisconsin communities, often at the urging of out-of-state-activists, have recently given serious thought to eliminating fluoride from public water supplies. That’s a terrible idea that would severely threaten the oral health of our state’s children, adults, seniors and families.

“Community water fluoridation is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. … It’s disturbing to see activist groups come into our state spouting half-truths and using scare tactics to reduce use of this important public oral health tool.

“… Even with today’s fluoridated toothpaste and mouth rinses, studies show community water fluoridation reduces tooth decay at least 25 percent during an individual’s lifetime.”

Watertown Daily Times

The Watertown Daily Times (Watertown, NY), from an editorial published on October 14, 2013:

“Jasmine W. Borreggine was part of a group of people who began attending City Council meetings to state their opposition to fluoridated water. She ran in the Sept. 10 primary for City Council but was not one of the four candidates to advance to the Nov.
5 general election. This group has exaggerated the potential hazards of fluoride and used bogus claims to preface its position.

“... If members of the anti-fluoride crowd wish to have people take them seriously, they must have more respect for the truth.

“Fluoridated water has been a tremendous public health policy for decades, and there's no reason to stop it now.”

The Wichita Eagle, from an editorial published on August 23, 2012:

“The pro-fluoride side is led by dentists, physicians and health groups. They point to more than 65 years of experience and numerous studies showing that fluoridation is safe and effective. ... The doctors estimate that raising the fluoride to the optimal level will save Wichitans at least $4.5 million a year in dental costs and contribute to overall improved health.

“Those opposing fluoridation are concerned about possible negative health effects. ... The challenge for voters will be sorting through the competing claims. Though many of those opposed to fluoride are serious and careful, there are some — including a group that made robocalls — that try to scare people with claims not backed by reputable science.

“The Eagle editorial board supports fluoridation, a benefit enjoyed by 74 percent of Americans and 65 percent of Kansans supplied by public water systems. Wichita is the fourth-largest city in the country without fluoridation, and it is long past time that its citizens share in this health advancement.

The News-Journal (Daytona Beach, Fla.), from an editorial published on September 20, 2012:

“Ormond Beach has wisely decided to keep fluoride in its water supply. It decided to do so despite the efforts of a city commissioner who is convinced that fluoride could be a bad thing to add to drinking water.

“While it’s good to ask questions of government, the recent anti-fluoride efforts in Ormond Beach still came across as a bit of scare-mongering that doesn't serve the public. It wasn’t the first time this year that we have seen this kind of political hypochondria.

“... Fluoridation has had benefits. The Centers for Disease Control said the addition of fluoride in water has been one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century. Yet even now, some Volusia County cities such as Edgewater don’t add fluoride to drinking water. And that’s too bad. One local dentist told the News-Journal that children
from Edgewater are 40 to 60 percent more likely to have cavities compared to other children in the area.

“... The best argument that opponents of fluoridation make is that adding fluoride is akin to medical treatment without consent — but only if you consider fluoride a medical treatment. It's more like the efforts in the middle part of the last century to enrich flour with nutrients.”

The Portland Press Herald

The Portland Press-Herald (Portland, ME), from an editorial published on January 12, 2011:

“The debate over fluoridation of water got some new life last week when the federal government issued new guidelines for the use of fluoride in public water systems. ... Generations of grass-roots activists have said it causes everything from cancer to communism.

“... Fluoridated water remains one of the public health success stories of the 20th century. It has been shown to dramatically reduce cavities by more than 60 years of experience. Its use is endorsed by major organizations of dentists and pediatricians, and by the same state and federal organizations that are now ordering reduced levels of fluoride allowed in public water supplies.

“It's true that you can have too much of a good thing. But that doesn't mean it's not a good thing if you don't have too much. It would be a big mistake to use these announcements as an excuse to remove fluoride entirely.”

The Asbury Park Press

The Asbury Park Press (Asbury Park, NJ), from an editorial published on June 16, 2005:

“Trying to sort out who’s right and who’s wrong in the renewed debate in Trenton on whether privately owned water companies should be required to fluoridate drinking water isn’t easy. But the burden of proof should rest with those who say it's necessary.

“The New Jersey Dental Association wants the state Public Health Council to write a regulation that would result in about half of the state’s residents having fluoride in their drinking water.

“The federal government, dentists and toothpaste manufacturers hail fluoridation as a miracle that has dramatically reduced the incidence of tooth decay. ... The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strongly supports fluoridation and wants to achieve 75 percent fluoridation of the nation’s water supply by 2010.

“Environmental groups, including the New Jersey Environmental Federation, regard fluoride as a health menace. They claim that the fluoride used in water supplies — a byproduct of phosphate fertilizer — is an ‘industrial grade’ variant that contains arsenic, lead, mercury and other cancer-causing agents. They also say the fluoride people get from toothpastes,
breakfast cereals and beverages bottled with fluoridated water is enough to protect teeth from decay.

“... there is no clear correlation elsewhere between rates of water fluoridation and rates of dental decay. Most European countries — where tooth decay rates are similar to those in the United States — don’t fluoridate their water. And one that does, Ireland, is being pressured by a group of dentists to stop doing so, citing concerns about cancer risks and fluorosis — damage to tooth enamel caused by fluoride.

“The Public Health Council ... should vote no unless rule change proponents can demonstrate two things: that tooth decay in New Jersey is more common than in parts of the country where fluoridation rates are much higher, and that there is compelling evidence, based on New Jersey data, that residents need more fluoride than they are getting from other sources.”

The Post-Standard

The Post-Standard (Syracuse, NY), from an editorial published on January 14, 2011:

“The fact that federal authorities are recommending slightly lower levels of fluoride in drinking water is not — repeat, not — confirmation of a long-standing government plot to corrupt our precious bodily fluids and turn us into submissive peons. But don’t expect conspiracy theorists to acknowledge this. Look for them to take this ball and run with it.

“... there’s no report of health risks resulting from current levels of fluoride exposure. The down side seems to be purely cosmetic — a tendency to spot or stain teeth — and in most cases the effects are barely noticeable, even by dentists.

“... [A dentist] offered the timely warning that those who insist on avoiding fluoride altogether ‘will pay the price with more fillings, root canals, extractions and dentures for themselves and their children.’”

The Omaha World-Herald

The Omaha World-Herald (Omaha, NE), from an editorial published on January 19, 2011:

“Fluoride in a scientifically determined amount has been added to Omaha’s drinking water since 1968. The science remains the same, but circumstances have changed ... The federal HHS is proposing that the recommended level of fluoride be set at 0.7 ppm, which is the lowest end of the optimal range now in effect.”

“Science has always stood firmly in favor of fluoride, but conspiracy theories, health misinformation and other free-floating old wives’ tales have maintained a level of paranoid fear nonetheless. But the practice of fluoridation has been an unmitigated good for the millions of younger Americans receiving its benefits. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has listed it as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century ...”
The Grand Rapids Press (MI), from an editorial published on January 14, 2011:

“In 1945 Grand Rapids became the first city in the country to add fluoride to its municipal water system, a public health triumph quickly duplicated elsewhere. ... Fluoride in water remains a safe, cost-effective and easy way to promote dental health, which is tied closely to overall health. The new government guidelines suggest fluoride should be adjusted, not discarded.

“The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services last week recommended a reduction in the fluoride level to 0.7 parts per million. ... However, the new recommendation should not feed the flawed notion — promoted on and off since the advent of fluoridation — that fluoride must be removed entirely from drinking water.”

Gazette-Times

Corvallis Gazette-Times (Corvallis, OR), from an editorial published on March 6, 2012:

“... the members of the Philomath council’s Public Works Committee continued to research fluoride, and they fell into some of the same traps that often snare people trying to sort through complex scientific issues — in this particular case, the natural tendency to put too much weight on a handful of studies and to overly discount the scientific consensus.

“We think that consensus is clear: Fluoridation still is the most cost-effective way to prevent tooth decay in a large population — and, it’s worth noting, tooth decay is the most common disease among children. And the most recent studies do not support claims that fluoridation causes cancer or lowers I.Q.

“To their credit, Philomath officials say they’re willing to take the $4,000 the city spends every year on fluoridation and invest it in programs to foster dental health. But that’s where that important phrase, ‘cost-efficient,’ comes into play. There’s no way that $4,000 spent on toothbrushes or other dental gear is going to create the kind of long-term results that you’ll see from fluoridating the water. In fact, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that every dollar spent on fluoridation saves $38 in dental costs.”

The Shepherd-Express (Milwaukee, WI), from a column published on June 5, 2012:

“Until Milwaukee Alderman Jim Bohl introduced a resolution to immediately end fluoridation of Milwaukee’s water supply, most of us had no idea there was still any controversy. The last real opponent of water fluoridation in the Milwaukee area was the appropriately named James Quirk, who in the 1960s identified himself as the Greater Milwaukee Committee Against Fluoridation.”
“... In an anti-fluoridation brochure, Quirk offered to pay $1,000 to the Jaycees for fluoride promotion if they could prove he was wrong in claiming four glasses of fluoridated water a day could cause ‘dermatologic, gastrointestinal and neurological disorders.’ When the Jaycees presented credible, expert testimony to a Milwaukee County jury that Quirk was wrong, the jury ordered Quirk to pay up.

“In the latest instance, apparently Bohl had read a book about the dangers of fluoride. And the author, who runs the modern-day equivalent of Quirk’s committee, something called the Fluoride Action Network, was only too happy to come to Milwaukee to bask in the publicity.

“We probably should encourage a lot more politicians to become readers. But there’s a big difference between reading propaganda and becoming educated.”

The Poughkeepsie Journal (NY), from an editorial published on March 4, 2008:

“The Poughkeepsie Common Council recently found itself in the middle of a controversy over teeth. The council recently heard from medical officials, including Dutchess County’s leading health expert, that a recent vote by the local water board to remove fluoride from the water supply should be reversed.

“These experts are right. Fluoride should be put back into the water. The unanimous vote by the Poughkeepsie Joint Water Board is the latest in an on-again-off-again timeline on fluoridation in the water system that serves 80,000 in the city and town, as well as in parts of Hyde Park and Wappingers Falls.

“...This level of protest by respected medical experts over a policy decision made by those without the expertise speaks volumes. The water board should reverse its vote as soon as possible.”

COURIER-POST

The Courier-Post (Camden, NJ), from an editorial published on April 10, 2005:

“There are no immunizations to prevent tooth decay in children. But it is easy to fight — put fluoride, a naturally occurring element, in the drinking water.

“Nearly every state does a better job than New Jersey of providing this protection to its residents. New Jersey health officials must stop the foot-dragging and get the state’s public water systems fluoridated. The hand-wringing over what to do has gone on too long. It’s time to act.

“...Opponents also promote unproved claims that fluoride poses significant health risks — from hyperactivity and brain disorders in children to cancer. But in 60 years, no one has proved a link between fluoridated water and any disease.”
The Express-News (Easton, PA), from an editorial published on September 10, 2009:

“In 1961, paranoid conservative activists in Allentown won a political fight opposing water fluoridation, despite all evidence the practice was a benefit — a decision which led to a marked decline in the city’s dental health.

“... Sometimes fringe voices command media attention disproportionate to their number or the merit of their claims.”

Arkansas Business (Little Rock, AR), from a column published on March 7, 2011:

“What we’re on the subject of improving life in Arkansas, let’s flash a big, healthy smile for the enlightened majority in both the House and Senate for taking a bold step into the last half of the last century by requiring fluoridation in city water systems.

“This long-overdue law will require fluoridation in water systems serving 5,000 people or more. Some 60 percent of Arkansans already drink water treated with fluoride, and this bill will extend the benefit to another 20 percent of the state.

“Fluoridation is recognized by the Centers for Disease Control as one of the 10 greatest achievements in public health of the 20th century, up there with vaccines and automobile safety advances. Yes, excess fluoride can discolor teeth, but so can decay. And no, fluoridated water is not the only way to protect teeth from rot. But fluoridated water may be the single most cost-effective development in public health — about 50 cents a year per person. In other words, a lifetime of fluoridation would cost much less than a single dental filling.”

The Greenwood (Miss.) Commonwealth, from an editorial published on March 5, 2013:

“The Mississippi Department of Health, a major proponent of fluoridation, will pay the full cost of implementation for the first two years. Then, after that, the annual cost is estimated to run about 56 cents per person. ... it costs more to fill a cavity than what it costs to fluoridate drinking water for a person’s lifetime.

“Greenwood Utilities, which prides itself on its water quality, thinks that its customers don’t want fluoride added to their water. If that’s true, it’s only because the utility has made little effort to educate itself and others about the benefits.
“... Adding fluoride to water is no more radical than adding chlorine to it, which Greenwood Utilities does without anyone protesting or claiming the water is unsafe to drink.”

**Bangor Daily News**

*The Bangor Daily News (ME), from an editorial published on March 19, 2007:*

“The public doesn’t make decisions about what drugs best manage diabetes or what treatments are most effective for lowering cholesterol. Yet, Maine law allows local voters to decide whether fluoride should be added to their water. This leads to situations like the recent vote in which Mount Desert residents agreed to eliminate fluoride, based largely on warnings from one person.

“... Fluoridation reduces tooth decay by 20 to 40 percent and even more among children, with the benefits reaching all socioeconomic sectors.

“... Maine communities should have a more sophisticated debate. Having the state require and pay for fluoridation is one solution. Communities could opt out after holding a meeting where public health officials were invited to provide information on the benefits of fluoridation. This is more reasonable than votes based on confusion or misplaced concern.”

**The Wichita Eagle**

*The Wichita Eagle (KS), from an editorial published on October 28, 2012:*

“The Eagle editorial board advocates a “yes” vote on Nov. 6 to fluoridate Wichita’s water system. ... more than half a century of peer-reviewed scientific research is on fluoridation’s side — along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the past five U.S. surgeons general, the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and 533 local dental and medical professionals.

“In addition, a 2012 state report concluded that populous Wichita’s ‘lack of community water fluoridation is a probable causal factor’ in why 58 percent of third-graders have cavities in south-central Kansas, compared with only 44 percent in northeast Kansas (home of fluoridated Topeka, Lawrence and the Kansas City area).

“Cost concerns have merit, especially with the city water system’s financial challenges. But fluoridation saves money on dental treatment. More waiting will only mean more unnecessary tooth decay in Wichita.”

**Idaho State Journal**

*The Idaho State Journal, from an editorial published on March 7, 2007:*
“Some lawmakers want to remove fluoridation from water if city voters request it, though an array of medical experts supports fluoridation in public water to fight tooth decay. Salt Lake and Davis counties are the only fluoridated counties in the state now.”

**Telegram & Gazette**

The Telegram & Gazette *(Worcester, MA), from an editorial published on May 26, 2005:

“In a rather surprising — and incorrect — vote, the Worcester City Council declined to oppose a Senate bill authorizing the state Department of Public Health to mandate the fluoridation of municipal water supplies serving more than 5,000 people.

“The Telegram & Gazette editorial board has endorsed fluoridation when the issue has appeared on the ballot here. However, the voters, most recently in 2001, have rejected the proposal six times since the 1950s, in the belief that personal responsibility for dental care is the way to go. Worcester city councilors should reflect that view to the Legislature.”

**The Springfield Republican** *(MA), from an editorial published on March 2, 2005:

“Water fluoridation has been so successful that most health experts regard it as one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century. So why doesn’t Springfield — the cavity capital of the Northeast — fluoridate its water?

“Some opponents question its safety and effectiveness, but they are unable to substantiate these claims with widely accepted scientific evidence.

“… We’ll concede that getting some people in Springfield to believe in fluoride is like asking them to believe in the tooth fairy, but city health officials should know the drill by now.”

**The Spokesman-Review**

The Spokesman-Review *(Spokane, WA), from an editorial published on June 25, 2006:

“Voters remain resistant to the idea of fluoridation, shooting it down multiple times at the polls though it has proved to be helpful in other communities. The Smile Survey turned up better results in King County, where the water is fluoridated.

“Fluoridation has its drawbacks, but the fears about it are overblown. The purported risks and dangers have yet to surface in Cheney or Fairchild Air Force Base, where the water is fluoridated.”

**Colorado Daily**

The Colorado Daily *(Univ. of Colorado), from an editorial published on July 14, 2006:”
“Adding fluoride to the list of public health frights is the latest challenge to our community’s values of public health and its understanding of science. We don’t care how you vote on the (Boulder, Colorado) initiative, but we would like to see people read, study and analyze the issue carefully.

Then, we’d like to see a debate on the issue that’s based on real scientific findings and hard data compiled by reputable sources, not on Web sites run by the hysterical or the corporate. If the record on fluoride is mixed, fine, let’s talk about that, openly, and make a rational decision as a community. But we can’t help pointing out that the tendency, when activists get into science, to turn ‘links’ into ‘direct causes,’ ‘traces’ into ‘lethal amounts’ ...

[The anti-fluoride group's] other assertion — that people can get enough fluoride from good toothpaste and sprayed vegetables — is a tad elitist.

“Sure, people who can afford good dental care and good toothpaste can get fluoride. But poor people — the ones local activists always seem to implore when it suits them and ignore when it doesn’t — often skimp on dental care, can’t go to a high-priced dentist for anti-cavity treatments and often don’t eat enough fruit and vegetables, so fluoridated water might be about the only preventive dental care they get.”

PalmBeachPost

The Palm Beach Post (FL), from an editorial published on December 19, 2006:

“A half-century of public health experience nationwide and unanimous support from an advisory committee are more than enough reasons for Martin County commissioners to stick to their decision to add fluoride to drinking water.

“... If commissioners disregard the recommendation of their own panel of health advisers, it will be because of politics, not science. The American Dental Association has recommended fluoridated water for decades to fight tooth decay, and public health officials continue to credit the practice with greatly improving oral hygiene for millions of Americans.

“... Martin probably would have to return a $129,000 state grant if it stopped adding fluoride. The more significant damage, however, would be the diminished credibility of a commission that caves to shrill pressure and changes its mind for no good reason.”

SunSentinel

The Sun-Sentinel (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), from an editorial published on June 24, 2006:

“Once again, the fluoride debate turned toxic, but a (Palm) County Commission majority made sure responsible public health policy won out over hysteria. After heated debate, commissioners voted to keep adding small amounts of fluoride to the public drinking water, affording residents — namely poor children — their best safeguard against tooth decay.

“It is a divisive debate that will likely repeat itself across the American landscape, now that a National Research Council study raises new concerns about the health risks of fluoride at certain levels. ...it’s baffling how anyone could use the study to argue against fluoridation.
“It’s an irrelevant argument, drilled away by decades of research and the vast majority of scientists touting the benefits of fluoridated water. But the report was somehow enough to prompt County Administrator Bob Weisman to urge commissioners to drop the fluoridation program.

“Cavity-fighting water, and rational thinking still flows, thanks to four astute county commissioners. But the EPA can help contain this emboldened debate by responding quickly to the report, especially by noting it has no implications for fluoridation.”

**Union-Tribune**

The Union-Tribune *(San Diego, CA), from an editorial published on February 19, 2006:

“Despite literally no evidence for claims that fluoridation doesn’t reduce tooth decay or is a sinister aluminum industry plot to poison Americans, many California politicians continue to heed the loons — not the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization or the 60-year record of beneficial fluoridation projects throughout the United States.

“One result: San Diego is the largest U.S. city without fluoridation and San Diego County is one of the largest U.S. counties to be mostly without fluoridation.

“Thankfully, the Metropolitan Water District, which supplies about 80 percent of the water used by the San Diego County Water Authority, will begin fluoridating next year. Unfortunately, things are more complicated for the cash-strapped city of San Diego … We need a benefactor or benefactors to come forward with the money. Once funds for the equipment are made available, a 1995 state law requires that fluoridation begin, with the state covering operating expenses.

“So let’s get the fundraising started.”

**The News Tribune**

The News Tribune *(Tacoma, WA), from an editorial published on May 13, 2005:

Pierce County water providers’ continued opposition to assisting in the fight against oral disease among poor children is revealing — and ironic. When the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health first sought to require fluoridation of drinking water, the opposition framed its objections primarily in terms of personal choice: Water customers who didn’t want fluoride in their water shouldn’t be forced to have it.

“So the health department came up with an alternative. Water providers that didn’t want to put fluoride in their water supplies could instead pay for the health department to provide fluoride varnishes to schoolchildren. … Now even that’s not acceptable.

“… What the growing opposition to the health department’s alternative is truly about is money. Water providers don’t want to pay, and they don’t think their customers should have to chip in to improve child dental health.
“But those same customers will end up paying more later to fix what public health measures like fluoridation can prevent. Dental decay — which disproportionately affects poor children who have limited access to dental care — makes it hard for children to learn and puts them at risk for illness. Eventually, kids either undergo more expensive procedures on taxpayers’ dime or go untreated and become less productive than they might have been.

“Poor children don’t have a lot of political pull, so they depend on health officials to act on their behalf. Part of the health department’s mission is to improve access to health care. Fluoridation falls squarely within that goal.”

The Post-Standard

The Post-Standard/Herald-Journal (Syracuse, NY), from an editorial published on December 30, 2005:

“Nearly three out of four children in Cayuga County have cavities by third grade. In Onondaga County, fewer than two out of four do. Is it mere coincidence that the Central New York county with no fluoride in its water has the highest cavity rate, while the county with nearly universal fluoridation has the lowest? Not likely.

“Why does Cayuga County resist the advice of the Centers for Disease Control, the American Dental Association, the American Medical Association, local dentists and its own health department?

“... The answer in a word: fear. The irrational fear of adding another chemical to the water supply. "It’s bad news," explained Homer Trustee Roy Crandall, referring to what he read about fluoride on the Internet. "It’s toxic poison."

“That’s pure nonsense. OK, fluoride is not something to drink by the gallon. Neither is mouthwash. However, the 1 part per million in the water supply is not only harmless, tasteless and odorless — it’s proven to reduce tooth decay.”