

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

KODY H. KINSLEY
SECRETARY

February 16, 2024

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Donny Lambeth, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 620, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Joyce Krawiec, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 308, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603


The Honorable Larry Potts, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 307B1, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Chairmen:

Session Law 2023-134, Section 8.16.(e), requires the Commission for Public Health to submit a report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services of its findings and recommendations, including a recommendation on whether the current standard for fluoride established in the Commission's rules is protective of public health and should be lowered. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report on behalf of the Commission.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Karen Wade, Director of Policy, at Karen.Wade@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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on behalf of Kody H. Kinsley
Kody H. Kinsley
Secretary

Public Water Supply Fluoridation Study Report

Session Law 2023-134, Section 8.16.(d,e)



**Report to the
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health
and Human Services**

by

**North Carolina Department of Health and
Human Services on behalf of the
Commission for Public Health**

February 16, 2024

Session Law 2023-134, Section 8.16, paragraphs (d) and (e) direct the Commission for Public Health (“CPH”) to review the National Toxicity Program’s (“NTP”) September 2022 draft report titled “Monograph on the State of the Science Concerning Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects: A Systematic Review” (“2022 NTP Report”) and other studies relevant to an assessment of the association between fluoride exposure and IQ in children, to determine if there is a link between fluoride in public water supplies and cognitive or neurological detriment to children, and to provide a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

This report is submitted by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health on behalf of the Commission for Public Health.

The 2022 NTP Report conducted a review of scientific research on fluoride exposure and health effects in humans. The report was peer reviewed twice by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (“NASEM”), and both reviews found that NTP had not adequately supported its conclusions that fluoride should be classified as a cognitive neurodevelopmental hazard for humans. Based on these reviews, NTP removed the hazard classification of fluoride. In 2023, the NTP Board of Scientific Counselors produced a report recommending substantial revisions to the 2022 NTP Report.¹

As the 2022 NTP Report remains under review and revision, consideration of the report for changes in North Carolina is premature. Additionally, the Commission for Public Health is not best situated to evaluate this report. The Secretaries’ Science Advisory Board (SSAB)² is comprised of experts better suited to this type of review in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Health and Human Services.

¹ Fluoride: Assessment for Developmental Neurotoxicity, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Toxicology Program, available at <https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/whatwestudy/assessments/noncancer/ongoing/fluoride#:~:text=The%20report%20underwent%20two%20peer,cognitive%20neurodevelopmental%20hazard%20for%20humans> (accessed January 25, 2024).

² Secretaries’ Science Advisory Board Charter, available at <https://www.deq.nc.gov/waste-management/dwm/sw/rules/toxics/risk/sab/science-advisory-board-charter/download> (accessed January 25, 2024).