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City Manager Nolan Young
c/o City of The Dalles, City Hall
313 Court Street
The Dalles, OR 97058

June 28, 2013

City Manager Young,

I am writing you today to express concern about your upcoming City Council discussion regarding ending water fluoridation in your community. As stewards of oral health, the Oregon Dental Association endorses fluoridation of community water supplies as safe and effective for preventing tooth decay.

The effectiveness of water fluoridation has been documented in scientific literature for well over 65 years. Since that time, numerous studies have been published making fluoridation one of the most widely studied public health measures in history. Studies prove water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing tooth decay by at least 25% in adults and children, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

All dental disease is preventable. But as dentists, we see the ravaging effects of dental decay in our communities every day. We can prescribe fluoride tablets and provide varnish at office visits, but the maximum reduction in dental caries is achieved when fluoride is available both topically and systemically. We need our water sources fluoridated.

The children most impacted by rampant tooth decay come from low income families. Families that are worried about paying the bills and where their next meal is coming from, struggle with taking Fluoride vitamins or supplements. Community water fluoridation is the best way to get fluoride to these children.

Dental health is intimately linked to overall health. Poor dental health not only contributes to heart disease and diabetes later in life, it also affects children's ability to grow, to be healthy, and to do well in school. Children experiencing dental pain from tooth decay are more likely to be distracted in and unable to focus in school or even on their homework. In fact, dental decay is the leading cause of absenteeism.

There is no reason to accept dental decay. Prevention, through dental education, regular dental exams and fluoride, is the most cost-effective way to end the pain, suffering, and cost associated with oral health problems. Water fluoridation is the cornerstone of community oral health programs. We hope you will continue to provide your citizens with this important preventative health measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill M. Price". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jill M. Price, DMD
ODA President

cc: Mayor Stephen Lawrence
Councilor Carolyn Wood
Councilor Timothy McGlothlin
Councilor Dan Spatz
Councilor Bill Dick
Councilor Linda Miller