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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

January 12, 2011

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

I am writing to you regarding the actions that EPA has taken over the past several days on fluoride exposure and public health. Fluoride has been the subject of much public praise and debate since its use in public drinking water systems began in the 1940s. The recent actions that EPA and the Department of Health and Human Services have recently taken will likely continue that debate, and also could create unintended consequences for public health, food safety, and the economy.

Federal officials recently informed my staff of a serious debate among scientists, technical experts, and staff at EPA on the agency's ultimate policy decision and supporting scientific rationale.

Given this debate and the potential public health and economic implications of these decisions, I would encourage EPA to allow for as much time as possible for public comment and scientific and technical input from stakeholders. Ensuring an open and transparent process will help bring to light the intense debate on the key issues underlying your decision, as well as ensure that EPA is using the best available science. In doing so, EPA can protect public health without needlessly harming economic growth or putting jobs at risk. I will be conducting oversight on this process, and hope that we can work together for transparency, openness, and accountability—principles of decision making that we both support.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Sincerely,

James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

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