



26.October 2020

Subject: Ačiū from civil society for your dental amalgam recommendation

Honorable Virginijus Sinkevičius
 European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius:

European civil society salutes you for your landmark decision to recommend the phase out of dental amalgam to the Parliament and the Council.

Ačiū!

Your decision makes sense for five solid, incontrovertible reasons:

1. Environment: Dental amalgam is the single largest use of mercury in Europe – and unnecessarily so. The European Union’s science committee SCHER calls amalgam a “secondary poison” because its mercury methylates in fish that children then eat.
2. Technology: Over the past decade the alternative materials have surpassed amalgam in effectiveness – and unlike amalgam, they are minimally-invasive and tooth-friendly.
3. Economics: The prototype is here, because in 2018 amalgam was banned for children, pregnant women, and breastfeeding women, and simple changes in insurance and government programs made the transition seamlessly. The same can now be done for the general population. Moldova, the poorest nation in Europe, banned all amalgam use last year.

4. Preparedness: (1) Manufacturers are ready: virtually all of them make the alternatives, so no jobs will be lost. (2) Dentists are ready: all know how to place the alternatives to amalgam and probably half of them have stopped using amalgam altogether. (3) Consumers are ready: in the European Commission's internet poll before the Mercury Regulation was enacted, 88% voted in favor of an amalgam ban. (4) Member States are ready: 89% of the Member States (24 of 27), encompassing fully 88% of the population, either have phased out amalgam, have announced a phase-out date, or have low to moderate amalgam use already.
5. Synergies with other EU goals: Whether the goal is specific, such as clean water, or general, such as the Green New Deal with the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, the route to a toxic-free Europe must include the end of dental amalgam, a primitive device that pre-dates the Franco-Prussian War and can lead to cracked teeth.

We wish to single out and thank your team at the Commission who laboriously and competently shepherded this issue to the end point of recommending the demise of amalgam for Europe: Aneta Willems, Christopher Allen, David Grimeaud, and Jenny-Johanna Green.

We wish to continue to work with the Commission as you craft legislation for Parliament and the Council to phase out amalgam, and we urge you to set a phase-out date of 2025 or sooner.

Good health to you.

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