

National Coalition
for Promoting
Physical Activity



October 15, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

The National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity (NCPA) strongly supports the inclusion of prevention and wellness provisions in any healthcare reform legislation. We applaud your vocal support of prevention and your public encouragement to get Americans moving more on a daily basis. The inclusion of such provisions in healthcare reform legislation will go far to help turn our current “sickcare” system into a true healthcare one- which we believe, is critical to the success of healthcare reform.

We would particularly ask that you communicate to congress your staunch support of a National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy as well as a Prevention and Public Health Fund. A National Health Promotion Strategy would allow us to work in cross departmental manner to set clear and realistic goals for improving health of Americans. We believe that such a coordinated effort is integral to health reform.

Funding has been woefully short in the areas of both public health and prevention and has contributed greatly to the severe rise in chronic diseases and obesity. Of particular note is that that these conditions are no longer largely confined to adults but the number of children being diagnosed on a yearly basis is very sobering. A Prevention and Public Health Fund would provide a dedicated funding stream for public health and prevention that is sorely needed to meet the many emerging health threats we must face, and the persistent chronic disease rates that we must begin to control.

The Centers for Disease Control and prevention estimates that if all physically inactive Americans became active, we would save \$77 billion in annual medical costs. Physical activity (Along with nutrition and tobacco cessation) must be considered a central building block in prevention and wellness strategies if we are to truly convert to a health care oriented system.

Investing in prevention gives all Americans the opportunity to lead healthier lives and ensures our workforce is strong and healthy enough to compete with the rest of the world. A Public Health Investment Fund and National Prevention and Wellness Strategy would lower disease rates, improve quality of life, and reduce health care costs for millions of Americans.

We urge you to add both of these provisions to your short list of “must haves” and that you communicate the same to Congress with a sense of urgency so that Americans can look forward to long and health lives. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Sheila Franklin', is written over a horizontal line.

Sheila Franklin
Executive Director
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity