

June 20, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health &
Human Services, Education &
Related Agencies Appropriations
Room 131 HSOB
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health &
Human Services, Education &
Related Agencies Appropriations
Room 156 DSOB
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

The undersigned organizations and individuals join in urging your support for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO). On July 1, 2008, CDC will announce the next cycle of grantees for the DNPAO. Without additional funding, CDC will provide grants to five fewer states than in the previous five-year funding cycle, and thirteen states that are currently funded will lose their funding. At a time when two-thirds (66%) of American adults and one-third (32%) of children are obese or overweight,^{1,2} and the estimated total cost of obesity is \$117 billion per year, we cannot afford to leave more than half of states unsupported for obesity prevention programs.

In Fiscal Year 2007, DNPAO funded obesity prevention and control activities in 28 states. Grants allowed state health departments to design, implement, evaluate and disseminate effective interventions that helped to encourage access to healthy foods and venues to be active and to strengthen obesity prevention and control programs in preschools, child-care centers, work sites and other community settings. Activities ranged from nutrition, cooking and literacy programs for low-income families to walking programs for seniors to pilot programs to deliver fresh fruits and vegetables to communities.

Unfortunately, 13 states (Illinois, Florida, Oklahoma, Maine, Kentucky, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Vermont, New Mexico, Arizona, South Dakota, and Missouri) that have previously received funding through the DNPAO were approved for the next grant cycle, but CDC lacks adequate resources to fund those states. In addition, CDC has never had sufficient funding to support obesity prevention programs in Mississippi, Hawaii, Alabama, Delaware, Alaska, Nevada, Louisiana, Ohio, North Dakota, Wyoming, Kansas, Virginia, or Washington, D.C. Although 51 states and territories qualified for funding, CDC only has enough resources to fund 23 of them. As you develop the Fiscal Year 2009 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, **we urge the Committee to provide \$65 million for DNPAO so that all states can be funded at a minimal level, at least. Better yet, given the magnitude of the obesity epidemic and its financial impact on Medicare and other health care costs, the committee should do all it can to provide the resources that CDC needs to fund all the state applications at the levels approved by CDC (i.e., \$90 million).**

We hope that the FY 2009 Labor/HHS Appropriations bill will make the much needed investment in the health of our country by adequately funding CDC's DNPAO. Our nation's health and economic well-being lie in the balance. We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Better Children's Diets

Alaska Public Health Association

America Walks

American Academy of Pediatrics – Pennsylvania Chapter

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Cancer Society – Pennsylvania Division

American Dietetic Association

American Heart Association

American Institute for Cancer Research

American Medical Athletic Association

American Public Health Association

American Running Association

Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals

Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs

Association of National Advertisers

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors

Be Active New York State

Berkeley Media Studies Group

Better Deal Exchange Ace Hardware (CA)

Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

California Association of Nutrition & Activity Programs (CAN-Act)

California Center for Public Health Advocacy

California Food Policy Advocates

California WIC Association

Campaign to End Obesity

Canned Food Alliance
CardioVision 2020 (MN)
Center for Communications, Health, and the Environment
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute
Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC)
Directors of Health Promotion and Education
Erie Center on Health and Aging (PA)
The FGE Food & Nutrition Team
Fitness Forward
Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools (FARMS)
General Mills
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Health Care Strategies Group, Inc.
Health Promotion Advocates
Health Promotion Council
Healthy Schools Campaign (IL)
i4Learning, Inc.
Institute for America's Health
International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association
Kids for Health
Muskegon Community Health Project (MI)
National Action Against Obesity
National Association for Health and Fitness
National Association for Sport and Physical Education
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Center for Bicycling and Walking
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Society of Physical Activity Practitioners in Public Health

National WIC Association
Nestle USA
New England Coalition for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
New York Coalition for Healthy School Food
New York State Nutrition Council
North Dakota Department of Health
North Dakota Dietetic Association
Nutrition Council of Oregon
Operation Wellness (IN)
Partners for a Healthy Nevada
Pennington Biomedical Research Center
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prevention Institute
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Produce for Better Health Foundation
Produce Marketing Association
Public Health Institute
Researchers against Inactivity-related Disorders
School Nutrition Association
Shape Up America!
Snohomish Health District (WA)
Society for Adolescent Medicine
Society for Public Health Education
South Carolina Eat Smart, Move More Coalition
The SPARK Programs
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
Trust for America's Health
United Fresh Produce Association
Vermont Department of Health
Vermont Dietetic Association

WalkBoston

Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity

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¹ Ogden C, Carroll M, Curtin L, McDowell M, Tabak C, and Flegal K. “Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in the United States, 1999-2004.” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2006, vol. 295, pp. 1549-1555.

² Ogden C, Carroll M, Flegal K. “High Body Mass Index for Age among US Children and Adolescents, 2003-2006.” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2008, vol. 299, pp. 2401-2405.