

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
731 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

We are writing to urge the highest level of funding possible in the 2009 Labor, HHS Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Community Health / Steps Program. In FY07 Steps funding was \$43 million and fell to \$25 million in FY08. With the crisis of chronic disease and obesity in this country, it is essential that CDC has a healthy communities' budget that reflects the severity of this burden. So many of the decisions that will turn the tide on obesity and chronic disease are in the hands of local decision makers and we need to provide them with the tools and resources to support healthy environments where we live, work, learn and play.

We need your help to ensure this generation of American children outlive their parents and do not suffer from the human and economic costs of chronic disease. Years of research and funding have amassed a wealth of knowledge and proven strategies to increase physical activity and advance healthy eating, but to date that knowledge has not yet reached our communities. CDC has convened state and local health departments, national organizations with extensive community reach and a wide range of local leaders and groups and has a powerful vision of how to support the spread of this knowledge and change across the nation.

Over the last 5 years CDC has made deep inroads into innovative strategies to prevent and control chronic disease and risk factors at the community level, through the Steps to a HealthierUS program and the Pioneering Healthier Communities program. CDC has recently launched an initiative called ACHIEVE that builds on the work and lessons of these and other premiere healthy communities programs. In total, CDC has funded 114 initiatives to advance policy and environmental change strategies in hundreds of communities to support of healthy eating, active living and chronic disease prevention.

CDC has a comprehensive vision of how to spread community-based initiatives that promote policy and environmental change that helps people make the healthy choice where they live, work, learn and play. Included in this vision is:

- A network of mentoring sites that can help spread the learning and strategies to additional communities;
- Funding of hundreds of new healthy community sites through state and local health departments and community-based organizations; and
- Funding lead national partners with footprints in thousands of American communities to continue to explore innovative approaches to this community change work.

Community level interventions show some of the most promising approaches to attacking this national crisis of obesity and chronic disease. Communities have shown success by:

- Restoring physical education (PE) to the school day and require 30 minutes of physical activity and healthy snacks in child care sites,
- Starting or enhancing farmers markets and community gardens in areas lacking grocery stores or with limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables,
- Changing zoning requirements to ensure developments include sidewalks,
- Building new trails and bike paths, and
- Implementing safe routes to school strategies.

National partnerships have helped CDC work on the ground in communities and gain a deeper understanding of how to advance best practices and policies at the local level.

During these difficult budget times, there is no greater challenge to the nation's economy than the cost of treating chronic disease and obesity – *most of which are preventable*. This healthy communities work not only recognizes the urgency to focus our communities on preventing these diseases and associated conditions but brings together such a diverse sector of leaders making the “real change” possible.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request that will help stem the tide of obesity and chronic disease in this country.

Sincerely,

National Orgs

American Association for Health Education  
 American College Health Association  
 American College of Preventive Medicine  
 American Hospital Association  
 American Public Health Association  
 Association of State & Territorial Health Officials  
 Campaign for Public Health  
 National Association of County & City Health Officials  
 National Association for Chronic Disease Director  
 National Recreation and Park Association  
 Research to Prevention  
 Society for Public Health Education  
 Trust for America's Health

## YMCA of the USA

### State and Local Organizations

Activate Elgin- Elgin, IL  
Adair County Family YMCA, Kirksville, MO  
Alliance of Texas YMCAs  
America on the Move in Ft. Wayne, IN  
American Heart/American Stroke Association, Framingham, MA  
American Lung Association of PA  
Ann Arbor YMCA, MI  
Ashland YMCA  
Attleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, MA  
Attleboro Public Schools, MA  
The Battle Creek Family YMCA, MI  
Beaumont Metropolitan YMCA, TX  
Bikur Cholim-Partners in Health of Monsey, NY  
Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation System, NY  
Binghamton University Decker School of Nursing, NY  
Binghamton University Department of Health and Physical Education, NY  
Black Hills Workshop, Rapid City, SD  
Black Knight Security, NY  
Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness, Boston, MA  
Boston Medical Center, Department of Pediatrics, Boston, MA  
Boston Public Health Commission, Boston, MA  
Boston Public Schools, Boston, MA  
Broome County Clerk of the Legislature. NY  
Broome County Economic Development Group, NY  
Broome County Executive, NY  
Broome County Health Department, NY  
Broome Tioga BOCES Communications, NY  
Broome Tioga BOCES Food Service, NY  
Broome Tioga BOCES Professional Development, NY  
Broome County YMCA, NY  
C. Scott Vanderhoef, County Executive, Rockland County, NY  
California State Alliance of YMCAs, CA  
Casper Wyoming Family YMCA, WY  
Center for Community Health and Evaluation. Seattle, WA  
Center for MultiCultural Health, Seattle WA  
Central Connecticut Coast YMCA, CT  
Chelsea Community Hospital, Chelsea, MI  
Chenango Forks School District, NY  
Chenango Valley School District, NY  
Chesterfield Family YMCA, SC  
Chiku Awali African Dance Company of Rockland, Inc, NY  
Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc, NY  
Clallam County YMCA Inc., WA  
Clark County Family YMCA, WA  
Clear Channels Radio, NY  
Central New York Kidney Foundation, NY  
The City of Pueblo, CO  
City of St. Louis Department of Health, MO

Colorado State Alliance of YMCAs, CO  
Community Choices, Clark County, WA  
Community Mediation Institute, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Connellsville Area School District, PA  
Corner Health Center, Ypsilanti, MI  
Crowder College, MO  
Crusader Clinic, Rockford, IL  
Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA, NJ  
Custer YMCA, SD  
Department of Public Health, Cleveland OH  
Diabetes Management and Nutrition Center Wyoming Valley health Care System,  
Kingston, PA  
Dryades YMCA, New Orleans, LA  
Edgemont YMCA, SD  
Eugene YMCA, OR  
Family Resource Network of the Panhandle, Inc., Martinsville, WV  
Family YMCA of Black Hawk County, Waterloo, IA  
Fargo-Moorhead Family YMCA, ND and MN  
Fayette County Community Health Improvement Partnership, PA  
Feet First, Seattle, WA  
Fort Worth Public Health Department, IN  
Freeman Health System, Neosho, MO  
Freeman Neosho Hospital, Inc, MO  
Freeman Southwest Family YMCA, Neosho, MO  
Gamma Theta Omega, Inc, Tampa, FL  
Get A Move On, Dallas, TX  
Grants Pass YMCA, OR  
Greater Binghamton Chamber, NY  
Greater Elgin Area YMCA, IL  
Greater Pittston YMCA, PA  
Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business & Industry (HR Committee), Wilkes-Barre,  
PA  
Harvard Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity, Boston, MA  
Hazleton YMCA & YWCA, PA  
Healthier Berkeley County, WV  
Healthier Jefferson County, WV  
Hockomock Area YMCA, MA  
Hopewell Valley YMCA, NJ  
Hot Springs YMCA, AR  
Idaho Falls Family YMCA  
Interfaith Resource Center for Peace and Justice, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Itasca Community College, Grand Rapids, MN  
Itasca County Family YMCA, MN  
Janet Weis Children's Hospital, Danville PA  
Jawonio Inc., NY  
Jewish Family Service, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Johnson and Associates, Albuquerque, NM  
Johnson City School District, NY  
Joint Urban Studies Center, PA  
Jonesboro YMCA, AR  
Justice Resource Institute, Boston, MA

Keep Rockland Beautiful, Inc., NY  
Ken Baxter Senior Community Center, Marysville, WA  
Kit Clark Senior Services, Inc., Boston, MA  
Kitsap Family YMCA, WA  
La Crosse Area Family YMCA, La Crosse, WI  
La Voz Latina, Rockford, IL  
Lake-Lehman School District, PA  
Little Rock YMCA, AR  
Local and National list for Hudson Health Plan and Case Management Society of America, NY  
Luzerne County Breastfeeding Coalition, PA  
Maternal and Family Health Services, Inc, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Marion-Polk County YMCA, OR  
Marshalltown Medical & Surgical Center, WV  
Marysville Parks and Recreation, WA  
Mayor Dennis L. Kendall, City of Marysville, WA  
Mayor Kevin J. Dumas, Attleboro, MA  
Mayor Larry Morrissey, Rockford, IL  
Mayor Matthew T. Ryan, Binghamton, NY  
Mental Health America of Pueblo, CO  
Mexico Area Family YMCA, Mexico, MO  
Michigan Inter-Tribal Council, MI  
Mid-Delmarva Family YMCA, MD  
Mid-Willamette Family YMCA, OR  
Neponset Health Center, Boston, MA  
Newport County YMCA, RI  
Nyack Teacher Center, NY  
Oneonta Family YMCA, NY  
Oregon State Alliance, OR  
Orville YMCA, OH  
Ozarks Regional YMCA, MO  
Palestine YMCA, TX  
Palmer College of Chiropractic, IA  
Parkview Medical Center, Pueblo, CO  
Partners in Community Care, NY  
Pennsylvania Department of health, diabetes prevention program, PA  
Pioneering a Healthier Marshall Marshall, MN  
Plainview YMCA, TX  
Public Health - Seattle & King County, WA  
Pueblo City-County Health Department, in Pueblo, CO  
Pueblo Step Up, CO  
Quad City Health Initiative, IA and IL  
Rockford Health Council, Rockford, IL  
Rockland County Department of Health, NY  
Rockland County YMCA, NY  
Rogue Valley YMCA, OR  
Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health Center, Inc., Boston, MA  
Rural Health Network, NY  
Sarah Walker, MA. University of Binghamton, NY  
Scene International, NY  
Scott County Family YMCA, IA

Seabrook YMCA, AR  
Shasta Family YMCA, CA  
Sidney Borum Jr. Health Center, Boston, MA  
Smithfield YMCA, RI  
South End Community Health Center, Boston, MA  
South Sound YMCA, WA  
Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center, Boston, MA  
St. James Middle School, NY  
Sturdy Memorial Hospital, MA  
Superintendent Pia Durkin, Ph.D, Attleboro Public Schools, MA  
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, WA  
Tecumseh YMCA, OH  
Tillamook County Family YMCA, OR  
Town of Orangetown, NY Parks and Recreation, NY  
Trane manufacturing, Pueblo CO  
Treasure Valley YMCA, Boise, ID  
Two Rivers YMCA, IL  
Union Endicott School District, NY  
Uniontown Area YMCA, PA  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Wyoming Valley, Kingston, PA  
United Health Services, NY  
United Medical Associates, NY  
UW Health Pediatric Fitness Initiative  
Warren YMCA, AR  
Washtenaw County Public Health, MI  
Wayne County YMCA, PA  
WBNG TV, NY  
Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, PA  
Wilkes-Barre City Health Department, PA  
Wyoming Valley Wellness Trails Partnership, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
WV Kids in Action, WV  
YMCA at Washington State University, WA  
YMCA of Abilene, TX  
YMCA of Attleboro, MA  
YMCA of Austin, TX  
YMCA of the Brandywine Valley, PA  
YMCA of the Capital Area, LA  
YMCA of Central New Mexico, NM  
YMCA of the Coastal Bend, TX  
YMCA of Columbia-Willamette, OR  
YMCA of Corsicana, TX  
YMCA of Dane County, WI  
YMCA of Delaware, DE  
YMCA of Eastern Union County, NJ  
YMCA of El Paso, TX  
YMCA of the Fox Cities, WI  
YMCA of Gray's Harbor, WA  
YMCA of the Golden Crescent, TX  
YMCA of Greater Cleveland, OH  
YMCA of Greater Dallas, TX  
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, IN

YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, MI  
YMCA of Greater Houston, TX  
YMCA of Greater Kansas City  
YMCA of Greater Louisville, KY  
YMCA of Greater New Orleans, LA  
YMCA of Greater Omaha, NE  
YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, PA  
YMCA of Greater Providence, RI  
YMCA of Greater Rochester, NY  
YMCA of Greater San Antonio, TX  
YMCA of Greater Seattle, WA  
YMCA of Greater St. Louis, MO  
YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg, FL  
YMCA of Greater Tampa, FL  
YMCA of the Greater Tri-Cities, WA  
YMCA of the Inland Northwest, Spokane, WA  
YMCA of Kanawha Valley, WV  
YMCA of Lincoln, NE  
YMCA of Marshalltown, IA  
YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South, TN  
YMCA of Metropolitan Denver, CO  
YMCA of Metropolitan Ft. Worth, TX  
YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee, WI  
YMCA of Metropolitan Tucson, AR  
YMCA of Moore County, TX  
YMCAs of New York State, NY  
YMCA of Orange County, CA  
YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, CO  
YMCA of Pueblo, CO  
YMCA of Rapid City, SD  
YMCA of Rock River Valley, IL  
YMCA of Rye, NY  
YMCA of San Francisco, CA  
YMCA of Snohomish County, WA  
YMCA of Southern Nevada, NV  
YMCA of the Suncoast, FL  
YMCA of Tacoma-Pierce County, WA  
YMCA of Walla Walla, WA  
YMCA of Western North Carolina, Asheville, NC  
Yuma Family YMCA, AZ

CC: Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

Daniel Inouye	Thad Cochran
Herbert Kohl	Judd Gregg
Patty Murray	Larry Craig
Mary Landrieu	Kay Bailey Hutchison
Richard Durbin	Ted Stevens
Jack Reed	Richard Shelby
Frank Lautenberg	