

December 3, 2008

The Honorable Dave Obey  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James T. Walsh  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh:

**As the House and the Senate begin negotiations on the final FY 2009 Labor, HHS Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we urge you to maintain the \$30 million for the Community Health / Steps Program as recommended by the House Subcommittee.**

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.

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 YMCA 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. Since 2004, through its Healthy Communities programs, including STEPS, Pioneering Healthier Communities and ACHIEVE, CDC has funded more than 150 communities to advance policy and environmental change strategies in 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 and will continue to help 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 reality of “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 Organizations

- National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Recreation and Park Association
- YMCA of the USA

Local Organizations

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| Aberdeen Family YMCA, SD                           | Boothbay Region YMCA, ME                   |
| ACHIEVE  | Border Trust Company, ME                   |
| Activate Campaign County, OH                       | Boston Public Health Commission            |
| Ahwatukee Foothills Family YMCA, AZ                | Burbank Community YMCA, CA                 |
| AIDS Community Service, NY                         | Butler County Family YMCA, PA              |
| Alamance County Community YMCA, NC                 | Butler Street YMCA, GA                     |
| Albany Area YMCA, NY                               | California Park and Recreation Society     |
| Alegent Health at Home, Adams Co Public Health, LA | Canton Leisure Services, MI                |
| Allegheny County Health Department, PA             | CareSouth Carolina, Hartsville, SC         |
| Allegheny Valley YMCA, PA                          | Carlisle Family YMCA, PA                   |
| Allentown Health Bureau, Allentown, PA             | Center For Childhood Weight Management     |
| Altarum Institute                                  | Central Bucks Family YMCA, PA              |
| America On the Move, Fort Wayne, IN                | Central Connecticut Coast YMCA, Inc        |
| American Red Cross Greater Buffalo Chapter         | Central District Health, ID                |
| Anaheim Family YMCA, CA                            | Centre Park and Recreation, TX             |
| Ann Arbor YMCA, MI                                 | Centre Park & Recreation, AL               |
| Arizona Parks and Recreation Association           | Chambersburg Memorial YMCA, PA             |
| Athens-McMinn Family YMCA, TN                      | Champaign Family YMCA, OH                  |
| Atmore Area YMCA, AL                               | Channel Islands YMCA, CA                   |
| Association of Ohio Health Commissioners           | Cheshire YMCA, NH                          |
| Barren County Family YMCA, KY                      | Chicago Department of Public Health        |
| Bath Area Family YMCA, ME                          | Chicago Mayor's Fitness Council, IL        |
| Bend Metro Park and Recreation District, OR        | Children's Health Initiative Program, MI   |
| Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department, IL    | City of Annapolis Recreation and Parks, MD |
| Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan                 | City of Brenham Recreation Department, TX  |
| Boone County Family YMCA, IN                       | City of Charleston Wellness Division, SC   |

City of Fort Collins Recreation Department, CO  
 City of Greenbelt Department of Recreation, MD  
 City of Gresham Parks and Recreation, OR  
 City of Hartford Parks and Recreation, WI  
 City of Menomonie Parks and Recreation, WI  
 City of Roseville Parks and Recreation , MI  
 City of St. Louis, Department of Health  
 City of Syracuse Dept of Parks & Recreation, NY  
 City of Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation, AL  
 City of West Sacramento Parks & Recreation, CA  
 Cleveland County Health Department, Shelby, NC  
 Clinton County Health Department, NY  
 Cole Center Family YMCA, IN  
 Colorado Parks & Recreation Association  
 Columbus Metropolitan YMCA, GA  
 Community Resources Council, Topeka, KS  
 Community YMCA of Eastern Delaware County, PA  
 Concord Family YMCA, NH  
 Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children  
 Cook County Department of Public Health, IL  
 Corona-Norco Family YMCA, CA  
 Cowlitz County Health Department, WA  
 Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA, NJ  
 Custer YMCA, SD  
 Dearborn YMCA, AL  
 Decatur County Family YMCA, IN  
 Dept of Community Medicine, West Virginia  
 University School of Medicine  
 Dodge and Jefferson Tobacco Free Coalitions  
 Dorchester County Family YMCA, MD  
 Nutrition Advisory Services, LLC, MI  
 DuBois Area YMCA, PA  
 East Hartford Parks and Recreation, CT  
 Edgemont YMCA, SD  
 Employers Coalition on Health, Rockford, IL  
 Family YMCA at Tarrytown, NY  
 Family YMCA of Greater Laurens, SC  
 Fayetteville Family YMCA, NC  
 Findlay City Health Department, OH  
 Florence Family YMCA, SC  
 Frankfort YMCA, KY  
 Franklin County Health Department, FL  
 Freeland YMCA, PA  
 Freeman Southwest Family YMCA, MO  
 Fulton Family YMCA, NY  
 Furman University, SC  
 Gadsden County Health Department, FL  
 Glades County Health Department, FL  
 Golden State YMCA, CA  
 Grand Forks YMCA Family Center, ND  
 Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, Grand Rapids, MN  
 Greater Burlington YMCA, VT  
 Greater Elgin Area YMCA, IL  
 Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness, IL  
 Greater Johnstown Community YMCA, PA  
 Greater Kingsport Family YMCA, TN  
 Greater Pittston YMCA, PA  
 Greater Susquehanna Valley YMCA, PA  
 Greensburg YMCA, PA  
 Grundy County Health Dept, IL  
 Hammond Area YMCA, IN  
 Hanover Area Family YMCA, PA  
 Harrisburg Area YMCA, PA  
 Hazleton YMCA & YWCA, PA  
 Healthy Communities of Meeker-McLeod-Sibley  
 Counties, MN  
 Healthy Monday Campaign, New York  
 Helena Family YMCA, MT  
 Henderson County Family YMCA, KY  
 Hendry County Health Department, FL  
 Hobart Family YMCA, IN  
 Hockomock Area YMCA, MA  
 Hodding Carter Memorial YMCA, MS  
 Hollidaysburg Area YMCA, PA  
 Honolulu Armed Services YMCA, HI  
 Hope Mills Family YMCA, NC  
 Hopewell Valley YMCA, NJ  
 Hopkins County Family YMCA, KY  
 Hot Springs Arkansas Family YMCA  
 Hunterdon County YMCA, NJ  
 Huntington YMCA, IN  
 Idaho Recreation and Park Association  
 Indiana County YMCA, PA  
 Interfaith Health and Hope Coalition, MI  
 Itasca County Family YMCA, MN  
 Jackson Metropolitan YMCA, MS  
 Jackson Public School District, MI  
 Jamestown New York YMCA, NY  
 Jefferson County Health Department, FL  
 Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, MO  
 Jefferson County Public Health Service  
 Kalamazoo County Family YMCA, MI  
 Kansas Recreation and Park Association  
 Kennebec Valley YMCA, ME  
 Kentucky Recreation & Park Society  
 Kentucky YMCA Youth Association  
 La Crosse Area Family YMCA, WI  
 Lancaster Family YMCA, PA  
 Lock Haven Area YMCA, PA  
 Logan Square Neighborhood Association, IL  
 Lombard Park District, IL  
 Madison Area YMCA, NJ  
 Madison County Health Department, FL  
 Manitowoc Parks and Recreation Department, WI  
 Margaret Mary Community Hospital, IN  
 Marissa Sims, Social Work student, Buffalo State College  
 Maryland National Capitol Park and Planning  
 Commission, MD  
 Maryvale Family YMCA, AZ  
 Massachusetts Recreation and Park Association  
 Maui Family YMCA, HI  
 Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey, City of Rockford  
 Meeting Waters YMCA, VT  
 Memphis and Shelby County Health Department

Metuchen Edison Woodbridge YMCA, NJ  
 MI Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
 Michigan Association of Health Plans  
 Michigan Association of Planning, Michigan Chapter  
 of the American Planning Association  
 Michigan Recreation and Park Association  
 Michigan Fitness Foundation  
 Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness,  
 Health and Sports  
 Mid-Delmarva Family YMCA  
 Milan Family YMCA, TN  
 Milan General Hospital  
 Milan Special School District Coordinated Health Dept  
 Minneapolis Dept of Health and Family Support, MN  
 Minot Family YMCA, ND  
 Missoula Family YMCA, MT  
 Monroe County YMCA, IN  
 Monroeville Area YMCA, AL  
 MORE HEALTH, Inc, FL  
 Moshannon Valley YMCA, PA  
 Monterey County Health Department, Salinas, CA  
 Mt Diablo Region YMCA, CA  
 Nebraska Recreation and Park Association  
 New Castle Community YMCA, PA  
 New Jersey Recreation and Park Association  
 NY City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
 Newport County YMCA, RI  
 Newport Recreation Department, RI  
 North Carolina Recreation and Park Association  
 North Central District Health, ID  
 North Dakota Recreation & Park Association  
 North Penn YMCA, PA  
 Northern York County YMCA, ME  
 Norwood Health Department, OH  
 Nutrition Advisory Services, LLC, MI  
 Ohio Parks and Recreation Association  
 Oil City Area YMCA, PA  
 Oklahoma Recreation and Park Society  
 Orangeburg Family YMCA  
 Oregon Recreation & Park Association  
 Oswego YMCA, NY  
 Ozarks Regional YMCA  
 Panhandle Health District, ID  
 Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA, VA  
 Pennsylvania Assoc of Community Health Centers  
 Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health  
 Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society  
 Penobscot Bay YMCA, ME  
 Pickens County YMCA, SC  
 Pocono Family YMCA, PA  
 Poplar Bluff Parks and Recreation, MO  
 Princeton Family YMCA, NJ  
 Public Health Solutions District Health Department, NE  
 Randolph-Asheboro YMCA, NC  
 Raritan Bay Area YMCA, NJ  
 RiverStone Health, MT  
 Rockford Health Council, Rockford, Illinois  
 Rock Springs Parks and Recreation, WY  
 Rye YMCA  
 Saint Paul – Ramsey County Department of Public Health  
 Sanford –Springvale YMCA, ME  
 Santa Anita Family YMCA, CA  
 Santa Maria Valley YMCA, CA  
 Santa Monica YMCA, CA  
 Santa Rosa County Health Department, FL  
 Schuylkill YMCA, PA  
 Scott County Family YMCA, IA  
 Sewickley Valley YMCA, PA  
 Shasta Family YMCA, CA  
 Shenango Valley YMCA, PA  
 Sherman Lake YMCA, MI  
 Sinai Community Institute, IL  
 Snohomish Health District, WA  
 South Bend Parks & Recreation, IN  
 South Brunswick Family YMCA, NJ  
 South Carolina Eat Smart, Move More Coalition, SC  
 South Carolina Recreation and Park Association  
 South Central Public Health District, ID  
 South Dakota Parks and Recreation Association  
 South Mountain YMCA, PA  
 South Sound YMCA, WA  
 Southeast Ventura County YMCA, CA  
 Southeastern District Health, ID  
 Southeastern Indiana YMCA, IN  
 Southern Pines Recreation & Parks, NC  
 South Lake YMCA, IN  
 Southwest District Health, ID  
 Sparta Parks & Recreation, NJ  
 Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids, MI  
 St. Clair County Health Department  
 Steps to a HealthierNY-Jefferson County  
 Stanly County Family YMCA, NC  
 State YMCA of Maine, ME  
 Stevens Traverse Grant Public Health, MI  
 Susan P. Byrnes Health Education Center  
 Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, WA  
 TAKE CHARGE!!! Lifestyle Management, Inc., FL  
 Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA, FL  
 Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association  
 The Family YMCA, NM  
 The Greenville Hospital System, SC  
 The Island of Hawaii YMCA  
 THE SHER GROUP Financial Advisors  
 Tom A. Finch Community YMCA, NC  
 Town of Belmont, Health Department, MA  
 Town of Burrillville Parks & Recreation, RI  
 Town of Billerica Recreation Department, MA  
 Town of North Hampton Recreation Department, MA  
 Town of Pelham Parks and Recreation, NH  
 Tri-County YMCA, IN  
 Two Rivers YMCA, IL  
 UMass Memorial Health Care, MA  
 Union County YMCA, SC  
 Uniontown Area YMCA, PA

Utah Recreation and Parks Association  
Valley of the Sun YMCA, AZ  
Valley Points Family YMCA, PA  
Vincennes YMCA, IN  
Wakulla County Health Department, FL  
Waldo County YMCA, ME  
Washington County YMCA, IN  
Washtenaw County Public Health Department, MI  
Wayne County YMCA, PA  
Waynesboro Area YMCA, PA  
West End YMCA, CA  
Westfield Area YMCA, NJ  
Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, PA  
Wilson Family YMCA, NC  
Winooski YMCA  
Winthrop Area YMCA, ME  
Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association  
Wyoming Recreation and Parks Association  
Yarmouth Massachusetts Recreation Division, MA  
YMCA Camp Abnaki, VT  
YMCA Camp Ockanickon, Inc., NJ  
YMCA Camp Tecumseh, IN  
YMCA of Beaufort County, SC  
YMCA of Calhoun County, AL  
YMCA of Cass and Clay counties, ND  
YMCA of Catawba Valley, NC  
YMCA of Central Kentucky, KY  
YMCA of Central Massachusetts, MA  
YMCA of Central New Mexico  
YMCA of Central Stark County, OH  
YMCA of Centre County, PA  
YMCA of Coastal Georgia, Inc.  
YMCA of Columbia  
YMCA of Corry, PA  
YMCA of Corsicana, TX  
YMCA of Dane County, Inc.  
YMCA of DeKalb County, Inc., IN  
YMCA of Delaware  
YMCA of Dyer County, TN  
YMCA of East Tennessee, TN  
YMCA of Eastern Union County, NJ  
YMCA of Elkhart County, IN  
YMCA of Glendale, CA  
YMCA of Greater Charlotte, NC  
YMCA of Greater Cincinnati, OH  
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, IN  
YMCA of Greater Grand Rapid, MI  
YMCA of Greater Indianapolis, IN  
YMCA of Greater Nashua, NH  
YMCA of Greater New York, NY  
YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City, OK  
YMCA of Greater Omaha, NE  
YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, PA  
YMCA of Greater Rochester, NY  
YMCA of Greater San Antonio, TX  
YMCA of Greater St. Louis, MO  
YMCA of Greater Tulsa, OK  
YMCA of Greater Whittier, CA  
YMCA of Greenville, SC  
YMCA of Harrison County, IN  
YMCA of Jackson, TN  
YMCA of Kings County, CA  
YMCA of Long Island, NY  
YMCA of Marshalltown Iowa  
YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South, TN  
YMCA of Metropolitan Birmingham, AL  
YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga, TN  
YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas, TX  
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit, MI  
YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth, TX  
YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles, CA  
YMCA of Metropolitan Tucson, AZ  
YMCA of Middle Tennessee  
YMCA of Middletown and Sullivan County, NY  
YMCA of Northwest North Carolina  
YMCA of Orange County, CA  
YMCA of Philadelphia and Vicinity, PA  
YMCA of Plattsburgh NY  
YMCA of Pomona Valley, CA  
YMCA of Ponca City, OK  
YMCA of Rapid City, SD  
YMCA of Reading and Berks County, PA  
YMCA of Red Wing Minnesota, MN  
YMCA of Rock River Valley, IL  
YMCA of Salem County, NJ  
YMCA of San Francisco, CA  
YMCA of Santa Clara Valley, CA  
YMCA of Saratoga, NY  
YMCA of Scottsville & Allen County, TN  
YMCA of Shreveport/Bossier City, LA  
YMCA of Snohomish County, WA  
YMCA of Southern Nevada, NV  
YMCA of Southwest Illinois  
YMCA of Stanislaus County, CA  
YMCA of Tacoma-Pierce County, WA  
YMCA of the Brandywine Valley, PA  
YMCA of the Coastal Bend, TX  
YMCA of the Desert, CA  
YMCA of the East Valley, CA  
YMCA of the Fox Cities, WI  
YMCA of the Greater Tri-Valley, Inc., NY  
YMCA of the Inland Northwest, WA  
YMCA of the Mid Peninsula, CA  
YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, CO  
YMCA of the Suncoast, FL  
YMCA of the Treasure Coast, FL  
YMCA of the Upper Main Line, PA  
YMCA of Topeka, KS  
YMCA of Western North Carolina  
YMCA of York and York County, PA  
YMCAs of New York State Inc., NY  
York City Bureau of Health, PA