

June 26, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Frelinghuysen and Ranking Members Leahy and Lowey:

On behalf of the undersigned 52 organizations, we are writing to encourage your continued support for the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) *Pool Safety* Grant Program in the FY 2019 appropriations process. The program was funded at \$1.1 million in FY 2018 and we strongly urge you to appropriate \$5 million to the grant program for FY 2019 and open the grant program for inclusion of national organizations. Drowning is the second leading cause of death for children and the *Pool Safety* Grant Program is the only federal funding that can be used for anti-drowning education efforts.

We deeply appreciate the support you gave to the important program in FY 2018, showing your understanding of the grant's importance in address the public health crisis of drowning. Two children die every single day from drowning. In fact, drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1 to 4 than any other cause except birth defects and the second leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 14. Minority children are especially impacted: 60 percent of African-American, 45 percent of Hispanic/Latino and 40 percent of Caucasian children cannot swim. In underserved communities, 79 percent of children who live in households with incomes less than \$50,000 have no/low swimming ability.

Most of these tragic deaths are preventable through cost-effective and simple swim lessons that teach basic water safety and self-rescue skills. National organizations, like the YMCA of the USA, National Recreation and Park Association, American Red Cross, USA Swimming Foundation and others train millions of children every year on invaluable water safety skills, but non-profits are constrained in their outreach, especially to the most vulnerable communities, by their ability to locally fundraise and a lack of adequate federal resource allocation.

We urge you to maintain the U.S. CPSC *Pool Safety* Grant Program, authorized as part of the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act*, which provides resources and technical expertise through state and local municipalities to hire and train enforcement personnel on pool/spa safety and education on drowning and entrapment standards. Some of this funding can, and is, used to provide direct education to children most at risk for drowning. We encourage you to open the grant programs to national organizations, which can leverage limited federal funding into multiple communities while providing expert technical assistance.

The groups listed below, representing a broad spectrum of public health, child and community safety professionals and providers, strongly encourage you to continue to support the only federal funding for anti-drowning training and education – the U.S. CPSC *Pool Safety* Grant Program. We thank you again for your leadership and support of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Association on Health and Disability
American Public Health Association
American Red Cross
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Brain Injury Association of America
Child Injury Prevention Alliance
Lakeshore Foundation
MomsRising
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials
National Environmental Health Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Safety Council
National Wildlife Federation
Safe Kids Worldwide
Safe States Alliance
Sierra Club
United States Lifesaving Association
USA Swimming Foundation
YMCA of the USA

State & Local Organizations

Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs
Alliance of New York State YMCAs
California State Coastal Conservancy
Camp Unalayee (CA)
Children's Health (TX)
Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs
Dakota Alliance of YMCAs (ND, SD)
Delaware State Alliance of YMCAs
Florida State Alliance of YMCAs
Georgia Alliance of YMCAs
Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs
Indiana State Alliance of YMCAs
Iowa Alliance of YMCAs
Minnesota Alliance of YMCAs
Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA
Mississippi Alliance of YMCAs
Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs
New Jersey YMCA State Alliance
North Carolina Alliance of YMCAs
Ohio Alliance of YMCAs
Oklahoma Alliance of YMCAs
Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs
Rhode Island State Alliance of YMCAs
South Carolina Alliance of YMCAs
State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs
Virginia Alliance of YMCAs
West Virginia Alliance of YMCAs
Wisconsin State Alliance of YMCAs

YMCA Alaska
YMCA of Greater New Orleans (LA)
YMCA of San Francisco (CA)
YMCA of the Fox Cities (WI)

CC Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government