

June 12, 2018

The Honorable James Lankford
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Graves
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Lankford and Graves and Ranking Members Coons and Quigley:

On behalf of the undersigned 35 organizations, we are writing to encourage your continued support for the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) *Pool Safely* 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 Safely* 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 Safely* 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 Safely* 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 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 Environmental Health Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Safety Council
Safe Kids Worldwide
Safe States Alliance
USA Swimming Foundation
YMCA of the USA

State Organizations

Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs
Alliance of New York State YMCAs
Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs
Dakota Alliance of YMCAs (ND, SD)
Florida State Alliance of YMCAs
Georgia Alliance of YMCAs
Illinois State Alliance of YMCAs
Iowa Alliance of YMCAs
Minnesota Alliance of YMCAs
Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA
Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs
North Carolina Alliance of YMCAs
Ohio Alliance of YMCAs
Oklahoma Alliance of YMCAs
Rhode Island State Alliance of YMCAs
State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs
West Virginia Alliance of YMCAs
Wisconsin State Alliance of YMCA's
YMCA of Greater New Orleans (LA)
YMCA of the Fox Cities (WI)