

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Tom Udall  
110 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tom Udall:

We, the undersigned, strongly support your Child Nutrition Enhancement Act, which would strengthen U.S. Department of Agriculture technical assistance and training to enhance the effectiveness of the child nutrition programs and expand nutrition education and promotion efforts to support and improve children's diets and health.

One in three young people is either overweight or obese, raising their risk for heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, which are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the U.S. Habits and diets during childhood affect health throughout life. Nutrition education and physical activity are essential to protecting children's health, addressing health care costs, and enhancing national investments in the child nutrition programs.

Nutrition promotion and education fosters a school environment that helps children initiate and sustain healthy eating behaviors, increases acceptance and consumption of healthy school foods, increases participation in school meal programs, enhances school meal quality, and supports development and implementation of local wellness policies.

Yet, current nutrition education and promotion efforts in schools are insufficient. Schools lack adequate resources to provide effective nutrition education throughout the school environment. Many child nutrition programs include some nutrition education components but there is no or limited coordination.

The Child Nutrition Enhancement Act would provide \$70 million per year for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide grants to states to enhance technical assistance and training and dissemination of model materials and best practices to help schools improve the nutritional quality of school meals, the offerings through school vending machines, the use and processing of school commodities, and local wellness policy development, implementation, and evaluation. It also would provide grants to school districts to strengthen and support nutrition education and promotion programs and policies at the local level.

The Child Nutrition Enhancement Act would augment current national investments in the child nutrition programs and support child health. Thank you for your leadership on this important legislation to support nutrition and physical activity by school children.

Respectfully,

America Walks

American Diabetes Association

American Alliance for Health, Physical  
Education, Recreation, and Dance

American Dietetic Association

American Heart Association

American Institute for Cancer Research  
American Public Health Association  
American School Health Association  
American Society of Bariatric Physicians  
Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors  
B. Sackin & Associates  
Be Active New York State  
California Center for Public Health Advocacy  
CardioVision 2020  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute  
Consumer Federation of America  
Directors of Health Promotion and Education  
Eat Smart, Move More South Carolina  
Ehrens Consulting, Bismarck, ND  
Fitness Forward  
FGE Food and Nutrition Team  
Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools (FARMS)  
Health Promotion Council  
Healthy Schools Campaign  
HealthyPlanet  
Hunter College, Program in Nutrition  
Maternity Care Coalition  
National Action Against Obesity  
National Association for Sport and Physical Education  
National Association of State Boards of Education  
National Consumers League  
National PTA  
North Dakota Dietetic Association  
National WIC Association  
Obesity Action Coalition  
Oral Health America  
Partners for a Healthy Nevada  
Partnership for Prevention  
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine  
Prevention Research Center, Yale University School of Medicine  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Produce for Better Health  
Produce Marketing Association  
Shape Up America  
Save the Children  
Society for Nutrition Education  
Teachers College, Columbia University, Program in Nutrition and Center for Food & Environment  
Trust for America's Health  
United Fresh Produce Association