

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