

April 13, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Baldwin and Ranking Members DeLauro and Capito:

As Congress works to draft the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2024, the 112 undersigned organizations request that you allocate **\$130.42 million for FY 2024 to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) and Active People, Healthy Nation**. DNPAO invests in evidence-based strategies that support active living and healthy eating in states and communities across the nation. DNPAO's programs help prevent and address obesity and reduce the risk of other chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and cancer.

From 2015-2020, only 1 in 3 military-aged U.S. adults met body mass index (BMI) eligibility and were adequately physically active.¹ In addition, the Department of Defense spends \$1.5 billion annually on health care related to obesity for active duty and former service members and their families.² Obesity is also one of the leading drivers of health care costs in the United States. A 2016 study found that obesity increased annual medical expenses by \$260.6 billion.³ In addition, underlying medical conditions and chronic diseases linked to nutrition insecurity and inadequate levels of physical activity increased the risk of hospitalization and mortality among individuals infected with COVID-19, and a recent systematic review showed that physical activity significantly reduces COVID-19 morbidity.⁴

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379722004238>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Mission: Readiness. (2017). Unfit to serve: obesity is impacting national security. <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/resources/unfit-to-serve/index.html>

³ Cawley J, Biener A, Meyerhoefer C, Ding Y, Zvenyach T, Smolarz BG, Ramasamy A. Direct medical costs of obesity in the United States and the most populous states. *J Manag Care Spec Pharm*. 2021 Mar;27(3):354-366. doi: 10.18553/jmcp.2021.20410.

⁴ Hill, AL., Whitfield, G., Morford, M., Okasako-Schmucker, DL., et al. Brief summary of findings on the association between physical inactivity and severe COVID-19 outcomes. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Atlanta, Georgia. 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/clinical-care/E-Physical-Inactivity-Review.pdf>.

Obesity and many of the chronic conditions linked to it are preventable. Due to funding constraints, DNPAO is currently employing obesity prevention evidence-based strategies in a limited number of states and communities. An increase in FY 2024 funding for DNPAO will allow CDC to expand two critically important programs that could substantially reduce health care costs:

- The **State Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN)** program funds 16 states out of 50 approved applicants to implement evidence-based obesity prevention strategies. SPAN programs are effective at empowering state and local leaders to increase access to physical activity for residents. Following the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, the [National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#) calls for the expansion of SPAN to all 50 states and the territories because of the program's ability to address root causes of chronic disease by increasing rates of breastfeeding, creating more opportunities for physical activity, and improving nutrition guidelines. Some examples of SPAN activities include:
 - Kentucky's SPAN program has developed shared road opportunities for bike routes and sidewalks for residents that are experiencing poverty, have insufficient transportation, or have a disability.
 - Utah's SPAN program assisted 23 out of 45 of Utah's labor and delivery hospitals as well as 7 out of 16 rural hospitals in the state to become fully trained in the Stepping Up for Utah Babies program, which promotes and supports breastfeeding.

- **Active People, Healthy Nation** supports communities to use evidence-based strategies to increase physical activity to encourage 27 million Americans to become more physically active by 2027. In addition, Active People, Healthy Nation is providing technical assistance for low resource communities, such as small rural towns, to access resources from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to create safe and convenient spaces for physical activity.
 - The program has trained over 2,100 community leaders to develop action plans for expanding opportunities for physical activity and has worked with national partners to implement Complete Streets policies in over 1,600 jurisdictions.
 - Fifteen rural communities in Louisiana are applying for funding to build safe and accessible bicycling and walking infrastructure made available in the BIL, in comparison to only one community applying before APHN's technical assistance and the BIL.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request to provide \$130.42 million in FY 2024 for CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity. We urge the Committee to ensure a DNPAO increase is made in the context of an overall increase for CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), which is critically needed to address chronic disease conditions that account for more than 90% of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual healthcare costs.⁵

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/costs/index.htm>

Sincerely,

Organization

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs
Alliance of NYS YMCAs
America Walks
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Lifestyle Medicine
American College of Sports Medicine
American Council on Exercise
American Gastroenterological Association
American Heart Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Society for Nutrition
Ashland Family YMCA
Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA)
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Bicycle Advocacy of Central Arkansas
Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BikeAAA)
Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota
Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Bicycle Colorado
Bike Cleveland
Bike Pittsburgh
Bike Walk Nebraska
Bike Walk Roseburg
Bike-Walk Fayette
BikeWalkKC
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Connecticut/Rhode Island Alliance of YMCAs
Diabetes Leadership Council
Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition
East Coast Greenway Alliance
Endocrine Society
Farm to Table - New Mexico
Florida State Alliance of YMCAs
Georgia Alliance of YMCAs
Grants Pass Family YMCA / YMCA Oregon State Alliance
healthTIDE
Healthy Food America

Healthy Teen Network
Illinois Public Health Institute
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
International Health Racquet & Sportsclub Association
Iowa Alliance of YMCAs
Iowa Bicycle Coalition
Jump IN for Healthy Kids
Kansas State Alliance of YMCAs
KY/WV YMCA State Alliance
Lakeshore Foundation
League of American Bicyclists
Marin County Bicycle Coalition
Mid-Willamette Family YMCA
Missouri Alliance of YMCAs
Napa County Bicycle Coalition
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Environmental Health Association
National League for Nursing
National Recreation and Park Association
National Youth Sports Health & Safety Institute
Nemours Children's Health
NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation
NJ YMCA State Alliance
Obesity Action Coalition
Ohio Alliance of YMCAs
Oregon Alliance of YMCAs
PAL: Play. Advocate. LiveWell
Palmetto Cycling Coalition
Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs
PeopleForBikes
Physical Activity Alliance
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Blindness Georgia
Prevent Blindness North Carolina
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness
Ride Illinois
Rogue Valley Family YMCA
Safe Routes Partnership
Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
Society of Behavioral Medicine
South Carolina Alliance of YMCAs
Southwest Alliance of YMCAs

State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs
State Alliance of Nebraska YMCAs
State Alliance of North Dakota YMCAs
State Alliance of South Dakota YMCAs
Tennessee State Alliance of YMCAs
The American College of Preventive Medicine
The Gerontological Society of America
The Obesity Society
Thrive Umpqua
Transportation for America
Trust for America's Health
Upper Midwest Alliance of YMCAs
Washington State Alliance of YMCAs
West Virginia Connecting Communities
Wisconsin Bicycle Federation
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
YMCA Alliance of Northern New England
YMCA of Central Maryland
YMCA OF Delaware
YMCA of Greater Seattle
YMCA of Honolulu
YMCA of Southwest Washington
YMCA of the USA

