



January 21, 2008

Representative Steve Wieckert, Chair
1 Weatherstone Drive
Appleton, WI 54914

Senator Julie Lassa, Vice Chair
4901 Beaver Dam Road
Stevens Point, WI 54481

Dear Representative Wieckert and Senator Lassa:

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health (Governor's Council) would like to express support for the legislative options related to nutrition, physical activity and obesity prevention that are currently being proposed and discussed by the Special Committee on Performance-Based Disease Management Programs for Large Populations. The Governor's Council reviewed and discussed the Committee's legislative options paper at our recent meeting on December 4, 2008. Since 2003, the Governor's Council has worked to move forward an agenda that focuses on improving the health of Wisconsin residents, especially children. The Council's mission is:

- To inform, promote, and encourage the residents of Wisconsin to incorporate healthy eating and physical activity behaviors for a lifetime;
- To encourage partnerships between parents, teachers, students, communities, government, and business to seek opportunities that enable all Wisconsin residents to eat healthy and be physically active daily; and
- To enable a system so that all Wisconsin youth are provided with opportunities to eat healthy and engage in health-related physical activity experiences.

Based on the premise of our mission, the Governor's Council supports the efforts of the Committee to address childhood obesity. Additionally, we would like to offer some suggestions for the Committee to consider when making their final recommendations for draft legislation.

Given the current economic times and potential fiscal constraints of the state's budget and the need to prioritize the most effective means for addressing this issue, we would like to propose the following for consideration:

1. List the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health in the Study Committee's recommendations as the advisory body for consultation and follow through on any legislative actions related to obesity. Legislative

- Memo #5 lists an option to *create a new state body to develop and implement a state plan to promote healthy lifestyles*. We believe the Governor's Council can easily fulfill this role and is well positioned to advance initiatives the Special Committee recommends. However, we do recommend that the Committee consider further defining this role through legislation. Additionally, the Governor's Council is currently considering having state legislators appointed to the Council. This would create an important link between the Governor's Council and the State Legislature.
2. Consider after-school physical activity and nutrition standards for Certified Learning Centers (21st Century Learning Centers) that are already overseen by the Department of Public Instruction.
 3. Consider expansion of a middle school pilot program, which measures components of health-related physical fitness including BMI and measurement of an aerobic test, called "PACER". Expansion of this project to the elementary school level, and ongoing support for involved middle schools beyond 2009 would provide novel and important information about children's fitness and health for our state. This partnership developed system, using Fitnessgram software, will create a statewide fitness-tracking data bank, and *objectively document* progress toward the goal of having the nation's healthiest children.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations. Dr. Alexandra Adams, who serves on your Committee also is a member of the Governor's Council and could speak to the history and role of the Council and how they might carry out some of the Special Committee's recommendations. As co-chairs of the Council, we would be glad to discuss these or any other issues related to nutrition, physical activity and obesity prevention with the Special Committee at your next meeting in January.

Sincerely



Karen Ordians

Co-Chairs, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health



Paul Costanzo