



2008 YMCA of the USA Legislative Priorities

ABOUT THE YMCA

The nation's 2,663 YMCAs serve more than 20.2 million people each year in 10,000 communities. Through a variety of programs and services focused on the holistic development of children and youth, health and well-being for all and family strengthening, YMCAs unite men, women and children of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. From urban areas to small towns, YMCAs have proudly served America's communities for nearly 160 years by building healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

PRIORITY REQUEST: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Secure \$30 million for the Community Health / Steps Program at the CDC, including \$5 million for Pioneering Healthier Communities—a national program with a proven track record for establishing partnerships with local leaders to mobilize their communities to implement healthy eating and active living strategies.

PRIORITY REQUEST: CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Protect the \$1.1 billion in funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers in the Department of Education budget.

I. Health & Well-being

For almost 160 years, YMCA's have united around healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Today, our nation's lifestyle health choices are contributing to increased rates of disease, the costs of which are a key factor in the health care crisis. The YMCA is once again poised to face the challenges of our nation and the communities we serve.

Funding

⇒ **PRIORITY REQUEST: SECURE \$30 MILLION FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH/STEPS PROGRAM AT THE CDC, INCLUDING \$5 MILLION FOR THE PIONEERING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES PROGRAM—**

The President's FY09 budget includes only \$15 million for the Steps Program. YMCA of the USA wants Congress to restore funding to the FY08 levels of \$25 million and support \$5 million for Pioneering Healthier Communities – a total of \$30 million. This year the YMCA movement hopes to build on its successful Pioneering Healthier Communities (PHC) program and expand the number of communities implementing proven programs and policy strategies that support healthy eating and active living. Last year Congress doubled the funding for this program to \$2.9 million for PHC, but \$5 million—about a \$2 million increase over FY08 funding—is needed in FY09 to substantially increase the number of participating communities each year. Already, 64 communities in 35 states have been trained in an innovative leadership process that advances local policy strategies that build environments supportive of healthy eating and active living.

In FY08, the final budget included \$25 million to enable CDC to spread the successes from the Steps Program by supporting a network of mentoring sites that can help share the learning and strategies with other communities; by funding dozens of new healthy community sites through state and local health departments and community-based organizations; and by funding national partners with footprints in thousands of communities to continue to explore innovative approaches to this community work. CDC needs these funds to truly disseminate these efforts and must continue to support national partnerships like the one with the YMCA to gain a deeper understanding of how to advance best practices and policies at the local level. These community-based approaches have been successful in addressing the national obesity epidemic by focusing on poor nutrition and physical inactivity and should be continued. **LEGISLATION: FY09 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations, CDC, Community Health Line / Steps Program (Health and Human Services Dept)**

⇒ **PROVIDE LEVEL FUNDING TO THE CAROL WHITE PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR PROGRESS (PEP) GRANT PROGRAM AT \$75 MILLION—**Many YMCAs benefit from the PEP program, administered by the Department of Education. The

program provides grants to nonprofit organizations and school districts across the country to initiate, expand and improve physical education programs (including afterschool programs). **LEGISLATION: FY09 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations (Education Dept.)**

⇒ **SUPPORT EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING FOR FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS INCLUDING:** *Child and Adult Care Food Program* provides nutritious snacks and meals to children in child care centers, and in some states it provides snacks to youth in afterschool programs; *Summer Food Service Program* (also known as Simplified Summer Foods) provides nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income areas during the summer months; *Special Milk Program* provides milk to children in schools, child care institutions and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition meal service programs; *Afterschool Supper Program* funds afterschool programs in low-income areas to provide suppers to children and teens. Currently, it is only available in eight states and should be expanded to more states. Many YMCAs sponsor or support these programs, which help bring quality nutrition programming to millions of children and families in need, in their communities and in their facilities. Program sponsors are reimbursed for meals served to eligible participants. **LEGISLATION: FY09 Agricultural Appropriations, Food Nutrition Service**

Legislation

⇒ **CO-SPONSOR THE PROMOTING LIFELONG ACTIVE COMMUNITIES (PLAY EVERY DAY) ACT (S. 651 / H.R. 3045)** The goal of the Play Every Day bill is to ensure that children and youth achieve the national recommendation of 60 minutes of physical activity every day. It will require federal agencies to support the development of a Community Play Index to assist communities in identifying strengths and gaps in policies and programs for physical activity. **LEGISLATION: S.651/H.R. 2045 by Sens. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Reps. Mark Udall (D-CO) and Kay Granger (R-TX)**

⇒ **CO-SPONSOR THE "FIT KIDS ACT" (S.2173 / H.R. 3257) AND URGE ITS INCLUSION IN NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REAUTHORIZATION.** The Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids (FIT Kids) Act would help get kids moving before and after school by supporting physical education and physical activity for all public school children through grade 12. It requires all schools, school districts and state education agencies to report on quantity and quality of the physical education courses provided as part of the report card process and promotes physical activity in afterschool programs among other things. **LEGISLATION: S. 2173/H.R. 3257 introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Reps. Ron Kind (D-WI), Zach Wamp (R-TN) and Jay Inslee (D-WA)**

II. Children, Youth and Families

Every day, YMCAs help children and youth deepen positive values, their commitment to service and their motivation to learn. Together, YMCAs are the nation's largest provider of child care, with nearly 10,000 child care sites across the country. YMCAs serve nearly 10 million children age 17 and under through a variety of activities, including afterschool programs, youth sports, adult mentoring, camping and the arts.

Funding

⇒ **PRIORITY REQUEST: PROTECT THE \$1.1 BILLION IN FUNDING FOR 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (CCLC) IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUDGET**—YMCA of the USA, along with other national and local partners, worked together to increase 21st CCLC funding to \$1.1 billion in the FY08 budget—a \$100 million increase. This was the highest funding level to date after six years of flat-funding for the program. Approximately 100,000 more children will be served by the program due to the increase in FY08. The 21st CCLC centers operate under three to five year grants with a diverse array of public and private partners, such as YMCAs. As the 21st CCLC initiative celebrates its 10th anniversary, the YMCA movement hopes to expand the program by increasing funding so the approximately 14 million children and youth who are unsupervised in the hours after school have safe, supervised activities available to them.

Therefore, YMCA of the USA asks Congress to provide \$2.5 billion for 21st CCLC as authorized annually under the No Child Left Behind Act. **LEGISLATION: FY09 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations (Education Dept.)**

⇒ **INCREASE HEAD START FUNDING BY \$1 BILLION**—YMCA of the USA encourages Congress to ensure every eligible child is able to enroll in Head Start. Last year, the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 was passed with bipartisan support in the House and Senate. Unfortunately, the appropriations for FY08 contained a net \$10 million decrease for Head Start funds. YMCA of the USA requests that Congress increase funding for the program by \$1 billion, therefore preventing a cut to crucial services provided by the program. Approximately 100 YMCAs are Head Start providers across the country. **LEGISLATION: FY09 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations (Health and Human Services Dept.)**

⇒ **INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CCDBG)**—YMCAs across the country can testify that finding quality affordable child care is a daily struggle for working families. The CCDBG program provides child care assistance to low-income families with children, including those who use their subsidies to utilize YMCA child care programs. Child care is where millions of young children receive the early learning experiences they need to be successful in their later

school years. YMCA of the USA encourages Congress to increase funding for CCDBG over the current \$2.1 billion.

LEGISLATION: FY09 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations (HHS Dept.)

⇒ **INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND REDUCTION OF YOUTH AND GANG VIOLENCE**—

The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Block Grants Program was created to fund treatment, rehabilitation and prevention activities. The President's budget proposes elimination of this program. YMCA of the USA asks Congress to provide full funding for delinquency prevention and provisions that fund community-based programs in urban areas which address, prevent and reduce gang-related crimes.

LEGISLATION: Commerce/Justice/Science Appropriation (Justice Dept.)

Legislation

⇒ **CO-SPONSOR THE KEEPING PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES ENGAGED (KEEPING PACE) ACT (S.1302)**—

This bill supports increasing graduation rates and strengthening student performance in schools by improving parental involvement in education and leveraging community resources to support students' needs in and outside the classroom. Community-based organizations will assess the needs of students and their families and then link them with support services available in the community. The Keeping PACE Act authorizes \$260 million per year for five years. At least 30 percent of funds would support community-based organizations, such as YMCAs.

LEGISLATION: S.1302 by Sens. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and John Kerry (D-MA)

⇒ **CO-SPONSOR THE FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ACT OF 2007 (S.1391/H.R.2323)**—

This bill supports strengthening student success through a public elementary, middle or high school that coordinates and provides students and families with comprehensive services through partnerships with community-based organizations and other public and private partners. Full-Service Community Schools will coordinate or provide at least three services for students and families, including: early childhood programs; literacy/reading programs for youth and families; parenting education activities; community service/serving-learning; mentoring and other youth development programs; child care services; job training/career counseling services, nutrition services and primary health and dental care. The Full-Service Community Schools Act authorizes \$200 million for FY09 and such sums for FY2010 through 2013.

LEGISLATION: S.1391/H.R.2323 by Sen. Ben Nelson (D-NE) and Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD)

III. Nonprofit Sector

For nearly 160 years, YMCAs have been meeting the most pressing challenges of the communities we serve. YMCAs, and the nation's 1.5 million charitable organizations, must meet the highest standards of governance, ethical conduct and accountability. The YMCA is a leader in the nonprofit community by improving its own measures of accountability, transparency and community benefit.

- ⇒ **SUPPORT TAX INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE CHARITABLE GIVING**—We urge Congress to continue to provide tax incentives that will help stimulate charitable giving. YMCA of the USA supports legislation that will extend the provision from the Pension Protection Act of 2006 that expired in 2007 which allowed older Americans to rollover IRA assets directly to charities tax-free. The *Public Good IRA Rollover Act (S. 819/H.R. 1419)* makes the IRA rollover incentive permanent. **LEGISLATION: (S. 819/H.R. 1419) Reps. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) and Wally Herger (R-CA) and Sens. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME)**
- ⇒ **INCREASE OVERSIGHT AND TRANSPARENCY OF NONPROFIT SECTOR**—YMCAs across the country are implementing a nationwide initiative to calculate and communicate community benefit. YMCA of the USA has developed tools for individual YMCAs to calculate their community benefit and to communicate that benefit. YMCAs recognize that tax exemption is a privilege, and they are working hard to calculate and communicate accurate and effective measurements in order to show how they earn that tax exemption.
- ⇒ **MEMBER VISIT:** All YMCAs welcome their Members of Congress for a visit, to share the incredible array of programs offered in their communities, to learn about their expansive community benefit, and to see their dedication to serving all—regardless of age, faith, background, physical ability or income.

IV. International: Global Youth and Community Development

YMCAs are at work abroad, serving more than 45 million people in 124 countries. Through cross-cultural learning opportunities and international partnerships and programs, YMCAs in the U.S. have worldwide impact, providing guidance and support, building strong local leadership and improving the health of families and communities across the globe. The International Group of the YMCA of the USA coordinates international relationships and programs in more than 60 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

- ⇒ **INCREASE FUNDING FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**—Since the FY03 Omnibus Appropriations Act, there has been language specifically highlighting the conflict resolution and reconciliation work of the Jerusalem International YMCA (JIY) and recommending the organization receive federal support. Founded in 1878, JIY serves thousands of Jewish, Muslim and Christian families in Jerusalem each year. It offers a full range of activities that actively strive to foster interfaith, interracial and intergroup understanding. Its unique programs are specifically designed to stimulate positive connections and peace leadership among young people of all faiths and backgrounds.

JIY is the only international YMCA operated by the YMCA of the USA, therefore, YMCA of the USA asks Congress to increase funding for conflict resolution and reconciliation programs for children and youth within the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). **LEGISLATION: FY09 State, Foreign Operations Appropriations (USAID).**
- ⇒ **PROVIDE FULL FUNDING FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS AT INTERNATIONAL YMCAs**—YMCA of the USA serves as a responsible, effective partner in the process of building a worldwide YMCA community for children, youth and families by supporting youth development and capacity building. YMCA programs around the world use a variety of activities to develop character and help youth become active leaders and responsible citizens. YMCA of the USA asks Congress to strengthen funding within the State Department and USAID to promote civic education and governance as well as cultural exchange programs for young people. **LEGISLATION: FY09 State, Foreign Operations Appropriations. (State Dept.)**

For more information, contact YMCA of the USA GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & POLICY office at 202.835.9043 or 800.932.9622.

