

Faiths United to End Childhood Obesity

United Methodist Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20002

September 21, 2011

The Honorable
Office of the Governor

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Governor _____:

We are writing to you as national leaders of America's faith community to strongly urge you to implement Coordinated School Health (CSH) statewide to address the childhood obesity epidemic. As a result of our work with the Campaign for Healthy Kids and Faith United to End Childhood Obesity, a consensus has grown to prioritize the implementation of CSH across the country.

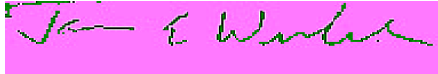
The Coordinated School Health model was developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to provide communities with a framework for managing new and existing health-related programs. CSH maximizes the benefits of health and wellness programs for all children through community partnerships with businesses, faith-based organizations, foundations, educational institutions and medical/health professionals.

Tennessee is recognized as a national Coordinated School Health leader. Tennessee's CSH successes include a 2% decrease in childhood obesity rates. In 2008-2009, 8,000 fewer children were classified as overweight and obese compared to the previous year. Great strides were made in improving the quality of food and drinks sold in schools and Tennessee has been recognized nationally for these improvements. This coordinated approach has also led to unprecedented community partnerships crucial to building support and sustainability for the model. Tennessee is funded through bi-partisan efforts to support optimal health for children that translate into reduced obesity rates, improved attendance, improved academic performance, decreased high school dropout rates and enhanced economic outcomes for the state. Tennessee is investing in its children and their future. We believe that the successes of Tennessee's Coordinated School Health approach can be replicated and we encourage you to invest in the children of _____.

More than one-third of our nation's children are overweight or obese. Over the past four decades the obesity rates for children ages 6 to 11 have quadrupled. The childhood obesity epidemic poses a real threat and is leading to a generation of children that will have shorter life spans than their parents. National faith leaders are actively engaged in efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by encouraging all states to implement a comprehensive CSH model. We do not want the futures of our faith communities defined by children succumbing to obesity related illnesses like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, osteoporosis and social and psychological problems.

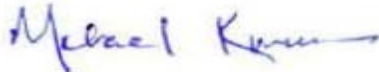
Please support statewide implementation of Coordinated School Health as a first step in stemming the tide of childhood obesity in _____. Children are our future and we must unite in efforts to address the plague of obesity. CSH promotes healthy lifestyles for our children, including promoting healthy eating and increasing opportunities for physical activity, which can lower the risk of becoming obese and developing related diseases. We hope and pray you will hear our call.

Sincerely,



James Winkler
Chair, Faiths United to End Childhood Obesity
General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church

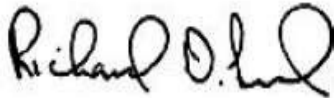
NATIONAL RELIGIOUS BODIES



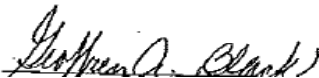
Reverend Dr. Michael Kinnamon
General Secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ, USA



Cynthia Bobach
Moderator, 219th General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (USA)



Dr. Richard Land
President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Southern Baptist Convention



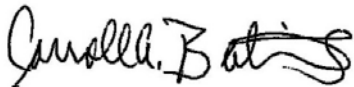
Geoffrey A. Black
General Minister and President, United Church of Christ



Grady Parsons
Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (USA)



Reverend Dr, Sharon E. Watkins
General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



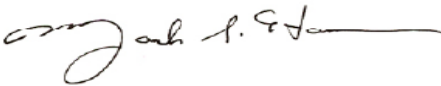
Reverend Dr. Carroll A. Baltimore, Sr.
President, President, Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.



Rabbi Steven Wernick
CEO, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism



Richard Skolnik
President, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism



Reverend Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



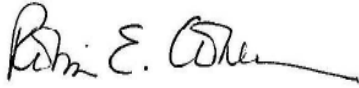
Dr. Walter L. Parrish, II, Executive Minister
American Baptist Churches of the South



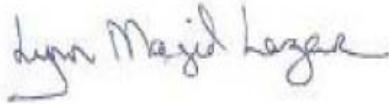
Galen Carey
Vice President, Government Affairs, National Association of Evangelicals



Kaye Edwards
Disciples Home Mission, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



Robin E. Cohen
Interim Executive Director, Women of Reform Judaism



Lynn Magid Lazar
President, Women of Reform Judaism



Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed
National Director, Office for Interfaith & Community Alliances, Islamic Society of North America



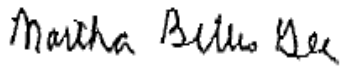
Clare Chapman
National Council of Churches of Christ, USA



Reverend Dr. Eileen W. Lindner
Health Care Consultant, National Council of Churches of Christ, USA



Matthew Ellis
National Episcopal Health Ministries



Martha Bettis Gee
Associate for Child Advocacy and Networking, Presbyterian Church (USA)



Gilbert Hanke
General Secretary, General Commission on United Methodist Men



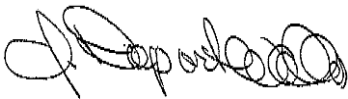
Katia Reinert
Director, Adventist Health Ministries, North American Division of Seventh-Day Adventists



Bryan W. Sickbert
President and CEO, Council for Health and Human Service Ministries United Church of Christ



Rabbi Shawn Zevit
Director of Congregational Services, Outreach and Tikkun Olam, Jewish Reconstructionist Federation

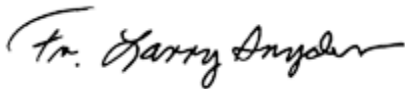


Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker
Director, Social Action Commission, African Methodist Episcopal Church

FAITH RELATED AGENCIES



Sister Carol Keehan
President and CEO, Catholic Health Association of the United States



Father Larry Snyder
CEO, Catholic Charities USA



Rabia Akram
President, American Muslim Health Professionals



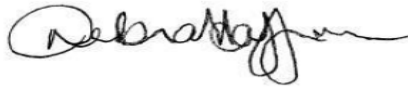
Darrel Billups
NCMM, Executive Director, National Coalition of Ministries to Men



Marlene Feagan
President, Health Ministries Association



Reverend Dr. Deborah L. Patterson
Executive Director, International Parish Nurse Resource Center



Reverend Debra W. Haffner
Executive Director, Religious Institute

