



Bill Summary: H.R.3257

Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act (FIT Kids Act)

A bill to enhance children's health in No Child Left Behind

AHA POSITION

The AHA strongly supports the FIT Kids Act. America's children should receive daily, quality physical education and learn about leading healthy lifestyles. This will help stem the tide of childhood obesity, which will improve life-long health, as well as enhance academic and emotional growth. Our children need a head start on a healthy life.

SUPPORTERS (10/15/2007)

- American Stroke Association
- National Association for Sport and Physical Education
- Afterschool Alliance
- American Association for Health Education
- American School Health Assn
- BlueCross BlueShield Assn
- First Focus
- National Association of Health Education Centers
- National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
- National Recreation and Park Association
- School Nutrition Association
- Shaping America's Health
- Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
- Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
- Trust for America's Health
- YMCA of the USA, and more...

ORIGINAL SPONSORS

Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)
Rep. Zach Wamp (R-TN)
Rep. Jay Inslee (D-WA)

As of October 15th, there are a total of 21 co-sponsors.

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

The "Fitness Integrated with Teaching Kids Act" amends No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act to support quality physical education for all public school children through grade 12 and ensure they receive important health and nutritional information. The proposed changes to NCLB:

- Hold schools accountable for providing high-quality physical education everyday, and encouraging healthy habits. They would be required to include multiple performance measures for PE. These include measuring progress towards national PE goals of 150 minutes per week for elementary school and 225 minutes per week for middle and high school students;
- Require all schools, districts and states to report on quantity and quality of physical education;
- Ensure that children get the information and support they need throughout their education to help them live a healthy life;
- Support professional development for health and physical education teachers and principals to boost students' ability to learn and help promote healthy lifestyles and physical activity; and
- Fund research and a pilot program to support effective ways to combat childhood obesity and improve healthy living and physical activity for all children.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ENACT THIS LEGISLATION

- Childhood obesity in the United States has reached epidemic proportions. It is estimated that by 2010, 20 percent of children in the U.S. will be obese.
- Researchers suggest that the childhood obesity epidemic is largely due to a decline in regular physical activity and a diet high in empty and fat-laden calories.
- Experts agree that increasing physical activity is the most important component of any program to combat childhood obesity, yet many schools are cutting back on PE programs. Between 1991 and 2003, enrollment of high school students in daily PE classes fell from 41.6 percent to 28.4 percent.
- Yet ironically, a lack of regular physical activity can hurt a child's academic, social and emotional development. Research shows that healthy children learn more effectively and achieve more academically.
- Physical activity may also have a positive impact on cognitive ability and reductions in tobacco use, insomnia, depression and anxiety.