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American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Maryland Chapter

TO: The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
Members, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable Jay Walker

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: February 8, 2018

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 393 – *Elementary School Students – Daily Physical Activity (Student Health and Fitness Act)*

On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), we submit this letter of **support** for House Bill 393.

House Bill 393 requires that all students in kindergarten through grade 5 participate in a specified amount of physical activity. The increasing incidence of childhood obesity, and the significant social and health consequences associated with this public health epidemic are appropriately receiving increased attention from health professionals, educators, and public policy makers. A critical component of any successful strategy to combat childhood obesity is increased physical activity. Given the amount of a child's day that is spent in school, mandatory requirements for physical education are logical, cost-effective, and produce significant benefits in the health and social well-being of students.

The benefits of physical activity are not limited to efforts to help control weight. Physical activity in children provides a wide range of significant health benefits including, but not limited to, increased muscle strength and aerobic endurance, increased bone mass, and prevention and reduction of high blood pressure. Furthermore, there is increased evidence that academic performance and behavior control is enhanced with increased physical activity.

MedChi and MDAAP applaud the sponsor for his continued leadership on issues regarding childhood obesity, health, and physical education. House Bill 393 is a modest and well-justified approach to incorporating the unquestionable benefits of physical activity into the curriculum of our schools. MedChi and MDAAP strongly urge a favorable report.

For more information call:

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