



Legislation Text

File #: 08-0069R, Version: 0

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
In Support of Federal Legislation - FIT Kids Act

FOR the purpose of expressing support for the Fitness Integrated with Teaching (FIT) Kids Act that amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), to measure not only student academic progress but also student progress toward a national goal of 150 minutes weekly of physical education in elementary school and 225 minutes weekly of physical education in middle and high schools.

Recitals

Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. The Department of Health and Human Services projects that 20% of children and youth in the U.S. will be obese by 2010. Overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults, increasing their risk for developing heart disease, stroke, several types of cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and osteoarthritis.

As reported by the Baltimore City Council Task Force on Childhood Obesity, obesity brings with it a host of comorbidities that are expensive in human terms and medical costs. 61% of overweight young people have at least 1 additional risk factor for heart disease, such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Children who are overweight are at a greater risk for orthopedic problems, sleep apnea, and psychological problems such as stigmatization and low self-esteem.

Evidence suggests that healthy, active children learn more effectively and achieve more academically. Several large-scale studies have found improvements in students' academic performance with increased time spent in physical education. Similarly, recent research has found a strong correlation between academic performance and aerobic fitness. Evidence further suggests that physical activity has a positive impact on cognitive ability and preventing tobacco use, insomnia, depression, and anxiety.

The FIT Kids Act amends ESEA to require annual state and local education agency report cards to include specified information on school health and physical education programs, encouraging life-long healthy habits for children. The Act amends the No Child Left Behind Act to:

- Hold schools accountable for working towards national standards for physical education - 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 the quantity and quality of physical education they provide;
- Ensure that children get the information and support they need from schools and parents throughout their education to help them live a healthy lifestyle;
- Support professional development for physical education teachers, health teachers, and principals to help promote children's 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.

The FIT Kids Act furthers the goal of the Baltimore City Council to reverse this country's trend toward childhood obesity. The Council joins the bill's supporters in seeking passage of the Act as a means of making a real difference in the fight against this epidemic without burdening schools, districts, and states.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body supports the Fitness Integrated with Teaching (FIT) Kids Act that amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), to measure not only student academic progress but also student progress toward a national goal of 150 minutes weekly of physical education in elementary school and 225 minutes weekly of physical education in middle and high schools.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Maryland Delegation to the 110th Congress, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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