



July 29, 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer, Senator Murkowski, and Senator Murray:

On behalf of the millions of children and families served by afterschool programs across the country, we are writing to thank you for introducing the Afterschool for America's Children Act. The undersigned organizations strongly support this important legislation that strengthens the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative—providing the next generation of before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs that keep young people safe, inspire them to learn and support working families. Thank you for your longstanding leadership in making quality, affordable afterschool programs available to all the children and youth that need them. For more than ten years the 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative has helped millions of children to become engaged in their academic studies, while sparking new interests in a wide variety of topics from the sciences to theater. Building on past accomplishments, the bipartisan Afterschool for America's Children Act supports the innovative advances occurring in before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs, meeting a host of new challenges and re-engaging children in their education and future.

Authorized in Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the 21st CCLC initiative provides students attending high-poverty schools with academic enrichment activities; a broad array of additional services designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program, such as: hands on experiments to excite children about science, technology, engineering and math, access to physical activity, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, art, music, opportunities to be creative and technology education programs; as well as literacy and related educational development services to the families of children who are served in the program. In addition, afterschool programs provide an infrastructure to bring in other resources to our children including access to mentors, tutors, snacks and meals, and in some places medical, dental and mental health programs. Your legislation will enhance the quality of these programs, improve the manner in which the program is evaluated and strengthen the school-community partnerships that are the hallmark of quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

Quality 21st CCLC programs result from collaborations between schools and community-based organizations and provide hands-on, experiential learning opportunities that align with lessons taught during the school-day. Evaluations and teacher reports have revealed positive results in behavior and academic achievement for students who regularly attend 21st CCLCs: students who attend 21st CCLC programs more regularly are more likely to improve their grades, test scores and overall academic behavior (Learning Point Associates, 2007). There are now 4,165 grants funding afterschool programs serving 1,660,713 children and youth in 10,466 school-based and community-based centers across the country. The parents of 18 million students would place their children in an afterschool program if one were available and accessible.

Our groups are proud to endorse this legislation. Thank you again for championing our children, our youth and our families. Afterschool programs offer an effective and affordable way of helping young people realize their full potential. We look forward to working with you in the future to translate our common vision of access to high quality afterschool opportunities for all into a reality.

Signed:

National Organizations

9 to 5 National Association of Working Women	USA
A World Fit For Kids	USA
ACE Mentor Program of America, Inc.	USA
Active Network	USA
Afterschool Alliance	USA
After-School All-Stars	USA
American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance	USA
American Association for Health Education	USA
American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation	USA
American Council on Exercise	USA
American Heart Association	USA
America's Promise Alliance	USA
Association of Science–Technology Centers	USA
Champions, a division of Knowledge Universe	USA
Coalition for Science After School	USA
First Focus Campaign for Children	USA
MENTOR	USA
National 4-H Council	USA
National AfterSchool Association	USA
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth	USA
National Association for Sport and Physical Education	USA
National Association of Elementary School Principals	USA
National Association of Secondary School Principals	USA
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity	USA
National Collaboration for Youth	USA
National Dance Association	USA
National PTA	USA
Net Literacy	USA

School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA)	USA
Street Soccer USA	USA
United States Tennis Association	USA
Up2Us	USA
W. Haywood Burns Institute	USA
YMCA of the USA	USA

State and Local Groups

Alaska Association for Community Education	AK
Arkansas Out of School Network	AR
Flowing Wells Extension Programs, Inc.	AZ
Bay Area Community Resources	CA
Central Valley Afterschool Foundation	CA
Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified School District	CA
Mt. Diablo CARES After School Program	CA
Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center/Aspiranet	CA
Woodcraft Rangers	CA
LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program	CA
BUILD	CA, DC, MA
YMCA of Boulder Valley	CO
Cardinal Shehan Center	CT
City of Bridgeport Lighthouse Program	CT
McGivney Community Center, Inc.	CT
Neighborhood Studios of Fairfield County	CT
Girls Scouts of Connecticut	CT
Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc.	CT
The Kennedy Center	CT
DC Alliance of Youth Advocates	DC
Higher Achievement	DC, VA, MD
Children's Forum, Inc.	FL
Children's Board of Hillsborough County, Inc.	FL
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County	FL
Florida Afterschool Network	FL
The Children's Trust	FL
United Way of Florida	FL
Children's Services Council of Broward County	FL
Alpha Chi Omega National Sorority	GA
Alpha Delta Pi National Sorority - Georgia College State Univ.	GA
DeKalb County Public Schools Foundation	GA
DeKalb County School System	GA
Department of Natural Resources	GA
Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, Cummings	GA
Georgia Tech Research Institute	GA

International Education Services Inc.	GA
Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services of Atlanta	GA
Solution Works	GA
Taking Jesus Across Communities (TJAC)	GA
Technology Solutions, Inc.	GA
The Findings Group, LLC	GA
Davenport Public Library	IA
Broader Urban Involvement & Leadership Development (BUILD)	IL
Project Exploration	IL
Big Buddy Program	LA
Partnership for Community Schools in Malden, Inc.	MA
Montgomery County Collaboration Council	MD
Fort Fairfield Parks and Recreation Department	ME
Greater Waterville Communities for Children & Youth	ME
Live 2 Learn Afterschool & Summer Program	ME
Maine Afterschool Network	ME
Riverview Foundation	ME
Somerset Grist Mill, LLC	ME
Town of Fort Fairfield	ME
Up On Top After School and Summer Program	ME
Westbrook-RSU 14~21st Century Collaborative CLC	ME
Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Child Development Board	MI
Bright Star Research, LLC	MI
TrueNorth Community Services	MI
Recreation Reaps Rewards, City of Grand Rapids	MI
Mancelona Public Schools	MI
Boys & Girls Club of the Red River Valley	MN
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Minnesota	MN
Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester	MN
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Bemidji Area	MN
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Northland	MN
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities	MN
Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota	MN
Minneapolis Beacons Network	MN
YWCA of Minneapolis	MN
Camdenton R-III School District	MO
Missouri Afterschool Network	MO
Educational Leadership Beyond Excellence, Inc.	NC
Partners in Out-of-School Time	NC
Statesville Housing Authority Family Development Division	NC
Network for New Jersey Afterschool Communities	NJ
YMCA of Greater New York	NY
Young Rembrandts, Greater Cleveland - West	OH

Enrichment Academy-Afterschool Alliance	OR
Salem-Keizer Education Foundation	OR
Chester Education Foundation	PA
Delaware County Communities That Care Network	PA
Dallas AfterSchool Network	TX
Texas Afterschool Association	TX
The BeHive USA	TX
Community Education Partnership of West Valley City, Inc.	UT
School's Out Washington	WA