

October 2, 2007

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Ranking Member Enzi:

As your committee considers how to improve our nation's education system, the afterschool community wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of the important contributions that afterschool programs are making in communities across the country. Recent studies show that children and youth in quality afterschool programs are demonstrating measurable gains in both academics and social behavior, gains that are a result of exposure to exciting and varied learning conditions and leaders. Quality afterschool programs are a proven resource in keeping students engaged in school, and preparing them to graduate ready for college and the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. In addition, afterschool programs are keeping children and youth safe during the most dangerous hours - from 3 to 6 PM - when juvenile crime peaks and when they are most likely to experiment with sexual activity, drug and alcohol use and other risky behaviors. By providing a structured environment with a variety of enriching activities, afterschool programs keep our children and our communities safe.

Afterschool programs are literally changing lives and creating opportunities where they did not exist before. However, they are not reaching enough of our children. In communities today, 14.3 million children take care of themselves after the school day ends, including almost four million middle school students. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program, the nation's only funding source dedicated exclusively to afterschool, has consistently been unable to meet the demand for funding; typically funding as few as 1 in 4 requests.

In recent years there has been growing interest in extending the school day. Afterschool experts have long recognized that learning doesn't stop at 3 PM and that the hours after school provide an opportunity not only to keep children and youth safe, but also to inspire them to learn and help them get the skills they need to succeed academically, socially and professionally. A well designed and well implemented extended day program that builds on the best practices of afterschool can help meet the needs of some of the 14 million children who are currently unsupervised afterschool. With decades of experience behind them, afterschool programs have learned what kinds of opportunities earn the best results for kids. Content matters. School-community partnerships matter. It's not just extending time, but providing quality, engaging, enriching learning opportunities during that time.

Yet, an extended day initiative will not eliminate the need for afterschool programs. In many cases, extended day schools still need afterschool to help meet the needs of working families. In other cases, a community may decide that they prefer an afterschool model instead of an extended day model to best meet the needs of the community.

The field of afterschool has grown tremendously over the last decade into a national movement - one that provides a quality service to children, families and communities and is incredibly popular with the American public. As the afterschool movement is really hitting its stride, we urge you not to consider diverting desperately needed afterschool funding to lengthening the school day. We agree that well designed, well implemented extended day programs can play a role in meeting the needs of youth and families, but they must not come at the expense of much valued afterschool programs.

On behalf of the children, youth, families and communities benefiting from afterschool and those eager to expand and enhance afterschool opportunities we thank you for your past support of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers and we look forward to the role that you will play in helping meet the needs of millions of children and youth and their families who desperately need afterschool opportunities.

Sincerely,

Adult & Continuing Ed Otsego Northern Catskill Board of Cooperative Educational Services, NY

Afterschool Alliance

After-School All-Stars

Alaska Association for Community Education, AK

Alaska School Age Care Alliance

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County, Delhi, NY

Alliance for Children and Families

American Association of Children's Residential Centers

America's Promise Alliance

Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence, Phoenix, AZ

Bay Area Partnership for Children and Youth, Oakland, CA

Bethany for Children & Families, Moline, IL

Beyond the Bell, Sioux City, IA

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Acadiana, Lafayette, LA

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Louisiana, Monroe, LA

Boston After School & Beyond, Boston, MA

Boys & Girls Clubs of East Los Angeles, CA

Boys & Girls Town of Missouri

Bridges to the Future Afterschool Partnership, Genesee City, MI

BUILD (Broader Urban Involvement and Leadership Development), Chicago, IL

Camp Fire USA  
Camp Fire USA Greater Arizona Council  
Cannon County REACH Programs, TN  
Catholic Family Center, Rochester, NY  
Center for Summer Learning  
Child & Family Service, Ewa Beach, HI  
Child & Family Services of Eastern Virginia, Portsmouth, VA  
Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc., Paramus, NJ  
Chinese American Planning Council  
Citizens Advice Bureau, Bronx, NY  
Citizens Schools  
Coalition for Community Schools  
Coalition for Family & Children's Services in Iowa, IA  
Colorado AfterSchool Network, CO  
Communities in Schools of Forsyth County, Inc., Winston-Salem, NC  
Communities In Schools, Inc.  
Connecticut After School Network, CT  
Cornerstone Community Development Corporation, Norwalk, CT  
Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership, NY  
Crossroads for Youth, Oxford, MI  
Daniel Memorial, Inc., Jacksonville, Florida  
Delaware Afterschool Alliance, DE  
DePelchin Children's Center, Houston, TX  
Diehl Evaluation and Consulting Services, Inc., Evansville, IN  
Earth Mentoring Institute, Inc., Hawk Circle Wilderness Education, Cherry Valley, NY  
Ed-LBEX, Inc.  
Eureka Kids, Eureka Springs, AR  
Family and Children First, Louisville, KY  
Family and Children's Agency, Inc., Norwalk, CT  
Family and Community Service of Delaware County, PA  
Family Service of Greater Boston, Boston, MA  
Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin  
Family Services of Westchester, Port Chester, New York  
FamilyMeans, Stillwater, MN  
First Focus  
Flint Community Schools, Flint, MI  
Florida Afterschool Network, FL  
Flowing Wells Extension Programs, Inc., Tucson, AZ

Georgia Afterschool Investment Council, GA  
Georgia School Age Care Association, GA  
Get on B.A.S.E./Building After School Excellence, Brockton, MA  
Girls Inc.  
Girls Inc. of Holyoke, Holyoke, MA  
Girls Incorporated of Lynn, MA  
Girls Incorporated of Worcester, Worcester, MA  
Green Bay Area Public Schools 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program,  
WI  
Hamilton Wings, Elgin, IL  
Harlem RBI, New York, NY  
Higher Achievement, Washington DC  
Iowa Afterschool Alliance, IA  
Jane Addams Hull House Association, Chicago, IL  
Jewish Family Service, Teaneck, NJ  
Kansas Enrichment Network, KS  
Knowledge Alliance  
La Casa de Esperanza, Inc., Waukesha, WI  
Lampion Center, Evansville, IN  
LA's BEST, Los Angeles, CA  
LEAF Council on Alcoholism/Addictions, Oneonta, NY  
Lights on Lander, Lander, WY  
Maryland School Age Child Care Alliance  
Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership  
Massachusetts School Age Coalition, MA  
MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership  
Methodist Home for Children, Philadelphia, PA  
Metropolitan Family Service of Portland, Oregon  
Morristown Neighborhood House, Morristown, NJ  
National Afterschool Association  
National Institute on Out-of-School Time  
National PTA  
NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley, Woonsocket, RI  
New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community, Albuquerque, NM  
New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network, NM  
Noble Street College Prep, Chicago, IL  
North Carolina AfterSchool Coalition  
Northeast Parent & Child Society, Schenectady, NY  
Northern Arizona School Age Coalition

Northwestern University Settlement Association, Chicago, IL  
Oasis Children's Services, New York, NY  
Ohio Afterschool Network, OH  
Oklahoma Afterschool Network, OK  
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, OK  
Oneonta Office of Learning for Life, Oneonta, NY  
OregonASK (Oregon Afterschool for Kids), OR  
Partners in Out-of-School Time, Charlotte, NC  
Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture, Phoenix, AZ  
PlusTime New Hampshire, NH  
Project EXTRA!, Laconia School District, NH  
Providence After School Alliance (PASA), Providence, RI  
Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance, RI  
Rhode Island School Age Child Care Association  
Robins' Nest Inc., Glassboro, NJ  
Safe and Sound, Baltimore, MD  
Save the Children  
School's Out Washington, WA  
SCOPE-Central Falls School District, RI  
Skinner Neighborhood Center, Denver, CO  
St. Matthew's & St. Timothy's Neighborhood Center, New York, NY  
Starr Commonwealth, Albion, MI  
The After-School Corporation (TASC), New York, NY  
The Bridge, Inc., Caldwell, NJ  
The Child Development & Family Council of Centre County, Inc. School Age Programs, PA  
The Children's Shelter, San Antonio, TX  
The Children's Aid Society, New York, NY  
The DeKalb County School System, GA  
The Downtown Middle School, Winston-Salem, NC  
The Family Technology Resource Center, Decatur, GA  
The Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, Minneapolis, MN  
The Village for Families & Children, Hartford, CT  
Town of Marana Parks and Recreation Department, Marana, AZ  
Trillium Family Solutions, Canton, Ohio  
United Neighborhood Centers of America  
United Neighborhood Houses of New York.  
University Settlement Society of New York  
Utah Afterschool Network

Vermont Out-of-School Time Network, VT  
Walker Partnerships, Needham, MA  
Woodcraft Rangers, CA  
Word of Hope Ministries, Inc., Milwaukee, WI  
Wyoming Afterschool Alliance, WY  
Wyoming Education Association, WY  
YMCA of Central Maryland, Baltimore, MD  
YMCA of Delaware, DE  
YMCA of New York State  
YMCA of Northwest North Carolina, Winston-Salem, NC  
YMCA of Rapid City, SD  
YMCA of the USA  
YWCA of Western New York, NY  
YWCA Syracuse & Onondaga County, NY

Cc: The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd  
The Honorable Tom Harkin  
The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
The Honorable Patty Murray  
The Honorable Jack Reed  
The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
The Honorable Barack Obama  
The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
The Honorable Judd Gregg  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable Richard Burr  
The Honorable Johnny Isakson  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch  
The Honorable Pat Roberts  
The Honorable Wayne Allard  
The Honorable Tom Coburn  
The Honorable Bernard Sanders