



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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May 11, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi
Ranking Member
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Enzi:

As the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee prepares to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we urge you to continue and expand the Committee's strong bi-partisan support for before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs through 21st Century Community Learning Centers. As mayors working in cities all over the nation, we understand how critical this program is to providing support for more than 1 million children in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. A wealth of research and data demonstrates that these programs help children academically, socially and behaviorally (See attached summary of research).

Communities like ours rely on 21st CCLC as an essential source of afterschool program funding that leverages a wide array of funding—local, state and private—as well as partners, including faith-based organizations, nonprofits, businesses, educational organizations and volunteers.

Despite the demand for and success of afterschool programs, on any given day more than 15 million children are unsupervised afterschool and more than 18 million would be in programs if they were available and affordable. Now is the time to expand access for more of our most at-risk students, not divert much needed afterschool funding to create new programs that will result in even more children home alone.

During the hours of 3 PM to 6 PM when children are most at risk for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex, afterschool programs have a proven record of keeping children safe. Working families also reap the benefits from afterschool programs; parents who are concerned about their children being unattended after the school day ends miss an average of eight days of work per year. Decreased worker productivity related to parental concerns about afterschool care costs businesses up to \$300 billion per year.

In addition to protecting and expanding afterschool programming and opposing any cuts to this much needed program, we urge the Committee to look to afterschool partners when designing school reform models. Afterschool programs are able to tap into the best of the community— colleges, museums, scientists, artists, musicians, volunteers, libraries and youth development workers— to teach our children critical workforce skills and connect their passions to learning. The very nature of these voluntary afterschool programs forces an innovative curriculum where students come because they want to learn, not because they have to learn. We believe that there is enormous opportunity to help our most at risk students and improve our most struggling schools if we include community-based organizations in the design and implementation of school reform.

Thank you for continuing the strong, bipartisan support for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and making sure the lessons learned by the afterschool community over the past decade help

inform school reform. If you have questions, please contact Conference staff Assistant Executive Director Crystal Swann at 202-861-6707 or cswann@usmayors.org.

Sincerely:



Elizabeth B. Kautz
Mayor of Burnsville
President



David N. Cicilline
Mayor of Providence
Chair, Children, Health and Human Services
Committee

Signatories In Support of 21st Century Community Learning Center and Afterschool Programs

USCM 05/18/2010

<u>Mayors</u>	<u>City and State</u>
1. Jerry Abramson	Louisville, KY
2. Maria E. Melendez Altieri	Ponce, PR
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4. Barbara C. "Sami" Barile	Morristown, TN
5. William V. Bell	Durham, NC
6. Bill Bogaard	Pasadena, CA
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8. Matti Bower	Miami Beach, FL
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11. Mark Burroughs	Denton, TX
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13. James Doyle	Pawtucket, RI
14. Steven K. Gaer	West Des Moines, IA
15. Patrick Henry Hayes	North Little Rock, AR
16. Sally Hutton	Richmond, IN
17. Gerald D. Jennings	Albany, NY
18. Otis S. Johnson	Savannah, GA
19. Scott Lang	New Bedford, MA
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24. Patrick J. Morris	San Bernardino, CA
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30. Donald Plusquellic	Akron, OH
31. Joseph Riley	Charleston, SC
32. Matthew T. Ryan	Binghamton, NY
33. Helene Schneider	Santa Barbara, CA
34. Joseph Sinnott	Erie, PA
35. Salvatore J Panto,	Easton, PA
36. Mark Stodola,	Little Rock, AR
37. Charmaine Tavares	County of Maui, HI
38. Joseph Varsallone	Margate, FL
39. Judith Volta	Coburg, OR
40. William R. Wild	Westland, MI
41. Jay Williams	Youngstown, OH
42. Jim Woodward	Englewood, CO
43. Antonio Villaraigosa, Vice Pres.	Los Angeles, CA