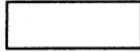




Chicago Area Transportation Study



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To: Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force  
From: Tom Murtha, Staff Liaison  
Date: February 2, 2005  
Subject: Illinois Childhood Obesity Prevention Consensus Agenda

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The Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) has requested endorsement of the Illinois Childhood Obesity Prevention Consensus Agenda (ICOPCA). Task Force members and CATS staff have been involved in advising CLOCC staff regarding the development of the agenda.

Since CATS is a transportation agency, we do not have the expertise to address all of the issues raised by the agenda. However, staff suggests support of the “Safe Routes to Schools and Parks” item on the agenda. The agenda item focuses on establishing a state program upon enactment of federal transportation legislation with a dedicated fund source for a Safe Routes program. Construction grants would be made available to local government agencies.

While the impact of the ICOPCA is limited for the transportation system, ICOPCA is a reasonable mechanism to raise the issue of child transportation to the Policy Committee and demonstrate CATS support for working with the public health community to assure that the transportation system supports healthy transportation options for children. Therefore, staff suggests that the Task Force request that the Work Program Committee recommend Policy Committee approval of the ICOPCA “Safe Routes to Schools and Parks” item.

Supporting materials from CLOCC, including the full ICOPCA, are included.

**Matt Longjohn, MD, MPH**  
*Executive Director*

**Katherine Kaufer Christoffel, MD, MPH**  
*Medical and Research Director*



Dear Colleague,

I am writing to request your organization's endorsement of the Illinois Childhood Obesity Prevention Consensus Agenda (ICOPCA, or the Consensus Agenda). The policies included in the Consensus Agenda are summarized on the attached pages and have been developed with the input of representatives from over 50 organizations. ICOPCA is being presented to lawmakers at the Policymakers Summit on Wednesday, December 8 at the Westin River North at 320 N. Dearborn in Chicago from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

**Your help at this time is extremely important to the advancement of a comprehensive childhood obesity prevention agenda in Illinois.**

This letter is not a "Sign-on" request, nor a "Call to Action". There are currently no Bills or Resolutions for which to lobby, on behalf of which to testify, or even about which to call your State Senator or Representative. Your organization's endorsement of the Consensus Agenda will simply help demonstrate the broad support that exists for the policies included in it. 'Endorsement' of the agenda should take the form of:

- A written statement of endorsement by any organization that would like to see the items on the consensus agenda introduced as legislation in Illinois
- Standing with (or at least to be listed among) other supporters at the Policymakers Summit on December 8

A sample letter of support is attached. Please edit it as you see fit, print it on your organization's letterhead and mail it back to us. Also, please email Chris Kierig at [ckierig@childrensmemorial.org](mailto:ckierig@childrensmemorial.org) to let her know that it is on the way. We are in the process of moving offices, so we will temporarily be without a working fax line, but we will provide you with our new fax number as soon as we can. We would of course request that anyone who expresses the support of their organization ensures that they have the authority to do so.

Please do not hesitate to call the CLOCC office at 773-327-9548 (before November 23) or 312-573-7760 (after November 23) to RSVP for the Policymakers Summit or with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Matt Longjohn, MD, MPH  
Executive Director

***THE ILLINOIS CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION  
CONSENSUS AGENDA***

***POLICYMAKERS SUMMIT  
December 8, 2004***

***BRIEFING PACKET***

*“We consider all our work in research, service, and education to be incomplete until our findings have achieved functional recognition through the implementation of policies that serve the communities and individuals...” Dr. Susan C. Scrimshaw, Dean, University of Illinois Chicago, School of Public Health*

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# ***ILLINOIS CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION CONSENSUS AGENDA***

## **POLICY PRIORITIES *Spring 2005***

*“Obesity costs the nation \$117 billion in 2000. To address obesity-induced heart disease, diabetes, cancer and stroke, policymakers can encourage physical activity and good nutrition.” National Conference of State Legislators, Annual Meeting, July 22, 2004*

\* \* \* \*

*“Regular physical activity substantially reduces the risk of dying of coronary heart disease, the nation's leading cause of death, and decreases the risk for stroke, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure. It also helps to control weight; contributes to healthy bones, muscles, and joints”, National Institutes for Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, “The Importance of Physical Activity”, March 31, 2004.*

\* \* \* \*

*“Since most children and adolescents are enrolled in schools, schools present a unique opportunity to promote healthy eating and regular physical activity. States, school districts and schools are addressing childhood obesity through multi-pronged strategies that include developing school nutrition and physical activity policies, implementing classroom instruction in nutrition and physical education, and creating a supportive school environment.” NGA Center for Best Practices, Issue Brief, February 4, 2003.*

\* \* \* \*

*“In spite of the public health impact of obesity and overweight, these conditions have not been a major public health priority in the past. Halting and reversing the upward trend of the obesity epidemic will require effective collaboration among government, voluntary, and private sectors, as well as a commitment to action by individuals and communities across the nation.” National Institutes of Health, Center for Disease Control, Defining Overweight and Obesity, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2004*

\* \* \* \*

*“We do not yet know the true rate of childhood obesity in Chicago communities at greatest risk (i.e., those that have populations that are African American, Hispanic, or predominately lower socio-economic status communities). We hope that childhood obesity prevention work will help children grow well and feel good about themselves, but we need to find out if it may also increase the prevalence or severity of body image disorders in adolescents... Obesity prevention programs and policies will require rigorous planning and evaluation.” CLOCC, 2003.*

## **POLICY PRIORITIES**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Childhood obesity is a critical public health issue, and, as such, policy must be driven by data. Yet practical approaches at the core of the issue—improving physical activity and nutrition—must be developed and promoted. A comprehensive and consensus policy approach to this epidemic is being called for by national, State and local leaders.

On September 29, 2004, the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) convened a broad-based *Advocates' Summit* to develop a consensus legislative agenda addressing the epidemic of childhood obesity. Participants and their sponsoring organizations believe in working collaboratively to develop long-term, systemic approaches to addressing this complex societal problem.

During the Advocate's Summit, over 75 participants from more than 50 organizations representing views across the policy spectrum created practical and achievable legislative goals for the Spring 2005 session of the Illinois General Assembly. Participants broke out into four working groups: 1) Agriculture and Commerce; 2) Education; 3) Health and Human Services; and 4) Transportation and Recreation. The working groups prioritized issues which were then vetted by the entire group. Revisions to the prioritized policy concepts were made by a planning committee and by reconvened working groups in each area. The product of this process is the Illinois Childhood Obesity Prevention Consensus Agenda.

Policy priorities in the Consensus Agenda include:

### **APPROPRIATING THE OBESITY STUDY AND PREVENTION FUND**

- **ISSUE:** In 2003, the General Assembly enacted P.A. 93-0060 establishing the Obesity Study and Prevention Fund. To date, no money has been appropriated to establish the fund. In order to create sound state-wide policy to address childhood obesity, the Study and Prevention Fund must be appropriated.
- **ACTION:** Three immediate initiatives under the Fund can be: 1) collecting, analyzing and disseminating children's Body Mass Indices (height, weight age and gender) as required by P.A. 93-966; 2) establishing a health related fitness assessment to determine the impact of physical education programs on student fitness levels; and 3) matching Federal funds to support the state Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Related Chronic Diseases managed by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

### **PROMOTING EARLY CHILDHOOD NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STANDARDS**

- **ISSUE:** High quality early care and education programs include recommended standards for children's nutrition and nutrition education delivered in a safe, sanitary, supportive environment. Nutrition standards promote healthy growth and development in very young children. Providing guidance to health care practitioners, day-care providers, and parents about menu adequacy and planning, food preparation, foodservice, food safety, and nutrition education, as well as physical activity recommendations, for children in day care centers is essential to promote good health habits among young children, preventing disease and enabling growth and development.
- **ACTION:** Include nutrition and physical activity standards in the Early Learning Council.

### ***REFORMING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION WAIVER PROCESS***

- **ISSUE:** Section 27-6 *et seq.* of the Illinois School Code requires schools to include physical education as a course of study. Illinois is a national leader in requiring a physical education curriculum. Each year, school districts apply for, and are granted physical education instruction waivers under Section 2-35g of the Illinois School Code.
- **ACTION:** Amend section 2-35g(d) of the Illinois School Code to require the Illinois State Board of Education to file waiver reports on March 1 instead of May 1 of each year, and increase the time for the General Assembly to act on waiver requests to 60 days, to allow more time for review and hearings concerning such waivers. Amend section 27-6 of the School Code to accommodate districts that have block scheduling, and therefore cannot provide daily physical education.

### ***CREATING THE ILLINOIS FOOD SYSTEM POLICY COUNCIL***

- **ISSUE:** Key to healthy children and communities is the food system. Food access and security have a direct impact on individual and community health and well-being. Where children get food, what they eat, where they eat it, and who prepares it, are all key components to a child's health and readiness to learn. As significantly, the culture of food is key to our communities' and families' productivity. Because Illinois' agricultural system is one of the top 5 in the nation, that system becomes a key component to self-sustainability, economic viability and health and well-being.
- **ACTION:** Create the Illinois Food Systems Policy Council to coordinate food production, access, delivery and security of food, and to encourage public/private partnerships around healthy food options. The Council will be administered through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and will consist, at a minimum, of state agencies, farmers and farm associations, business and business associations, including agri-business and food processing, and community based organizations, including those working on food access, food security, and food delivery.

### ***PROVIDING SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS***

- **Issue:** House Bill 6954 stalled in Senate Rules at the end of the 2004 legislative session. This Bill had been introduced to provide that, upon enactment of a federal transportation bill with a dedicated fund available to states for safe routes for schools, the Department of Transportation would, in cooperation with the State Board of Education and the Department of State Police, establish and administer a Safe Routes to School Construction Program for the construction of bicycle and pedestrian safety and traffic-calming projects, with construction grants being made available to local governmental agencies.
- **ACTION:** Reintroduce House Bill 6954, and work with the Illinois Congressional Delegation to ensure adequate continued federal funding for Illinois Safe Routes.

*“Safe and Healthy Streets, Safe and Healthy Kids”*

*THE ILLINOIS CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION CONSENSUS AGENDA*

**PROVIDING SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS**

***ISSUE:***

House Bill 6954 stalled in Senate Rules at the end of the 2004 legislative session. This Bill had been introduced to provide that, upon enactment of a federal transportation bill with a dedicated fund available to states for safe routes for schools, the Department of Transportation would, in cooperation with the State Board of Education and the Department of State Police, establish and administer a Safe Routes to School Construction Program for the construction of bicycle and pedestrian safety and traffic-calming projects, with construction grants being made available to local governmental agencies.

***PROPOSED ACTION:***

Reintroduce House Bill 6954, and work with the Illinois Congressional Delegation to ensure adequate continued federal funding for Illinois Safe Routes.

***RATIONALE:***

A key barrier to physical activity lies with unsafe streets. Transportation enhancements can make streets and neighborhoods more conducive to walking and bicycling. By setting up a process by which schools and communities can apply for the federal resources earmarked for transportation enhancements, a mechanism will be put in place to receive and distribute these funds for their intended use and many across the State will be encouraged to evaluate their own pedestrian infrastructure.

**SUPPORT THE REINTRODUCTION AND PASSAGE OF A “SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS” BILL TO IMPROVE WALKABILITY AND BIKABILITY FOR OUR KIDS.**

HB6954 Engrossed	LRB093 17838 NHT 43519 b
1	AN ACT concerning school students.
2	<b>Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,</b>
3	<b>Represented in the General Assembly:</b>
4	Section 5. The Department of Transportation Law of the
5	Civil Administrative Code is amended by adding Section 2705-317
6	as follows:
7	(20 ILCS 2705/2705-317 new)
8	<u>Sec. 2705-317. Safe Routes to School Construction Program.</u>
9	<u>(a) Upon enactment of a federal transportation bill with a</u>
10	<u>dedicated fund available to states for safe routes to schools,</u>
11	<u>the Department, in cooperation with the State Board of</u>
12	<u>Education and the Department of State Police, shall establish</u>
13	<u>and administer a Safe Routes to School Construction Program for</u>
14	<u>the construction of bicycle and pedestrian safety and</u>
15	<u>traffic-calming projects using the federal Safe Routes to</u>
16	<u>Schools Program funds.</u>
17	<u>(b) The Department shall make construction grants</u>
18	<u>available to local governmental agencies under the Safe Routes</u>
19	<u>to School Construction Program based on the results of a</u>
20	<u>statewide competition that requires submission of Safe Routes</u>
21	<u>to School proposals for funding and that rates those proposals</u>
22	<u>on all of the following factors:</u>
23	<u>(1) Demonstrated needs of the grant applicant.</u>
24	<u>(2) Potential of the proposal for reducing child</u>
25	<u>injuries and fatalities.</u>
26	<u>(3) Potential of the proposal for encouraging</u>
27	<u>increased walking and bicycling among students.</u>
28	<u>(4) Identification of safety hazards.</u>
29	<u>(5) Identification of current and potential walking</u>
30	<u>and bicycling routes to school.</u>
31	<u>(6) Consultation and support for projects by</u>
32	<u>school-based associations, local traffic engineers, local</u>

	HB6954 Engrossed	- 2 -	LRB093 17838 NHT 43519 b
1	<u>elected officials, law enforcement agencies, and school</u>		
2	<u>officials.</u>		
3	<u>With respect to the use of federal Safe Routes to Schools</u>		
4	<u>Program funds, prior to the award of a construction grant or</u>		
5	<u>the use of those funds for a Safe Routes to School project</u>		
6	<u>encompassing a highway, the Department shall consult with and</u>		
7	<u>obtain approval from the Department of State Police and the</u>		
8	<u>highway authority with jurisdiction to ensure that the Safe</u>		
9	<u>Routes to School proposal is consistent with a statewide</u>		
10	<u>pedestrian safety statistical analysis.</u>		
11	<u>(c) On March 30, 2005 and each March 30th thereafter, the</u>		
12	<u>Department shall submit a report to the General Assembly</u>		
13	<u>listing and describing the projects funded under the Safe</u>		
14	<u>Routes to School Construction Program.</u>		
15	<u>(d) The Department shall study the effectiveness of the</u>		
16	<u>Safe Routes to School Construction Program, with particular</u>		
17	<u>emphasis on the Program's effectiveness in reducing traffic</u>		
18	<u>accidents and its contribution to improving safety and reducing</u>		
19	<u>the number of child injuries and fatalities in the vicinity of</u>		
20	<u>a Safe Routes to School project. The Department shall submit a</u>		
21	<u>report to the General Assembly on or before December 31, 2005</u>		
22	<u>regarding the results of the study.</u>		
23	<u>(e) The Department, the State Board of Education, and the</u>		
24	<u>Department of State Police may adopt any rules necessary to</u>		
25	<u>implement this Section.</u>		
26	Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon		
27	becoming law.		