Healthy Children for School Act

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Abstract

Our children are rapidly becoming physically unfit, overweight and obese; for the first time in history, the life expectancy of children may be shorter than their parents. The rate of obesity and its related diseases have tripled since 1980, affecting nearly twenty percent of children. Obesity is associated with diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. At this rate, by the year 2025, nearly half of adults will be obese and one out of three will have diabetes. The rates of heart disease and cancer may be even greater, since studies have shown that when adolescents are obese, the rate of cancer is two times greater and the rate of heart disease is about three and a half times greater than non-obese adolescents in early adulthood.

The Healthy Children for School Act would include the following:

- All children entering elementary school will have a primary care provider who will provide health screening every two years.
- All children at risk for diabetes will have blood glucose monitoring.
- All schools would create a student health council that has at least one primary care provider as a member.
- All school districts and schools would implement two of three policy recommendations established in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

Using school wellness plans to fight childhood obesity conjoined with preventive, comprehensive primary care, will increase access to health care and improve the quality of care.