



# Congressman Jared Polis

2<sup>nd</sup> District, Colorado | 501 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2161

## H.R. 5090 – The Nutrition Education and Wellness in Schools Act (NEW Schools Act)

### Background

- Over the last 20 years, obesity has tripled among children and youth. One in three young people is either overweight or obese, raising their risk for heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, which are responsible for two-thirds of deaths.
- Habits and diets during childhood affect health throughout life. Healthy eating, nutrition promotion, and physical activity are essential to protecting children's health, addressing health care costs, and enhancing national investments in the child nutrition programs.

### The Problem:

- Effective school district local wellness policies (LWPs) are a key strategy for ensuring children are on track for lifelong health and wellness. Established in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, LWPs require school districts to craft nutrition and physical activity goals, implement policies to achieve those goals, and measure implementation across the district. However, many LWPs:
  - ✓ Are not implemented or evaluated.
  - ✓ Remain unavailable to parents and other key stakeholders and lack sufficient community engagement.
  - ✓ Have no requirements for physical education or school food marketing.
  - ✓ Are not informed by best practices and lack access to resources.
- Also authorized in 2004, USDA's Team Nutrition Network (TNN) could help promote healthy behaviors more effectively, but has not been adequately funded. As a result:
  - ✓ School meal quality has improved, but there is still much work to be done.
  - ✓ Nutrition education is insufficient.
  - ✓ Schools lack adequate resources to prioritize nutrition education throughout the school environment.

### What the NEW Schools Act will do:

- The NEW Schools Act would help school districts strengthen their LWPs by improving:
  - ✓ Transparency: Would ensure school districts make easily accessible their LWPs and implementation plans to parents and other stakeholders.
  - ✓ Oversight: Would create a school district committee to develop, implement and assess LWPs.
  - ✓ Physical Education and Food Marketing: Ensures that LWPs address these critical areas.
  - ✓ Technical Assistance: Provide support for a national LWP clearinghouse and grants for districts to implement, assess, and enhance LWPs.

- The NEW Schools Act would enhance the effectiveness of child nutrition programs and strengthen nutrition promotion and education by supporting:
  - ✓ Improved meal quality and access through training and technical assistance.
  - ✓ Nutrition promotion in schools through training and technical assistance to school districts, including best practices dissemination, program and curricula implementation and evaluation, and fostering collaborations through multidisciplinary, integrated nutrition education partnerships.
  - ✓ Qualified professionals to lead statewide nutrition promotion and education efforts in child nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program.
  - ✓ Incentive-based funding to promote continued enhancement and improvements to nutrition and physical activity efforts.

### **Congressional Co-Sponsors**

Rep. Howard Berman (CA-28)  
 Rep. Marcia Fudge (OH-11)  
 Rep. Steve Kagen (WI-8)

Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick (MI-13)  
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### **Supporting Organizations**

America Walks  
 American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance  
 American Diabetes Association  
 American Dietetic Association  
 American Heart Association  
 American Institute for Cancer Research  
 American Public Health Association  
 American School Health Association  
 American Society of Bariatric Physicians  
 Association of State and Territorial, Public Health Nutrition Directors  
 Be Active New York State  
 B. Sackin & Associates  
 California Center for Public Health Advocacy  
 CardioVision 2020  
 Center for Science in the Public Interest  
 Colorado Children's Campaign  
 Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute  
 Consumer Federation of America  
 Directors of Health Promotion and Education  
 Eat Smart, Move More South Carolina  
 Ehrens Consulting, Bismarck, ND  
 FGE Food and Nutrition Team  
 Fitness Forward  
 Focus on Agriculture in Rural Maine Schools  
 Health Promotion Council  
 Healthy Schools Campaign

HealthyPlanet  
 Hunter College, Program in Nutrition  
 Maternity Care Coalition  
 National Action Against Obesity  
 National Association for Sport and Physical Education  
 National Association of State Boards of Education  
 National Consumers League  
 National PTA  
 National WIC Association  
 North Dakota Dietetic Association  
 Obesity Action Coalition  
 Oral Health America  
 Partners for a Healthy Nevada  
 Partnership for Prevention  
 Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine  
 Prevention Research Center  
 Yale University School of Medicine  
 Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
 Produce for Better Health  
 Produce Marketing Association  
 Shape Up America  
 Save the Children  
 Society for Nutrition Education  
 Teachers College, Columbia University, Program in Nutrition and Center for Food & Environment,  
 Trust for America's Health  
 United Fresh Produce Association