

RESOLUTION #9

**AFT MICHIGAN
70TH CONVENTION
MAY 2-3, 2008**

**INCREASE ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION
TO COMBAT CHILDHOOD OBESITY**

- Whereas, Americans are heavier than past generations. That includes children. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 19% of children aged 6-11 were overweight in 2003-2004, up from 11% in 1988-1994; and
- Whereas, Children and adolescents spend more time in front of television, computer and video screens, their physical activity levels have decreased and their body weights have increased; and
- Whereas, Obesity in kids is now epidemic as the number of children who are overweight has doubled in the last two to three decades. The CDC 2003-04 reported Michigan as the 20th worst in the nation, with 14.5 percent of children between the ages of 10-15 overweight; and
- Whereas, The University of Michigan Health System revealed that childhood obesity increases the risk for some serious childhood medical problems, including type II diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep apnea, bone conditions, gastro-intestinal diseases, early puberty, and psychological problems such as depression; and
- Whereas, In addition to the risks in childhood, overweight kids are at greater risk of becoming obese adults. The CDC estimates that about 112,000 deaths are associated with obesity each year in the U.S.; and
- Whereas, A recent report from the U.S. Surgeon General's office calls on schools to provide daily physical education for all grades; and
- Whereas, Michigan law requires physical education but does not give guidelines for the amount of time or the grade levels that should have it. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education has called the state's requirement among the nation's worst. (see attachment I); and
- Whereas, Glenna DeJong, vice president of educational programs for the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports, states, "Michigan leads the nation in the quality of their PE but we rate among the worst for the quantity. We need both in order to make a difference in the health of our students."; and
- Whereas, Little more than one third of the state's 2,222 elementary schools offer physical education class one day a week and some not at all; and

Whereas, Increased physical activity helps students perform better academically, and physical education promotes positive life long fitness habits; and

Whereas, Physical education is not a threat to academic performance but a way to enhance it for all students; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED: AFT Michigan supports the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness to highlight the benefits of increased physical education and curb childhood obesity; and BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED: That AFT Michigan encourages lawmakers to pass legislation that would provide for a minimum of two thirty minute physical education classes per week in all public elementary schools, encourage school districts to more adequately address the physical education needs of middle and high school students, and provide the funding necessary for implementation of this proposal.

Submitted by:

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As amended by Legislation Committee

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