

“The Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act of 2009”

(H.R. 2105)

A bill to promote increased physical activity to improve health in America.

What is PHIT?

PHIT is legislation pending in Congress to allow for reimbursement of physical activity expenses using pre-tax dollars. PHIT would reduce the costs of physical activity to encourage healthier lifestyles.

Why is PHIT important to healthcare reform?

Healthcare spending continues to rise at an alarming rate. Medical expenditures account for 17 percent of the money generated by the U.S. economy. By 2015 the U.S. will spend \$1 of every \$5 (\$4 trillion) on medical expenses.

A top priority of healthcare reform is to reduce spending. The World Health Organization reported that in the U.S. an investment of \$1 in physical activity leads to \$3.20 in medical costs savings.

With 20 percent of the population accounting for 80 percent of health costs, prevention of costly chronic diseases is critical to reform efforts. Increased physical activity will improve health by preventing illness to lower medical spending.

How does PHIT work?

PHIT would allow taxpayers to place up to \$1,000 for individuals and \$2,000 for families a year in existing pre-tax medical accounts for reimbursement of physical activity expenses; lower costs will promote active lifestyles and improve the health of Americans.

Currently pre-tax medical accounts are primarily used for reimbursement of medical expenses once you become sick. PHIT would expand the definition of a medical expense to include qualified physical activities as a form of prevention.

Contributions to existing pre-tax medical accounts, flexible spending accounts, medical savings accounts and other medical re-imbusement accounts could be used to pay for physical activity expenses. PHIT does not increase existing caps on contributions to pre-tax accounts. There is a \$250 per-item cap on non-fitness/exercise equipment purchases.

Covered expenses include:

- Youth camp & physical activity fees
- Membership and dues in a health club
- Exercise/fitness classes or instruction (personal trainer)
- Sports league fees (adult and youth)
- Marathon/Triathlon registration fees
- Equipment used exclusively for participation in physical exercise/activities

Excluded expenses include:

- Expenses incurred from private clubs owned and operated by members
- Clubs offering golf, hunting, sailing and horseback riding activities
- Apparel and footwear not used *exclusively* for physical activity
- Travel and accommodation expenses associated with participation in physical activity

Click here to find the link to your U.S. Senators

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Click here to find the link to your U.S. Representatives

<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

Please forward this email to your constituents!

Attention Youth Sports Advocates! **We need your help** to move along an important piece of legislation to promote increased physical activity to improve health in America.

For your convenience, a sample action letter and links to your U.S. Representatives and Senators is below.

“The Personal Health Investment Today Act” (PHIT) H.R. 2105 would allow families to use pre-tax dollars to pay for physical activity expenses including league/tournament/clinic/camp fees. PHIT is pending in the House of Representatives and enjoys strong bi-partisan support. As Congress continues work on healthcare reform, supporters of PHIT stress the need to promote physical activity to improve health and lower medical costs. This puts PHIT in a strong position going forward.

The PHIT language was developed in a coordinated effort with Congress to provide a tax benefit through the use of pre-tax dollars for physical activity expenses. Families could dedicate up to \$2,000 annually for pre-tax reimbursement of physical activity expenses via PHIT. PHIT’s potential to encourage active, healthy lifestyles and prevent illness make it an attractive option as Congress considers ways to reform health care and reduce medical expenditures.

Contact Congress now and let them know you want PHIT included in healthcare reform as a form of prevention. **A sample action letter along with links to U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators is provided below.** It only takes a minute but could make a lifelong difference.

For additional information on PHIT please go to www.ncys.org/govrelations.html or go to www.getphit.sgma.com for details.

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN HELP...

Please forward this email to your affiliates—leagues, coaches, families for action. The National Council of Youth Sports membership represents more than 44-million boys and girls in organized youth sports.

HERE IS THE LINK TO FIND YOUR U.S. SENATORS...

For a complete list of United States Senators including their name, address, phone numbers, and email addresses and home pages.

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

HERE IS THE LINK TO FIND YOUR U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES...

For a complete list of United States Congressmen including their name, address, phone numbers, and email addresses and home pages.

<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

Let's blast the U.S. Congress with emails, faxes, and phone calls to support PHIT.

HERE IS THE SAMPLE ACTION LETTER FOR YOU TO SEND TO YOUR U.S. REPRESENTATIVES AND U.S. SENATORS. Hurry, time is of the essence.

Date _____

Dear Representative or Senator _____:

I want to commend you and your colleagues for making Health Care Reform a priority and ask for your support of initiatives to promote physical activity to improve health and reduce health care costs in America. Legislation introduced in the House, H.R. 2105 ***"The Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act of 2009"*** will prevent illness and improve health in America by encouraging more active lifestyles. It is well known that increased physical activity and a better diet are the keys to avoid sickness and a more healthy life. I hope you will support the PHIT legislation as it works through committees to Congressional floor votes.

Changes to our health care model are long overdue. Our current system focuses almost exclusively on treating illness once you become sick which has led to significantly higher medical costs. As Congress works to reform our health care system, it is critical to include initiatives that will lead to more active, healthy lifestyles in order to reduce future spending. PHIT will increase physical activity in America by making it more affordable. Much like our health care system as a whole, pre-tax medical accounts are primarily limited to reimbursements of expenses once you become sick. PHIT changes this outdated approach by making prevention of illness through physical activity a reimbursable expense.

If we continue down the current path, the CDC projects that by 2015 \$1 of \$5 generated in the U.S. will be spent on health care. Our economy simply cannot afford this expense; we need to do more to promote better health in America. A 2003 report by the World Health Organization reinforced the economic benefits of physical activity in the U.S.:

"Investing in physical activity programs will lead to economic savings...in the U.S. an investment of \$1 in physical activity leads to \$3.20 in medical cost savings."

It's no coincidence that the dramatic growth in health care spending has paralleled the rise in obesity and sedentary lifestyles in America. Currently 2 out of 3 people in the U.S. are overweight or obese. With the incidence of expensive chronic illnesses significantly higher among the obese, we must encourage physical activity to reverse the trend toward sedentary lifestyles and obesity in order to reduce health care expenditures.

America needs to get PHIT! Support prevention through increased physical activity. Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal to help address America's health care problem.

Sincerely,
Name
Title
Organization

The National Council of Youth Sports is a unified voice for youth sports. Founded in 1979, the NCYS represents the youth sports industry by advancing the values of participation and educating and developing leaders. It is our goal to preserve the integrity of organized youth sports while strengthening the performance of youth sports administrators. NCYS is committed to enhancing the youth sports experience in America by supporting and addressing the issues affecting more than 44-million actual boys and girls/60-million registered participants in organized youth sports. For more information call 772-781-1452 or visit www.ncys.org.