



TO THE CONNECTICUT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

This testimony is in favor of H.B. 5354 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING ATHLETIC DIRECTORS AND INCORPORATING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO THE SCHOOL DAY.

The Wilton Alliance for a Healthy Community was formed in 2010 as a result of a grant award received by the Wilton Family Y from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Center to Combat Childhood Obesity and Y USA. For the past 2 ½ years, our 12-member steering committee which is composed of community leaders in youth-serving organizations, public schools, health profession, nutrition, and town agencies has developed an Action Plan with 3 focus goals: Increasing physical activity among children under age 18; Improving eating habits towards healthier food choices; and Implementing infrastructure, built environment and policy changes to result in more active lifestyles.

A major initiative of the Action Plan is working with the Wilton public schools at the elementary and middle school levels to implement initiatives that increase the opportunities for children to participate in physical activity. The Fitnessgram computerized system which tracks and reports the amount of time students are involved in physical activity is already being piloted here, and there is enthusiasm for pursuing ABC and ABE (Activity Bursts in the Classroom, and Activity Bursts for Everyone).

Our Alliance is a member of a statewide coalition which has been involved for many years in the YMCA of the USA's national effort of Pioneering Healthier Communities. In addition to Wilton, 5 other local Ys in our state received Robert Wood Johnson grants specifically to attack the problem of childhood obesity, so it is a critical issue among communities throughout the area, and all of us are working closely with the public schools to increase physical activity time. Support for our efforts through passage of H.B. 5354 would advance our initiative significantly and benefit the health of our young people.

Therefore, the Wilton Alliance for a Healthy Community heartily endorses H.B. 5354 which promotes at least 20 minutes of physical activity for children in grades K-5 as an excellent means of combating and preventing the epidemic of childhood obesity in Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Strickland, Alliance Co-Chair (Wilton Family Y)

Carol Johnson, Alliance Co-Chair (Fairfield County Bank)

Colleen Fawcett, Alliance Steering Committee Member, Physical Activity Subcommittee Chair (Wilton Youth Services)