

April 6, 2015

Dr. Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Collins:

As leading national organizations in the scientific and health professional community, we are extremely enthusiastic about the potential of a new research focus area within the NIH Common Fund on mechanisms underlying benefits from physical activity. We appreciate your efforts to broaden the scope of inquiry of the Common Fund program to encompass, among others, the critically important field of physical activity and exercise biology.

Targeted use of federal resources to support high-impact research in areas of emerging scientific opportunity in biomedical science is a crucial endeavor for the progress of society and human wellbeing. Physical activity induces myriad biological responses and adaptations critical to the prevention and treatment of numerous diseases, yet the molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying those health benefits are largely unknown. Research devoted to identifying the mechanisms responsible for the extraordinary link between physical activity and health outcomes is expected to lead to the identification of novel regulatory processes and potential therapeutic targets relevant to specific diseases, as well as support the ongoing development of personalized medicine approaches. Given the impact of physical activity on human health, the biomedical discovery potential of a dedicated effort is undeniable.

One of our key roles as scientific and health organizations is to help inform the public as to why investments like the Common Fund are important to overall human health and critical to our future prosperity. We certainly stand ready to assist in that capacity for this all-important initiative.

Sincerely,

Active Living Research
America Walks
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Sports Medicine
American Council on Exercise
American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
American Physical Therapy Association - Sports Physical Therapy Section
American School Health Association (ASHA)
Association for Applied Sport Psychology
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Childhood & Family Learning Foundation
Clinical Exercise Physiology Association
Healthy Weight Partnership Inc,
International Association for Worksite Health Promotion
International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association
Lakeshore Foundation
National Academy of Sports Medicine™
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council on Strength and Fitness
National Physical Activity Plan Alliance
National Physical Activity Society
NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators