PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ALLIANCE
MOVE WITH US

Statement for the Record

Physical Activity Alliance (PAA)
Submitted by Mike Stack, President
U.S. House Energy & Commerce Committee
Subcommittee on Health

Hearing on H.R. 6121 – Promoting Physical Activity for Americans Act

Submitted electronically, April 15, 2026

Chairman Griffith, Ranking Member DeGette, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Physical Activity Alliance (PAA) respectfully submits this statement for the record in strong support of H.R. 6121, the Promoting Physical Activity for Americans Act. PAA is a coalition of leading national organizations dedicated to advancing policies that increase physical activity and improve the health of all Americans. As President of the Alliance, I am pleased to provide this submission on behalf of our members and partners committed to elevating physical activity as a central pillar of preventive health in the United States.

This legislation represents a critical and timely step toward ensuring that physical activity is appropriately recognized, elevated, and consistently guides preventive health in the United States.

The United States continues to face an escalating crisis of chronic disease, driven in large part by physical inactivity. Physical inactivity costs the U.S. healthcare system an estimated **$192 billion every year**, 12.6% of total national health care spending.[1] It is one of the leading risk factors for heart disease, diabetes, depression, and premature death. Only about 25% of U.S. adults and 20% of youth currently meet federal physical activity guidelines.[2]

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 40 percent of U.S. adults have obesity, significantly increasing their risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and other serious health conditions.[3] Chronic diseases account for the overwhelming majority of healthcare spending in the United States, placing an unsustainable burden on families, employers, and federal programs.

---

[1] Matjasko, JL., Chen, Z., Whitfield, GP., Whitsel, LP., Rose, K., Roy, K. Inadequate aerobic physical activity and healthcare expenditures in the United States: An updated cost estimate. American Journal of Health Promotion. July 2025. https://doi.org/10.1177/08901171251357128
[2] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018) Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition. Retrieved from https://odphp.health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf
[3] Emmerich SD, Fryar CD, Stierman B, Ogden CL. Obesity and severe obesity prevalence in adults: United States, August 2021–August 2023. NCHS Data Brief, no 508. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2024. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc/159281

Physical activity must be understood not as an optional lifestyle choice, but as essential preventive health with supportive infrastructure and investment. As one of the few interventions that simultaneously improves physical health, mental well-being, and long-term healthcare costs, physical activity empowers individuals to engage in their health in ways that are accessible, adaptable, and personal, whether through structured exercise, community-based programs, or everyday movement. Ensuring Americans have clear, science-based guidance is fundamental to driving meaningful health outcomes at scale.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, last updated in 2018, serve as the nation's authoritative, evidence-based recommendations for physical activity. They inform clinical practice, public health initiatives, education systems, and community programs across the country. However, unlike other cornerstone federal health guidelines, there is currently no statutory requirement to ensure these guidelines are regularly reviewed and updated. As a result, updates remain subject to administrative discretion, creating uncertainty and risking misalignment with the latest science.

H.R. 6121 establishes a regular, at a minimum ten-year cycle for updating the Physical Activity Guidelines and grounding that process in statute. Codifying this process will ensure long-term continuity and credibility of federal guidance; keep federal guidance aligned with evolving science; strengthen integration of physical activity into healthcare and prevention strategies; support consistent implementation across states, health systems, and communities; and elevate physical activity as a national priority in addressing chronic disease and healthcare costs. It also sends a clear and necessary signal that physical activity is not secondary, but central to improving the health of the nation.

Since the release of the 2018 guidelines, the scientific understanding of physical activity has continued to evolve. One of the most important developments is the growing body of evidence supporting the critical role of muscle-strengthening activities. Strength training is now widely recognized as essential for improving metabolic health, supporting healthy body composition and weight management, enhancing insulin sensitivity, preserving bone density, and promoting functional independence and healthy aging. Despite this evidence, strength training remains underappreciated and often underemphasized in public health messaging. A structured and recurring scientific review process is necessary to ensure that future guidelines fully reflect these advancements and provide clear, actionable recommendations to the public.

H.R. 6121 is a commonsense, bipartisan solution that will modernize how the United States approaches physical activity and prevention. By codifying a regular update process for the Physical Activity Guidelines, Congress can ensure that everyone has access to the most current, evidence-based physical activity recommendations.

On behalf of the Physical Activity Alliance, I strongly urge Congress to advance this legislation. Doing so will elevate physical activity as a central pillar of preventive health and help equip Americans with the tools they need to lead healthier lives.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to improving the health of the nation.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Stack

Michael Stack
President
Physical Activity Alliance (PAA)