

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