

1 Whereas, the annual costs of cardiovascular disease to the health care system
2 in the United States in 1996 were estimated to have been \$151 billion, a 9% increase
3 from the previous year; and

4 Whereas, increased physical activity in both children and adults has been
5 proven to reduce the incidence of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease; and

6 Whereas, experts in this area agree that, for children, school physical education
7 class is the opportune setting for teaching lifetime physical activity skills and instilling
8 positive attitudes toward physical fitness; and

9 Whereas, for adults, workplace fitness programs and local community-based
10 physical activity programs are the most successful mechanisms for improving fitness
11 levels; Now, therefore,

12 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

13 Section 1. (a) The purposes of this act are to:

- 14 (1) Improve the fitness of North Carolina's youth through the establishment
15 of an interschool physical education mentoring program;
- 16 (2) Provide a community-based approach to addressing the physical fitness
17 needs of all North Carolinians through the encouragement of
18 development of local fitness councils in each of the State's 100 counties;
- 19 (3) Utilize, in a coordinated fashion, the educational and training resources
20 and services that have been developed by the Governor's Council on
21 Physical Fitness and Health and other appropriate organizations;
- 22 (4) Raise awareness of the general public about the importance of physical
23 activity in preventing stroke and heart disease;
- 24 (5) Adequately fund these programs; and
- 25 (6) Provide lasting improvement in the fitness and physical well-being of
26 North Carolinians, thus providing the State's citizens with an improved
27 quality of life and society with the reduction of health care costs.

28 (b) There is established the 1997-98 Youth Fitness Mentoring Program in
29 the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, Governor's Council on
30 Physical Fitness and Health. Under this program the Governor's Council on Physical
31 Fitness and Health shall provide grants to enable 12 "model" schools that are former
32 recipients of the Governor's Award for Youth Fitness to partner with 12 "aspiring"
33 schools that are trying to meet the requirements for the Governor's Award so that
34 physical educators may share ideas and expertise. One "model" school shall be selected
35 to participate from each Congressional District in the State. Under this program, the
36 Council shall do the following:

- 37 (1) Identify and partner the most appropriate local schools to carry out the
38 program;
- 39 (2) Provide training and support to public school personnel to ensure the
40 successful implementation of the program;
- 41 (3) Provide opportunities for physical educators at aspiring schools to
42 borrow curricula and innovative teaching techniques from physical

1 educators at model schools and encourage the implementation of
2 improvements;

3 (4) Improve exercise and lifestyle activity habits of children at aspiring and
4 model schools within one school year;

5 (5) Improve the fitness of children at aspiring and model schools; and

6 (6) Conduct a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the impact of the
7 mentoring program on students and physical educators at aspiring and
8 model schools.

9 (c) There is established the Local Fitness Council Development Program in
10 the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, Governor's Council on
11 Physical Fitness and Health. The purpose of the program shall be to encourage the
12 development of local fitness councils in each county in North Carolina where one does
13 not currently exist. Under this program, the Council shall do the following:

14 (1) Work with and provide technical assistance to community leaders,
15 including, but not limited to, county commissioners in each North
16 Carolina county to encourage the development of local fitness councils
17 and the development of community-based strategies to build and
18 maintain the highest quality of physical fitness and health services;

19 (2) Develop intervention strategies to address the physical fitness needs of
20 each county's residents;

21 (3) Develop community-level indicators to annually measure health status;

22 (4) Allocate grant funds to offset start-up costs of local fitness councils;

23 (5) Encourage community-based health programs;

24 (6) Promote good health and disease prevention in schools and workplaces;

25 (7) Establish a local fitness council in all 100 North Carolina counties by
26 June 30, 1999; and

27 (8) Establish community-level indicators and objectives for improving the
28 fitness of North Carolinians in each county by June 30, 1998.

29 (d) In implementing the programs established under subsections (b) and (c)
30 of this section, the Department shall ensure that sufficient staff are available and trained
31 to effectively implement each program.

32 Section 2. (a) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department
33 of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources the sum of one hundred thousand dollars
34 (\$100,000) for the 1997-98 fiscal year and the sum of one hundred thousand dollars
35 (\$100,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year for the Youth Fitness Mentoring Program
36 established under Section 1 of this act.

37 (b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
38 Environment, Health, and Natural Resources the sum of three hundred thousand dollars
39 (\$300,000) for the 1997-98 fiscal year and the sum of three hundred thousand dollars
40 (\$300,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year for the Local Fitness Council Development
41 Program established under Section 1 of this act.

42 Section 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1997.