



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

October 10, 2017

Good morning Chairman Schaffer and members of the House Ways and Means Committee. I am Josh Little and I am the CEO of the Wapakoneta Family YMCA. I also am the Chair of the Ohio Alliance of YMCAs.

The Ohio Alliance of YMCAs is a nonprofit organization that represents the 165 YMCAs throughout Ohio. We are a grassroots driven and governed organization that advocates and educates on behalf of the YMCAs and their mission. Please see the attached list of our YMCAs that support House Bill 177.

Until the mid-1990s, Ohio YMCAs were tax exempt in all aspects of their mission work. Then, the legislature imposed sales tax on memberships, making Ohio only one of five states that tax nonprofit fitness memberships.

House Bill 177 would return Ohio YMCAs ask to full tax exempt status, as they should be as 501(c)(3)s. Taxing memberships is unjust and runs contrary to our organizations' charitable nonprofit purpose.

A YMCA should not have to tax a member, such as a youth that comes after school to a safe place to participate in healthy activities. Activities such as swimming, basketball, or playing chess in a teen room. Or a senior citizen who comes to the Y to participate in activities that help them stay healthy, active, and social.

YMCAs are charitable, nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that are dedicated to youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Every day we take on challenges that will shape our communities' futures - challenges like the academic achievement gap, chronic disease, and social isolation.

Together with our members, volunteers, and community partners, we make our communities stronger by:

- Driving academic achievement and inspiring kids to reach their greatest potential with high quality early childhood education and before and after school support.
- Tackling our community's greatest health challenges and improving quality of life, such as leading the state in providing the National Diabetes Prevention Program.
- Ensuring access and inclusion so that everyone has a chance to succeed and belong by providing financial assistance to those in need.

Like nonprofit hospitals, YMCAs provide immense community benefit. In 2016:

- YMCAs contributed over \$23 million in financial assistance to those who could not otherwise afford a membership.
- Over 29,000 volunteers donated over \$2.8 million worth of time.

OHIO ALLIANCE OF YMCAs

40 West Long Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

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- The Wapakoneta Family YMCA, my YMCA, contributed over \$150,000 in financial assistance for memberships and programs to over a 1,200 families, adults, and children.

YMCAs are not taxed on other programs and services, such as summer camp and fitness classes, only memberships. Without a membership, individuals and families are not able to experience everything that Ys have to offer.

The dollars YMCAs collect from members and remit for sales tax could be used to provide more financial assistance to those who cannot afford to be a member and participate in programs.

Our programs help in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases like diabetes, and obesity. Our Ys help children with special needs and weekend food programs for children during the school year and throughout the summer.

Removing the sales tax would allow YMCAs to lower their rates, making it more affordable to those who are struggling financially but are too proud or even embarrassed to ask for help.

With dramatically increasing healthcare costs, Ohioans need incentives to get healthy and stay healthy. Let us be that incentive. With your support we can continue to do what we do best - change lives and continue to be a positive impact on our communities. We are so much more than a fitness center or a gym. We are a truly a cause.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.



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Jill Kolesar, CEO, Akron Area YMCA
Molly Riley, CEO, YMCA of Ashland
Trevor Sprague, CEO
Ashtabula County Family YMCA
Auglaize-Mercer Counties Family YMCA
Steve Crone, CEO, YMCA of Bucyrus
Jim Cowin, CEO, Cambridge Area YMCA
Steve Ives, CEO, YMCA of Central Ohio
Tim Shetzer, CEO
YMCA of Central Stark County
Paul Waldsmith, CEO
Champaign Family YMCA
Jorge Perez, CEO
YMCA of Greater Cincinnati
Tim Hilk, CEO, YMCA of Greater Cleveland
Sam Cassalano, CEO, YMCA of Darke County
Dale Brunner, CEO, YMCA of Greater Dayton
Rich Seward, CEO, Defiance Area YMCA
Doug Saunders, CEO
Fayette County Family YMCA
Brent Finlay, CEO, YMCA of Findlay
Terry Gribble, CEO
Galion Community Center YMCA
Eric Stinehelfer, CEO
Geary Family YMCA of Fostoria
Woody Fitton, CEO, Great Miami Valley YMCA
Sean Galvin, CEO, Hardin County Family YMCA
Shadra Jenkins, CEO, YMCA of the Jackson Area
Dick Bennett, CEO, Lake County YMCA
John Schaller, CEO, Lakota Family YMCA
Mike Lieber, CEO
Family YMCA of Lancaster and Fairfield County

Ed Bohren, CEO
The Licking County Family YMCA
Jared Lehman, CEO, YMCA of Lima
Cristen Gilbert, CEO, YMCA of Mansfield
Suzy Zumwalde, CEO, YMCA of Marietta
Theresa Lubke, CEO, Marion Family YMCA
Jim McMaken, CEO, Miami County YMCA
Nick Clark, CEO, YMCA of Mount Vernon
Jeff Radde, CEO, Muskingum Family YMCA
Rob O'Hara, CEO, Ohio Valley YMCA
Tim Shetzer, CEO, YMCA of Orrville
Kim Conley, CEO, Pike County YMCA
Brad Toft, CEO, Putnam County YMCA
Steve Clever, CEO, YMCA of Ross County
Tim Hilk, CEO, Sandusky Area YMCA
Denise Reiter, CEO, YMCA of Sandusky County
Caitlin McKelvey, CEO, Shelby YMCA Community Center
Ed Thomas, CEO, YMCA of Sidney and Shelby County
Paul Weber, CEO, Springfield Family YMCA
Ralph J. Stolle Countryside YMCA of Warren County
Steve Crone, CEO
Tiffin Community YMCA Recreation Center
Brad Toft, CEO, YMCA of Greater Toledo
Tiffany Foxx, CEO, Tuscarawas County YMCA
Steve Ives, CEO, Union County Family YMCA
Hugh Kocab, CEO, YMCA of Van Wert County
Josh Little, CEO, Wapakoneta Family YMCA
Jim Stanford, CEO, YMCA of Western Stark County
Rob Imber, CEO, Williams County Family YMCA
Gwen Sommer, CEO, YMCA of Wooster
Tom Gasce, CEO, YMCA of Youngstown

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