



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

June 10, 2015

Good afternoon Chairman Oelslager and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Beth Tsvetkoff, the Executive Director of the Ohio Alliance of YMCAs.

The Ohio Alliance of YMCAs is a nonprofit organization that represents the 163 YMCAs throughout Ohio. We are a grassroots driven and governed organization that advocates and educates on behalf of the YMCAs and their mission.

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.

YMCAs are charitable, tax exempt organizations. Like nonprofit hospitals, YMCAs provide immense community benefit.

- In 2014, YMCAs contributed over \$23 million in financial assistance to those who could not afford memberships. Anyone who comes to the Ys' doors can be a member, regardless of ability to pay.
- Over 29,000 volunteers donated over \$2.8 million worth of time.

YMCAs are not taxed on other programs and services, such as summer camp and fitness classes. Only memberships. Additionally, other nonprofit organizations who have members, such as Boys Scouts, Girls Scouts, Rotary, churches, and trade associations, do not pay sales tax on memberships.

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 chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity, help children with special needs, and provide nutritious food for children on the weekend during the school year and in the summer.

With dramatically increasing healthcare costs, Ohioans need incentives to get healthy and stay healthy. Let us be that incentive. We are an organization that is for healthy living, youth development, and social responsibility. With your support we can continue to do what we do best ...change lives.

Ohio YMCAs ask to return to full tax exempt status, as they should be as 501(c)(3)s. 17 of your Ohio Senate colleagues support repealing sales tax on YMCA memberships in this budget. Taxing memberships is inequitable and runs contrary to our organizations' charitable purpose. A YMCA should not have to tax a member to use a treadmill when the Y does not pay tax to purchase the treadmill.

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

**OHIO ALLIANCE OF YMCAs**

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