

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
U.S Senator for Ohio

The Honorable J.D. Vance
U.S Senator for Ohio

Dear Members of Congress,

My name is Elaynah Noftz and I am a current nursing student at Firelands Regional Medical Center School of Nursing in Sandusky, Ohio. I am writing to you to seek support in the prevention and decreased prevalence of obesity in Ohio. Ohio is currently ranked 7th in the country for adult obesity prevalence and the number continues to grow.

Our state is one that experiences a long winter, promoting prolonged periods of immobility. I believe with proper initiatives; the prevalence of obesity could be significantly decreased. Currently in Ohio there are 214,000 unemployed individuals. This alone could be affecting the number of people who can afford or have access to a gym/workout facility. With implementation of workout facilities across Ohio that require low-cost memberships, Ohio could help individuals obtain easy access to a gym to promote their health.

Easy access to fast food services and increased expense in healthy food alternatives is another factor contributing to obesity in Ohio. According to *The National Institutes of Health*, "Fast food consumption has increasing trend due to convenience, costs, menu choices, flavor, and taste. About 30% of children to more than 50% of college students use fast food daily" (2018). With fast food being the easier and more accessible option, the percentage of individuals eating this food daily is going to continue to rise. Ohio should discourage the accessibility of fast-food services and focus on ways to reduce the cost of healthier options, while making them more accessible.

Obesity is contributing to several other health issues in Ohio. Without taking the proper steps to initiate change, obesity will continue to grow in our population. We should focus on making workout facilities more accessible as well as more affordable healthy food options. Decreasing obesity will help decrease other comorbidities and in turn, decrease the cost of health care in Ohio. Please consider a movement towards preventing the prevalence of obesity in Ohio and expanding resources to the citizens to promote health.

Sincerely,

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