



James Johnson
City of Long Beach
Councilmember, Seventh District

Date: October 19, 2010
To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember James Johnson, Seventh District JJ
Councilmember Robert Garcia, First District RG
Subject: Adopt Long Beach as a "Let's Move" Participating City

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Long Beach as a participating city in the national "Let's Move" campaign to reduce childhood obesity.

DISCUSSION

Childhood obesity is a nationwide epidemic. The incidence of childhood obesity (ages 6 to 11) increased from 6.5% in 1980 to 19.6% in 2008. One-third of all children born in 2000 or later will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives; many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and asthma. Health care costs of obesity-related diseases are approximately \$147 billion per year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/obesity/index.htm). This increase will lead to increased health care costs, decreased life spans, and decreased quality of life for years to come.

First Lady Michelle Obama has spearheaded a national "Let's Move" campaign to fight this epidemic; the campaign is described at www.letsmove.com (see attached documents). She has called on elected officials across the nation to make signification action in the following areas:

1. **Helping Parents Make Healthy Family Choices:** Offer parents tools, support, and information to make healthier choices for their families.
2. **Improving the Health of Schools:** Promote healthier food in schools.
3. **Increasing Physical Activity Opportunities:** Promote physical activity in your schools, city, or town.
4. **Making Healthy Food Affordable and Accessible:** Eliminate food deserts in your community and improve the affordability of healthy food.

Long Beach, with its own Health Department, has already taken the lead on fighting childhood obesity. We should further encourage youth in our city to live healthy lifestyles, for their own benefit and to benefit the general public as well.

Adopting Long Beach as a "Let's Move" city will encourage youth in Long Beach to live healthier lifestyles without any additional cost to the city. Therefore, Long Beach should participate in this national campaign.

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Health Department, there would be no fiscal impact as a result of adopting the Let's Move initiative since Long Beach already is running many programs to prevent childhood obesity using Federal and State funding. These programs include childhood obesity prevention health education programming, classes educating parents about nutrition, walking clubs, healthy cooking classes, community gardens, gardens at schools, and encouraging grocers and smaller convenience stores to carry healthier items.