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MEDIA ADVISORY – SENATE HEARING ON CHILDHOOD OBESITY
Student Thanks School-Based Health Center for Weight Loss Success

The Children and Families Subcommittee of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Senator Dodd (D-CT) with Ranking Member Senator Alexander (R-TN), will conduct a public hearing on “Childhood Obesity: The Declining Health of America’s Next Generation – Part II.”

Childhood obesity is the number one health concern for kids in 2008 topping both smoking and drug abuse, according to a report released this July by the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital National Poll on Children’s Health. In 2007, childhood obesity ranked third. This rising health concern has created interest in identifying successful programs to combat the health risks associated with child and adolescent obesity.

Jonathan Miller, a recent high school graduate, and Beth Van Helden, a registered dietician, have been invited to provide testimony on how school-based health centers (SBHCs) address childhood obesity. Jonathan knows firsthand that SBHCs can offer a valuable intervention in this public health epidemic. Having a SBHC staffed with a multidisciplinary team of health professionals at his school was instrumental in Jonathan losing 137 pounds over two years. Jonathan’s participation in group and individual counseling sessions offered at the SBHC was a vital first step in understanding the health implications of his weight. Thanks to the SBHC in his school, Jonathan had the support to start a path to a healthier lifestyle.

WHAT: Children and Families Subcommittee of the HELP Committee hearing entitled, *“Childhood Obesity: The Declining Health of America’s Next Generation – Part II”*

WHO: Jonathan Miller, Youth Representative, University of Michigan, Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools and Beth Van Helden, MS, RD, University of Michigan, Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools, represent a SBHC in Ann Arbor, Michigan that provides students with nutrition and physical activity counseling, support groups, and health services to support students and encourage behavior modification and lifestyle changes

WHEN: Wednesday, June 23, 2008 at 2:30 pm

WHERE: Senate Dirksen Office Building, Room 430

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The National Assembly on School-Based Health Care (NASBHC) promotes and supports school-based health centers to assure that all children receive high quality, comprehensive health care.

The School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan (SCHA-MI) is a collaboration of individuals and organizations that represent and support school-based and school-linked health care and through their actions, commitment and passion support the belief that all Michigan children and youth have a basic fundamental right to access and receive comprehensive primary health care and prevention services.