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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 958 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY DINNIMAN, TEPLITZ, FONTANA, BREWSTER AND WARD,  
JULY 21, 2015

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REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JULY 21, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," in school health services,  
6 establishing the Childhood Wellness Council and providing for  
7 its powers and duties.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. The General Assembly finds and declares as  
11 follows:

12 (1) Childhood obesity is a major health epidemic facing  
13 this Commonwealth.

14 (2) Roughly 26% to 28% of our children are either  
15 overweight or obese.

16 (3) The high rate of obesity in our children serves to  
17 only lower quality of life and exposes our youth to serious  
18 health concerns in the future.

19 (4) These health concerns in turn lead to higher health  
20 care costs which negatively impact Pennsylvania's taxpayers.

1 (5) In order to improve the quality of life for many  
2 Pennsylvanians and prevent an increased burden on its  
3 taxpayers, the Commonwealth needs to develop a coordinated  
4 approach to addressing the problem of childhood obesity.

5 (6) Coordination cannot be through the State alone  
6 because all previous top-down approaches to combating this  
7 epidemic have failed.

8 (7) By joining the private sector, the Commonwealth can  
9 form a State council comprised of individuals in the private  
10 sector who are experienced with this issue to act as a  
11 liaison and to assist local governments to combat the  
12 problem.

13 Section 2. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
14 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a  
15 section to read:

16 Section 1421.1. Childhood Wellness Council.--(a) The  
17 Childhood Wellness Council is established in the Department of  
18 Education. The council shall consist of the following members:

19 (1) Three representatives from a charitable organization  
20 that involves child health.

21 (2) A pediatrician.

22 (3) A nutritionist.

23 (4) A food bank administrator.

24 (5) A physical education or health education teacher.

25 (6) A representative of an after-school youth development  
26 program.

27 (7) An employe of the Department of Education as designated  
28 by the Secretary of Education.

29 (8) An employe of the Department of Agriculture as  
30 designated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

1 (b) The council shall meet at least six times annually.

2 (c) The council shall have the following duties:

3 (1) To develop coordinated strategies for addressing  
4 childhood obesity and disseminating information on these  
5 strategies.

6 (2) To work as liaison with local governments to implement  
7 strategies to combat childhood obesity.

8 (3) To submit annual reports to the General Assembly.

9 (d) The Department of Education shall promulgate regulations  
10 providing for the operation of the council.

11 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.