

Whereas, the annual costs of cardiovascular disease to the health care system in the United States in 1996 were estimated to have been \$151 billion, a 9% increase from the previous year; and

Whereas, increased physical activity in both children and adults has been proven to reduce the incidence of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease; and

Whereas, experts in this area agree that, for children, school physical education class is the opportune setting for teaching lifetime physical activity skills and instilling positive attitudes toward physical fitness; and

Whereas, for adults, workplace fitness programs and local community-based physical activity programs are the most successful mechanisms for improving fitness levels; Now, therefore,

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2 Section 1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
3 Health and Human Services the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for the
4 1998-99 fiscal year for the Be Active North Carolina Initiative established under this act.

5 Section 2. (a) The purposes of this act are to:

6 (1) Improve the fitness of North Carolina's youth through the establishment
7 of an interschool physical education mentoring program;

8 (2) Provide a community-based approach to addressing the physical fitness
9 needs of all North Carolinians through the encouragement of
10 development of local fitness councils in each of the State's 100 counties;

11 (3) Utilize, in a coordinated fashion, the educational and training resources
12 and services that have been developed by the Governor's Council on
13 Physical Fitness and Health and other appropriate organizations;

14 (4) Raise awareness of the general public about the importance of physical
15 activity in preventing stroke and heart disease;

16 (5) Adequately fund these programs; and

17 (6) Provide lasting improvement in the fitness and physical well-being of
18 North Carolinians, thus providing the State's citizens with an improved
19 quality of life and society with the reduction of health care costs.

20 (b) There is established the 1998-99 Be Active North Carolina (BANC)
21 Initiative in the Department of Health and Human Services, Governor's Council on
22 Physical Fitness and Health. Under this initiative the Governor's Council on Physical
23 Fitness and Health shall provide grants to enable "model" schools that are former
24 recipients of the Governor's Award for Youth Fitness to partner with 12 "aspiring"
25 schools that are trying to meet the requirements for the Governor's Award so that
26 physical educators may share ideas and expertise.

27 (c) There is established the Local Fitness Council Development Program in the
28 Department of Health and Human Services, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and
29 Health. The purpose of the program shall be to encourage the development of local
30 fitness councils in each county in North Carolina where one does not currently exist.

1 In implementing the BANC Initiative established under this section, the
2 Department shall ensure that sufficient staff are available and trained to effectively
3 implement the initiative.

4 Section 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.