

June XX, 2018

The Honorable James Lankford
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Graves
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Financial Services and General Government
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Lankford and Graves and Ranking Members Coons and Quigley:

On behalf of the undersigned ## organizations, we are writing to encourage your continued support for the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) *Pool Safely* Grant Program in the FY 2019 appropriations process. The program was funded at \$1.1 million in FY 2018 and we strongly urge you to appropriate \$5 million to the grant program for FY 2019 and open the grant program for inclusion of national organizations. Drowning is the second leading cause of death for children and the *Pool Safely* Grant Program is the only federal funding that can be used for anti-drowning education efforts.

We deeply appreciate the support you gave to the important program in FY 2018, showing your understanding of the grant's importance in address the public health crisis of drowning. Two children die every single day from drowning. In fact, drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1 to 4 than any other cause except birth defects and the second leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 14. Minority children are especially impacted: 60 percent of African-American, 45 percent of Hispanic/Latino and 40 percent of Caucasian children cannot swim. In underserved communities, 79 percent of children who live in households with incomes less than \$50,000 have no/low swimming ability.

Most of these tragic deaths are preventable through cost-effective and simple swim lessons that teach basic water safety and self-rescue skills. National organizations, like the YMCA of the USA, National Recreation and Park Association, American Red Cross and others train millions of children every year on invaluable water safety skills, but non-profits are constrained in their outreach, especially to the most vulnerable communities, by their ability to locally fundraise and a lack of adequate federal resource allocation.

We urge you to maintain the U.S. CPSC *Pool Safely* Grant Program, authorized as part of the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act*, which provides resources and technical expertise through state and local municipalities to hire and train enforcement personnel on pool/spa safety and education on drowning and entrapment standards. Some of this funding can, and is, used to provide direct education to children most at risk for drowning. We also encourage you to open the grant programs to national organizations, who can leverage limited federal funding into multiple communities while providing expert technical assistance.

The groups listed below, representing a broad spectrum of public health, child safety, and community safety professionals and providers, strongly encourage you to continue to support the only federal funding for anti-drowning training and education – the U.S. CPSC *Pool Safely* Grant Program. We thank you again for your leadership and support of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American Red Cross

National Recreation and Park Association

YMCA of the USA

State Organizations

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