



# Coalition for a Healthy Maryland

**In order to promote PREVENTION, curb the escalating cost of lifestyle related health disorders, and improve the health of the residents of the State of Maryland, the Coalition for a Healthy Maryland proposes that:**

The State promote increased physical activity, improved nutrition, and decreased smoking & tobacco use for all Marylanders.

The State of Maryland invest the equivalent of \$10 per person per year promoting these preventive activities. The return would exceed the investment within just 1-2 years, and exceed 5-6 times the investment within 5 years. For Maryland, this adds-up to an investment of approximately \$50M per year, eventually yielding \$300M or more in annual savings or gains.

In Maryland, this investment could take the form of modest tax deductions, tax credits, or even tax rebates for qualified expenses aimed at combating childhood obesity, reducing smoking and tobacco use, promoting senior fitness, adult weight loss to healthy levels, and adult physical activity.

The following sections outline a legislative proposal designed to get Marylanders healthy and reduce our state's health care costs.

## Legislative Proposal / Abstract

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### 1. Combat Childhood Obesity in Maryland

**Incentive:**

- Includes a tax deduction per child for efforts to reverse childhood obesity
- Provided to parents of children participating in a qualified program designed to combat childhood obesity

### 2. Reduce Smoking and Tobacco Use in Maryland

**Incentive:**

- Includes a tax credit for cessation related efforts
- Provided to users of qualified smoking / tobacco cessation programs

### 3. Promote Senior Fitness & Wellness in Maryland

**Incentive:**

- Annual tax deduction for seniors (65+) with qualified fitness & wellness expenses

#### **4. Promote Adult Physical Activity in Maryland**

**Incentive:**

- Annual tax deduction for qualified physical fitness expenses including the cost paid for certain exercise equipment and/or participation or membership in a health and fitness program

#### **5. Promote Healthy Weight Loss in Maryland**

**Incentive:**

- Annual tax deduction for eligible weight loss program fees
- Provided to users of qualified weight loss programs
- Precedent set by IRS

Incentives can create a sense of personal responsibility for improving one's health and create a climate for A Healthy Maryland!