



Policy Corner: Lawmakers get the policy message, based on science

The science of physical activity moved a big step closer to real-world implementation July 26, 2012 as American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) experts teamed up with the Congressional Fitness Caucus to sponsor a briefing on Capitol Hill.



Reps. Brian Bilbray (CA-50) (on left) and Ron Kind (WI-3), caucus co-chairs, spoke of their commitment to physical activity for individual wellness and as a public health priority. Gregory Heath, DHSc, FACSM, delivered key messages from the research he and other scientists had contributed to the groundbreaking [Physical Activity Series](#) published in *The Lancet*. **Michael Bergeron, Ph.D., FACSM (Executive Director, National Youth Sports Health & Safety Institute)**, and Stephen Rice, M.D., Ph.D., FACSM, shared insights from their perspectives as leaders of the National Youth Sports Health & Safety Institute and the ACSM Health & Science Policy Committee, respectively.

The message resonated with those attending, who represent an extraordinary 29 representatives, nine senators and two committees. Most are staff who advise elected officials on health policy matters. They learned that ACSM is a trusted source for evidence-based information they need to know, and many expressed interest in receiving future updates on matters relating to health, sports, obesity and healthy lifestyles.

For all the scientific and clinical expertise represented on the panel, the highlight for many was an appearance by youth from the Baltimore SquashWise program and their executive director, Abby Markoe. Even in a crowded committee room, the kids were able to demonstrate the ball-handling skills and the confidence and focus they had learned from SquashWise. Those youngsters are on a trajectory toward lifelong fitness and accomplishment—a lively embodiment of the principles conveyed during the briefing.

ACSM and the National Youth Sports Health & Safety Institute work closely with the Congressional Fitness Caucus. Look for updates in future installments of *Policy Corner*. To learn how you can become involved in advocating for the ACSM policy agenda, send an email to policy@acsm.org.