

THE NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

November 8, 2023

Dear New England Delegation:

I write to you today in support of the bipartisan Personal Health Investment Today Act (H.R.1582, S.786), also known as the “PHIT” Act. As you may know, the New England Council is a non-partisan alliance of businesses, academic and health institutions, and public and private organizations throughout New England. Our mission is to promote economic growth and a high quality of life in the region, and it is with that background that I urge you to consider the PHIT Act, a key component in addressing the mental and physical challenges facing the health and wellbeing of our nation’s youth.

Across the country, pediatric specialists are sounding the alarm about the rise in adolescent depression, anxiety, and suicide. Additionally, obesity rates among children between the ages of 2 to 17 have also increased, prompting long-term physiological concerns. Sports and physical activity play a vital role in brain, social, and physical development. The PHIT Act lessens the cost for families who want their children involved with youth sports and other physical activities. Equally important, the PHIT Act encourages exercise and healthy lifestyles for generations to come. Currently, over 96 million Americans have access to health benefit accounts. Yet, the accounts do not recognize exercise as a form of preventative health care. Unlike previous generations, there are financial barriers to activity today; school “pay-to-play” costs, fitness center dues, outdoor recreation fees and other expenses, serve as a hinderance to physical activity.

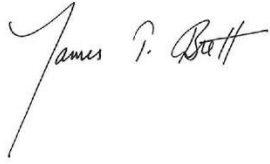
The PHIT Act lowers these barriers by allowing a portion of such funds to be used for qualified physical activity expenses – a much needed update to encouraging and improving mental and physical health. Additionally, I encourage you and your colleagues to provide additional guidance on how HSA, FSA or other pre-tax medical account managers would determine eligible expenses and process claims.

The New England Council believes that the PHIT Act will have long term benefits on the physical and mental wellbeing of young people in our region and across the country, and we hope that you will support this bipartisan legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sean Malone on my staff at smalone@newenglandcouncil.com.

Sincerely,

The New England Council

98 North Washington Street, Suite 301 • Boston, Massachusetts 02114 • (617) 723-4009
1411 K Street, NW, Suite 700 • Washington, DC 20005 • (202) 547-0048
www.newenglandcouncil.com

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James T. Brett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

James T. Brett
President & CEO
The New England Council

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