

WHEREAS, In the United States, the number of adults and children who are overweight has risen sharply during the past 25 years, and the percentage of adults and children who made trips on foot dropped during that same period; and

WHEREAS, Health care costs related to cardiovascular disease in Maryland are \$2.25 billion yearly, and the annual cost of heaviness and obesity in the United States is \$122.9 billion with \$64.1 billion in direct costs and \$58.8 billion in indirect costs; and

WHEREAS, If all inactive Americans were to participate in physical activity, an estimated \$76.6 billion in direct health costs would be saved; and

WHEREAS, One in five children are overweight or at risk of being overweight, and encouraging children to walk more can establish more physically active and healthy lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, Suicide is the third leading cause of death among children and young people and the eighth leading cause of death overall, and physical activity reduces feeling of depression and anxiety; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Surgeon General recommends that all Americans walk at least 30 minutes per day, 5 days a week; and

WHEREAS, Walking is one of the best forms of exercise because it helps reduce cholesterol, improve cardiovascular fitness, improve blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart attack, and prevent colon cancer, breast cancer, osteoporosis, and diabetes; and

WHEREAS, More than 300,000 Maryland residents have diabetes, and an estimated one-third of the population remains undiagnosed, and walking 30 minutes a day cuts the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by 58%; and

WHEREAS, Walking is ideally suited for rehabilitation after illness, surgery, or injury by strengthening the heart, lungs, and circulatory system; and

WHEREAS, The risk of injury while walking is less than with other forms of physical activity, and injuries incurred while walking are less severe than with many other exercises; and

WHEREAS, Walking is a fun activity that friends and family can do together; and

WHEREAS, Walking promotes informal interactions between people and strengthens community, and many neighborhoods lack any social contact between neighbors; and