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July 25, 2012

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Mr. Robert E. Doyle
General Manager
East Bay Regional Park District
2950 Peralta Oaks Court
Oakland, California 94605

Subject: Support for the East Bay Regional Park District Community Transformation Grant (CTG) application

Dear Mr. Doyle:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to write in strong support of the East Bay Regional Park District's application for a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) and I applaud the Park District's emphasis on health and outdoor activity.

One of the reasons the East San Francisco Bay area a healthy and vibrant place to live is the tremendous assets of the East Bay Regional Park District. With 112,000 acres of accessible parkland, 1,200 miles of trails, and thousands of education, recreation, and interpretive programs, the District plays a critical role in both the physical and mental wellness of our region, as well as providing a substantial health and quality of life benefit. Indeed, the District has been a preventative health care provider in the East Bay for 78 years.

The District has supported the international *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* initiative – the only regional or local government to do so in the United States – and proposes to lead a multi-sector collaborative to further strengthen the relationship between health, education, and outdoor activity providers. The Get Outdoors! (GO!) Network for Healthy Kids brings together the West Contra Costa County Unified School District, Oakland Unified School District, the U.C. Berkeley Center for Weight and Health, Children's Hospital in Oakland, Alameda County Office of Education, and EcoVillage (a Richmond-based, regional non-profit focusing on sustainable, healthy food and nutrition). This well-rounded collaborative uniquely addresses the CTG strategic directive to promote Active Living and Healthy Eating in the cities of Richmond and Oakland, California.

The GO! Network has several key components. It embraces the Full Service Community School and District model – a model which promotes schools as sites to meet student, family and community needs. This component will implement Parks Prescription strategies to train teachers and school district staff in the health related value of outdoor activity, and, importantly, where there are opportunities to take advantage of regional park related activities. The District and its partners will work to address the transportation and policy barriers that can literally keep kids from experiencing the outdoors. Ultimately, the GO! Network will provide a concrete example of a truly transformative, replicable model to promote outdoor activity, increase community-wide awareness of opportunities to move outside, fund collaborations, and reduce park access barriers.

Expanding the District's reach into our education and health care communities will further enhance the wellness and health of the East Bay – particularly in the urban corridors of Richmond and Oakland where families have limited safe outdoor options.

The District's facilities and programs improve our region's economic competitiveness by providing low-cost, safe outdoor activity opportunities in an urban environment. Connecting the District with schools and health care providers will help reduce health care costs for employers,

address chronic diseases before they happen, enhance the quality of life for residents, and provide schools additional resources – all of which further bolster business and worker recruiting efforts for our region.

Finally, the District is a model public agency in the East Bay which successfully links communities together in a manner that has the regional interest at its core. The District receives 14 million visitors a year, has secured stable funding through ballot measures, and has existing partnerships with schools and health care providers in our area.

Knowing that the program will serve as a model and catalyst for regional wellness and livability in the Bay Area, I am pleased to offer my wholehearted support of the Park District's application for a Community Transformation Grant to support The GO! Network for Healthy Kids.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "G".

George Miller, Congressman
7th District, California