



CAMPAIGN TO END OBESITY

For Immediate Release

June 22, 2011

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Campaign Honors Congressional Champions for Work Combating Obesity

Fourth Annual 'Breakfast with Champions' Recognizes Eight Members of Congress on Both Sides of the Aisle

WASHINGTON, DC –Today, the Campaign to End Obesity recognized eight outstanding Members of Congress whose work has been instrumental in moving forward provisions to end the obesity epidemic. In its fourth annual “Breakfast with Champions,” leaders from across industry, academia and public health convened to acknowledge these key players in health care, nutrition and transportation policy, among other areas. The event also served to encourage these visionaries’ colleagues to take up needed reforms that will reverse one of America’s costliest medical challenges.

Congressman Jim Gerlach (R-PA) and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) were present at the event to accept their awards. Additional awardees included Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), and Rep. Todd Platts (R-PA).

“If we are going to reduce the one of the greatest single costs to our health care system, Americans need exactly the kind of leadership these Members of Congress represent,” said Stephanie Silverman, senior advisor to the Campaign to End Obesity. “These champions send a strong message to Congress that, to curb this epidemic, we must provide our communities with the tools they need to make the healthy choice, the easy choice.”

“Fighting obesity is something that every member of Congress should be able to support,” said Rep. Blumenauer. “There are common sense solutions everywhere we look—like making our streets safer for people to walk and bike, ensuring that our children have access to healthy food and physical education in schools, and providing prevention-based healthcare coverage. These solutions are cost effective, bipartisan and improve quality of life for all Americans. I am honored by this award and look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to enact some of these straightforward changes that will make Americans healthier and happier.”

Noting that obesity-related medical spending—already \$168 billion a year—is projected to double and consume more than 20 percent of all health care related spending within the next decade, Silverman added, “These Champions are demonstrating that reversing the obesity epidemic means substantial long-term savings for all taxpayers.”

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Congressman Jim Gerlach (R-PA) was recognized for his leadership in supporting policies that improve the health of all Americans from their earliest years. This spring, Rep. Gerlach introduced the bipartisan FIT Kids Act along with Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI). This important legislation would expand opportunities for physical activity in schools and increase public awareness about how much activity today's kids receive. The FIT Kids Act would also require local educational agencies to publicize whether schools are providing age-appropriate physical education and the amount of time students spend getting the activity they need, relative to recommended national standards.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) was recognized for his leadership in advancing policies to improve childhood nutrition, increase opportunities for physical activity and expand access to nutritional information and healthy foods. In 2010, Rep. Blumenauer —joined by Representatives Kind, Mary Bono (R-CA) Mack and Marcia Fudge (D-OH)— introduced the Healthy CHOICES Act, first-of-its-kind comprehensive obesity legislation that worked to screen BMI and body composition in adults and children; align federal food programs with nutritional guidelines; make healthy foods affordable and accessible to those most at risk; make it easier for children and adults to be active and fit, including as a means for transportation; support incentives for local school wellness; and increase federal support for obesity research. Founder and co-chair of the Congressional Bike Caucus, Rep. Blumenauer has also been a long-time role model and leader in active transportation solutions, advancing education programs and small scale infrastructure projects such as bike lanes, sidewalks, cross walks, and bike racks to encourage safe, active ways of getting to school and work.

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About the Campaign to End Obesity

The effects of the nation's obesity epidemic are immense: taxpayers, businesses, communities and individuals spend hundreds of billions of dollars each year due to obesity, including an estimated \$168 billion in medical costs. By bringing together leaders from across industry, academia and public health with policymakers and their advisors, the Campaign to End Obesity provides the information and guidance that decision-makers need to make the changes necessary to reverse one of the nation's costliest and most prevalent diseases.