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**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

August 5, 2010

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## **Campaign to End Obesity Hails Senate Passage of Child Nutrition Reauthorization**

**(Washington DC)** In a landmark achievement for more than 32 million children who depend on federal food programs, Senator Blanche Lincoln's (D-Arkansas) Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act passed the Senate today. The Campaign to End Obesity hailed Senate Leadership and Senator Lincoln for their tenacity in advancing this strong step toward increasing the nutritional quality of all foods served on school campuses and improving the long term health of America's children.

"There has never been a more urgent need for federal action in the fight against obesity," said Penny Lee, Executive Director of the Campaign to End Obesity. "Just this week, the CDC reported that 2009 obesity rates exceeded 30 percent in nine states across the country, as opposed to only three states in 2007. And with nearly one in three children overweight or obese, today's kids face a lifetime full of chronic disease stemming from obesity, and even shorter lifespans than their parents. Yet, in the face of unprecedented challenge, the Senate has taken unprecedented action, and we commend them."

"This bill goes further than simply reauthorizing existing programs," continued Lee. "For the first time in nearly 40 years, the Senate has allocated an increase in the reimbursement rate for schools that agree to serve healthier lunches. Making more nutritious foods more accessible throughout school campuses and reducing less nutritious options is a simple, tangible step towards giving our youth a fair shot at good health. Millions of children rely on federal food programs as their primary source of nutrition, and there is no reason that the food we provide them cannot consist of more apples and fewer French fries."

Additionally, the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act reduces the bureaucratic red tape that currently prevents too many families getting the meals they are eligible to receive.

The measure now moves to the House of Representatives where the Campaign urged swift action so these critical programs can be reauthorized and strengthened before the expire on September 30.

"With one victory achieved, we now look to the House to take up the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, immediately following the August recess," said Lee. "It is essential to continue this momentum, as we have a real opportunity to create lasting changes that will sustain the next generation of our youth."

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### **About the Campaign**

The Campaign to End Obesity is dedicated to reversing America's costliest disease. Ending this epidemic requires change – in individuals, institutions and communities. The Campaign convenes leaders from industry, academia, public health and associations to speak with one voice for federal policies to reverse the obesity epidemic and promote healthy weight in children and adults.