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For Immediate Release

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Campaign Applauds Strong Congressional Vote on Obesity Amendment to the Defense Bill

Washington, D.C. (May 27, 2010) – The Campaign to End Obesity today applauded the strong, bipartisan vote in the House of Representatives that recognizes obesity as a threat to the national security of the United States. As part of the House’s work on the Defense Appropriations measure, the House approved by a 341-85 vote a “Sense of the Congress” amendment by Congressmen Jim McGovern (D-MA), Congressman Sanford Bishop (D-GA), and Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) which recognizes that, “reducing domestic childhood obesity is a matter of national security” and that “Congress should act to reduce childhood obesity and hunger.”

The obesity epidemic is a threat to many populations in America and the military is not immune. In citing the need for action by the Congress to address this growing national security threat, the amendment noted that, “being overweight is now the leading medical reason for rejection from military service and between 1995 and 2008, the proportion of potential recruits who failed their physicals each year because they were overweight rose nearly 70 percent.”

Penny Lee, Executive Director of the Campaign to End Obesity, said: “As we face new demands on our armed forces, nearly a third of recruits are unfit to serve due to overweight or obesity. Today’s vote is another key step to help raise awareness of the critical threat obesity poses to our nation’s national security.”

About the Campaign

The Campaign to End Obesity is dedicated to reversing America’s costliest disease. Right now, two-thirds of adults and 1 in 3 children struggle with overweight and obesity. Taxpayers, governments and businesses spend billions on obesity-related conditions each year, including an estimated \$147 billion in medical costs.

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.

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