



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

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## **In Setback for Obesity Epidemic, House Transportation Committee Eliminates Programs to Increase Physical Activity** *Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund Denounces Measure's Failure to Help Reverse Obesity Epidemic*

**(Washington, DC)** Undermining a critical component in the effort to reverse the costly obesity epidemic, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee early today voted to eliminate critical biking and walking programs that help facilitate physical activity for Americans. The Campaign to End Obesity Action fund lamented that the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act would do away with dedicated funding for transportation enhancements programs, which enable the construction of sidewalks, crosswalks and bikeways that make biking and walking safe and accessible in communities across the country.

"The correlations between physical activity and good health—to say nothing of good health and reduced health care costs—are well-evidenced and plain to see," said Stephanie Silverman, cofounder of the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund. "Doing away with programs like active transportation solutions that get Americans moving represents a step backwards in the effort to curb obesity — one of America's costliest diseases. The Committee's decision is an unacceptable outcome for our nation's health and our economy."

The Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund has long supported active transportation solutions, such as the [Safe Routes to School Act](#) and the [Safe and Complete Streets Act](#). As obesity rates have steadily increased in recent years, so too have rates of inactivity. The Centers for Disease Control reports that rates of childhood obesity have more than tripled in the past 30 years. Meanwhile, the Safe Routes to School Partnership finds that, although approximately 50 percent of children walked or bicycled to school in 1969, fewer than 15 percent of schoolchildren walk or bike to school today.

Currently, America faces \$168 billion in annual medical costs associated with obesity—more than twice what it was paying only a decade ago. Absent reforms—including those to help get Americans moving—obesity-related medical costs could double again by 2018, according to a McKinsey report.

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### **About the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund**

The Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund is dedicated to federal policy changes that can reverse one of America's costliest diseases. The Campaign convenes leaders from industry, academia, public health and associations to speak with one voice for measures to reverse the obesity epidemic and promote healthy weight in children and adults.