



CAMPAIGN TO END OBESITY ACTION FUND

Details have begun to emerge on a package to extend the Medicare physician payment fix by 10 months, the implications of which stand to negatively impact the future of the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Contrary to [earlier reports speculating the deal would not need to be paid-for](#) with other spending reductions, we understand that the compromise – which may be voted on by the end of the week – may include cuts of approximately \$5 billion to the Fund. This would potentially result in the fund being cut by more than 30 percent. The situation is still extremely fluid as negotiations will be occurring throughout the day, and no final decisions have yet been made.

The Prevention Fund, which allocates funding to prevent the prevalence of chronic diseases including obesity, has been the target of much bad news this week; on Monday the President released his budget proposal, which would cut more than \$4 billion from the Fund -- more than 20 percent of its budget over the next 10 years. This proposal is separate and apart from any proposed cuts resulting from negotiations on “doc fix” legislation.

As background, in the waning days of 2011, Congress passed a two-month Medicare physician payment fix to stave off the possibility of a 27% Medicare payment reduction to doctors. That agreement is set to expire at the end of February and, absent action, physicians would face a significant reimbursement reduction. The compromise would further extend the payment rates through the end of the year.

The Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund has steadfastly opposed reductions to the Prevention Fund. [Earlier this week, Campaign cofounder Stephanie Silverman stated:](#)

“The initiatives supported by the Prevention Fund can help our communities to get on track to a healthy weight and achieve more manageable long-term health care costs. Standing pat will not get us there. If we are serious about reigning in health care costs, we must have strategies to change our nation’s current course. No easy fixes exist to balancing our budget, but failing to put all of our muscle behind tackling the obesity epidemic will only lead to greater illness for patients and greater expenses for taxpayers in the long run. Reducing the Prevention and Public Health Fund is economically backwards.”

The Prevention and Public Health Fund was lauded by the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund as a much needed federal investment to stave off preventable--and costly--chronic conditions, such as obesity. Unfortunately, the approach taken by Congress last night – and by the President earlier this week – represents a step backward in the nation’s fight to reverse our obesity epidemic and reign in the costs associated with treating it and its associated conditions.