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## **National Prevention Strategy Hailed as a Win in Fight Against Obesity**

### *Hurdles Remain in Implementing Recommendations from 17 Federal Agencies*

**(Washington DC)** Today, the National Prevention Council released the [National Prevention Strategy: America's Plan for Better Health and Wellness](#), a plan that was applauded by the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund as an extensive approach for both the public and private sectors to combat one of America's most costly diseases.

The plan —called for under the Affordable Care Act— is a first-of-its-kind commitment from 17 federal agencies to adopt policies that prioritize healthy eating, active living and eliminating health disparities among at-risk communities. In addition to its commitments on behalf of the federal government, the Strategy, which was developed with guidance from the public, makes recommendations for how businesses and employers, insurers, clinicians, schools, community organizations, individuals and families can further efforts to prevent chronic diseases such as obesity.

“The Prevention Council’s Strategy would change our national health care playbook—focusing our efforts appropriately and forcefully on preventing epidemics like obesity, which threatens to make our current generation of youth live sicker and die younger than their parents,” said Stephanie Silverman, senior advisor to the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund. “From increasing access to healthy and affordable foods to promoting physical activity in schools and communities, and even encouraging health care providers to screen for obesity, monitor body mass index and provide nutrition counseling — the Council has hit upon critical action items to guide both our government and our society.”

Silverman added, “However, despite the importance of these recommendations and the significant progress that has already been made through obesity-related provisions under the Affordable Care Act and Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act, real hurdles remain in the current political environment. It will be a formidable and critical task for each of the participating agencies to see that this roadmap leads to implementation as well as additional federal action.”

To encourage nutritious eating, the Prevention Strategy calls on the federal government to implement programs and regulations to increase access to healthy food (as with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act); ensure that foods purchased, distributed, or served in federal programs and settings meet standards consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans; provide information and tools to help Americans understand and apply the Dietary Guidelines; and support initiatives to increase the availability of healthy and affordable foods in underserved urban, rural, and frontier communities.

To encourage active living, the Strategy calls on the federal government to support programs and policies that encourage physical activity and physical education, especially in schools and early learning centers; promote the development of active transportation solutions; and support active living principles in community design, such as mixed land use, compact design, and inclusion of safe and accessible parks and green space.

Additionally, the plan encourages health care providers and clinicians to screen for obesity by measuring body mass index and provide nutrition education and counseling.

Absent reforms, taxpayers stand to see obesity-related medical spending double within the next decade, according to a recent McKinsey study, which would push the cost to \$320 billion annually. Such an increase would raise the percentage of obesity-related medical spending from 10 percent of all health care related spending today to more than 20 percent.

“In an environment where reducing long-term health care spending is a national imperative, preventative strategies like these will remain essential to America’s physical and fiscal health,” added Silverman.

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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.*