



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

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Campaign to End Obesity Applauds USDA's Proposed Guidelines on National School Lunch & Breakfast Programs

The Campaign to End Obesity today commended the USDA's swift action to implement improved nutrition standards for our nation's school breakfast and lunch programs, as outlined in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in December. The proposed new rule, announced today and open for public comment until April 13, 2011, would revise the nutrition requirements for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program to increase the availability and quality of nutritious foods, a goal long-supported by the Campaign.

"As the obesity epidemic places increasing threats on the long-term health and longevity of our children—as well as an unsustainable economic toll to our nation— there is no time to waste in implementing these landmark provisions," said Penny Lee, Executive Director of the Campaign to End Obesity. "Today's announcement signals that when children return for their first day back to school this September, they stand a strong chance of starting out with the proper nutrition they need to learn and grow."

Obesity is linked to more than 60 chronic and often life-threatening diseases—including heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis, stroke and even cancer. As a result, today's generation of children may live shorter lifespans than their parents if this epidemic is not curtailed. Additionally, new research has indicated that Americans pay \$168 billion annually in medical costs stemming from obesity-related illness, and nearly 17 percent of U.S. medical costs can be attributed to obesity. Currently, two-thirds of adults and nearly one in three children struggle with overweight and obesity.

"Our schools should be models of good nutrition that enable and inspire our children to lead healthier, fuller lives," continued Lee. "By making more nutritious foods more accessible, we will be giving our youth a fair shot at good health."

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About the Campaign to End Obesity

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.

