



**\*\*\*Media Advisory\*\*\***  
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## **Senators Udall and Murkowski Introduce Bi-partisan ‘Fit to Serve’ Act to Curb Obesity’s Threat to Military Readiness**

*Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund Applauds Measure*

**(Washington, DC)** Responding to an alarming rise in the number of military recruits who are unfit for service and fail to meet basic standards for fitness, United States Senators Mark Udall (D-CO) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) today announced the introduction of the ‘Fit to Serve’ Act. The legislation provides support for military leaders who wish to voluntarily open up their base’s sports fields, gyms and other facilities to youth seeking a place to exercise. The legislation also would provide for the dissemination of information about healthy weight and body mass indexes (BMI) to potential recruits.

"Obesity and obesity-related illnesses are costing us billions of dollars each year to treat. And obesity is more than a health issue — it hurts our national security," Udall said. "Nearly three-quarters of all young people are ineligible to serve in the armed forces, often because they cannot meet basic military weight and fitness standards. This bipartisan bill will address this problem in a way that helps young people to be more active and educated about how their choices affect their future."

"Obesity is the single greatest non-criminal hindrance for our young people seeking to enlist in the armed forces," Senator Murkowski added. "We want our young women and men who seek to serve their country to have basic information on what healthy weight means. As parks and recreation budgets are being cut in many communities, oftentimes the local military installations provide an alternative for kids who want a soccer field or track to access for their athletic activities."

The U.S. military today discharges more than 1,200 first-term enlistees every year because they cannot maintain a healthy weight, and a Defense Department report has estimated that nearly one in 20 current service members are diagnosed as clinically overweight.

"To truly support our troops, we must take action to prevent and reduce obesity which increasingly plagues our youth," said Ed Foster-Simeon, U.S. Soccer Foundation President and CEO and a seven year veteran of the U.S. Navy. Foster-Simeon, a member of the board of directors to the Campaign to End Obesity Action Fund, also said, "The obesity epidemic is denying too many young Americans the chance to begin a career of service. The Udall-Murkowski bill gives our youth—including our future recruits and military communities—a fair shot at good health, and our nation the benefit of their dedication."

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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.